

# Preface

Arts integration is “*the most significant innovation in the field over the last two decades. . . .*”

—President’s Committee on the Arts and the Humanities (Duncan, 2011, p. 41)

Since the first edition of this book, arts integration (AI) has gathered steam across America. Thousands of classroom teachers have been moved to re-imagine themselves—to collaborate with art specialists to plan math lessons, consult with music teachers about social studies links, bring the English language arts to life through drama, and turn science content into informative and artistic dances. Instead of joining a robotic march toward standards implementation, these AI teachers see themselves as instructional architects charged with envisioning innovative ways to reach challenging educational goals. Today, their creative practices and indefatigable courage are producing undeniably impressive learning results—concrete testaments to how the forces of *can’t do* and *won’t work* are being defeated.

Indeed, the vision of the arts as the “fourth R” has become a classroom reality, with imagination and creative inquiry made integral to the educational main course. Instead of drill and kill, AI teachers engage and un-cage, drawing students into problem solving by issuing intriguing challenges laced with *what if* and *how might* questions. Thus, AI breathes life into learning in every content area.

## Fueling Arts Integration

AI is powering a sea change in education. Fuel for this AI engine comes from numerous sources, including . . .

- *Growing dissatisfaction* with an oppressive test-driven school culture and outdated teaching methods that have failed to narrow troubling achievement gaps between haves and have-nots.
- *Challenging standards* that demand students be prepared for 21st century higher education and work, which requires coordination of complex thinking in order to comprehend sophisticated texts and skillfully articulate synthesized conclusions using written, spoken, and multimodal communication forms.
- *Mounting research* results that confirm that the arts “level the playing field” for the hardest-to-reach students by motivating and teaching them *how to* make sense of challenging subject matter.
- *Ready access* to searchable arts education research databases, such as those available at Arts Education Partnership, which allow educators to maintain a bead on what works.
- *Designation by federal legislation* that the arts are to be treated as *core* academic disciplines with equal status to other curricular areas.
- *Government investment* in diverse arts integration projects across the country, including model dissemination grants and Title I funded programs.
- *National organizations*, such as the Kennedy Center’s Partners in Education, which support school efforts to put arts-based educational research into practice.
- *Philanthropic organizations* such as Annenberg, Ford, Dana, and other foundations that have given millions of dollars to investigate and support arts-based education.

In contrast to previous educational movements built on shifting sands, the foundation for AI has a broad and rock solid base. A unique coalition of educators, arts and cultural organizations, government agencies, and hundreds of businesses and corporations have joined forces around a common goal—to improve education by devising innovative instructional practices that align with curriculum goals aimed at preparing students for our constantly evolving future.

The efforts of diverse collaborations have honed AI into a powerful and nimble tool that has proven to have potent effects on learning.

## Mounting Evidence

A wealth of studies now document that carefully planned and thoughtfully implemented arts integration (AI) projects can significantly impact students' academic performance and develop essential prosocial behaviors. Amazingly, AI models appear to have the most dramatic effects on the cognitive and affective development of our most needy learners, particularly those from the lowest income strata in the United States.

After decades of work, AI has shown itself to be more than just another educational *reform*. Indeed, AI *transforms*; teachers dramatically alter their views about students and learning when they place creative practices central to the arts at the core of instruction. Now, an expanding research base documents that when substantial links are forged between the arts and other academic studies, an impressive range of positive educational consequences results. In particular, AI approaches . . .

- *Increase motivation for learning*, primarily by teaching students to solve problems using creative processes inherent in arts work. Problem-centered teaching ignites curiosity and thus motivates students to employ the highest levels of thinking—those embodied in creative inquiry, with its component critical thinking.
- *Elevate student achievement* (learning, grades, scores), which reflects increased involvement in the aforementioned self-motivating creative inquiry process. Some of the most difficult to reach students are “turned on” by academic study infused with interesting arts-based practices and content.
- *Develop desired social skills*. “Habits of the mind” most sought after in the 21st century, such as independent problem solving—reliant on integrating a set of creative critical thinking and working processes—is inherent in cross-disciplinary AI learning. As students develop multiple skill sets, they also learn to collaborate with others, choose to persist at difficult tasks, take prudent risks, think more flexibly, and deal with ambiguity and complexity with confidence. With coaching from teachers and arts specialists, the self-efficacy of learners grows. As kids become more capable, they feel increasingly empowered to be actors, instead of puppets, on the stages of school, career, and life.

## Zooming In on the AI Advantage

How has this unique instruction approach, with a host of variations, been able to break the back of persistent student achievement gaps? At the heart of AI is the unstoppable force that drives human success—creativity. And the arts are a major storehouse of creative practice.

Viewing the arts as potential instruments of daily learning in every curricular area invites active creative investigation by students. In essence, the arts become learning levers, raising motivation and thus increasing achievement as students become more involved and in control of their own learning. In essence, the arts act as connective tissue for the entire curriculum—parallel to how the processes of reading and writing must be woven throughout every discipline. But when the arts are added to every student's communication repertoire, there are special effects, particularly aesthetic engagement, which widens the circle of understanding to include emotional ways to know and respond.

By design, AI is accompanied by traditional specialist-led arts classes meant to teach the “arts for arts' sake” courses. Without adding teaching time or subtracting rigor from any discipline, AI increases access to arts literacy by making arts learning integral in all classes. And access to the arts is vital to achievement—as demonstrated by the correlation found between low scores and inequities in availability of arts education opportunities (National Assessment of Educational Progress in the Arts, 2003–2012).

Using principles described in previous paragraphs, schools that choose AI undertake to develop the arts instructional efficacy of every teacher, create a more aesthetic school-wide

climate, and expand the circle of education to make families and community agencies genuine partners in learning. Thus, AI boosts student achievement because it promotes . . .

- *Focus on creative thinking.* As students learn how to address challenges using the creative inquiry process (*imagine* possibilities, *collect* information, *connect* ideas, *conclude*, *critique*, and *communicate*), they expand their capacities to understand/comprehend, represent, and share synthesized “big ideas.” Personal life, as well as educational and eventual career success, becomes more probable as youth learn to manage this vital process. Indeed, creativity is the source of innovation (e.g., technology), so it is unsurprising that CEOs around the world claim it is the most important leadership quality (IBM Corporation, 2010). Moreover, employers rank arts study as second only to a track record in entrepreneurship in identifying those with the highest creative potential (Lichtenberg, Woock, & Wright, 2008).
- *More positive school climate.* AI philosophy and practice establish a context for using creative practice and promote a culture of respect for diverse ideas and unique ways to learn. Teachers benefit when freed to take risks, experiment, and work together to solve problems. Most importantly, kids benefit when their teachers are empowered to empower them.
- *Greater collaboration.* Teachers cooperate across grade levels and disciplines, working with arts specialists to tackle every manner of learning challenge. Viewing themselves as learners first, teachers work collaboratively with students—co-investigating academic challenges. And collaboration doesn’t cease at the schoolhouse door. AI invites community members in. Teaching artists, museum educators, parents, community leaders—all are potential partners in cross-disciplinary planning for arts-based teaching and learning with real world applications.
- *Improved instructional effectiveness.* Collaborative planning and implementation of inquiry-oriented, problem-centered, and project-based cross-disciplinary work connected to real world work and life produces memorable lessons with stunning learning results.
- *Amplified use of differentiated teaching.* AI instruction is customized in the sense that diverse student needs, interests, and strengths are viewed as entry points for learning. AI works because it celebrates individual differences instead of suppressing them. When students learn to skillfully employ multimodal arts communication to understand, represent, and express their conclusions, they are liberated to search for their own special niches.
- *Changed focus of assessment.* Performance assessment with a bias for “do and show” is used to design learning events personalized to student interests, strengths, and needs. Such lessons have inherent motivational properties that sustain engagement with content.
- *More efficient use of time and money.* As school curricula are upgraded to meet higher standards, AI is able to ameliorate either/or problems in which subjects compete for time and resources. By simultaneously addressing multiple learning outcomes, AI becomes an efficient, cost effective approach in which instructional time is saved; thus, the educational budget is more wisely used.

## AI: Educational Practice Aligned with Research

Some of the most exciting research on teaching and learning involves study of the growth and functioning of the human brain. Studies suggest that learning with, about, in, and through the arts changes our minds. Particulars discussed in this book include how to use the arts to . . .

- *Draw learners forward* along a universal continuum of developmental stages that move toward increasing complexity of thought (i.e., general to particular and concrete to abstract).
- *Engage aesthetic understanding* by integrating the brain’s emotional processing capacities with the cognitive and physical. Arts experiences concentrate on noticing details and making sense of them, which brings both immediate motivational rewards and cumulative benefits as engagement with learning is extended.
- *Rehearse or repeat information and skills* by channeling learning through multiple modalities/pathways, which activates more of the brain.

- *Represent ideas and emotions* using multimodal thinking and forms, which allows more communication choices that can be aligned to individual strengths, as well as the context or audience.

The goal of AI instruction is for students to restructure information using multifaceted communication—perhaps changing verbal information (words) into a visual form (drawing)—which engages more of the brain’s potential. Learning effectiveness is expanded as domains of understanding and expression are added; in other words, transfer of learning to long-term memory is facilitated (Rudacliffe, 2010). *Meaningful* high caliber AI creates the conditions for transfer of deep knowledge and skill learning, gained through arts work, to traditional academic areas, and vice versa. What’s more, arts-based learning transfers to life in the 21st century with its burgeoning demands for creative thinking and working.

In sum, arts-infused learning focuses on restructuring ideas. Prolonged engagement with restructuring—a key process in creative thinking—transforms students from information recipients into active meaning makers—thus, the title of this book. This deep change often eludes measures common to standardized testing, but it is readily observable in thousands of AI classrooms each day. Working collaboratively to creatively solve problems that transcend curricular boundaries, students huddle together in conversation and debate, further defining the problem, collecting ideas, experimenting with connections, testing out conclusions, and deciding how to communicate their thoughts. As teachers subtly and skillfully coach students toward increasing independence, learners become increasingly more competent, confident, flexible, open to differing perspectives, proud of group efforts, and willing to both give and receive peer feedback. It is clear kids are more engaged and thinking more deeply. Furthermore, students, teachers, and parents involved in arts integration report everyone is just plain happier about school.

## Literacy IS the Arts

*Creating Meaning through Literature and the Arts* tells the story of how arts integration (AI) has grown so much in a few decades. It is the story of hundreds of arts-based schools. Some startups, such as Hilton Head School for the Creative Arts (SC) and Tallahassee Magnet School of the Arts (FL), have been at it for less than a decade. Others, such as Ashley River Creative Arts (ARCA)—one of the schools featured in this edition—is pushing the 30-year mark. Old and new, public, magnet, and charter, today’s AI schools draw upon cutting edge research, evolving state standards, and constructivist beliefs to transform teaching and learning. At schools like Lady’s Island Elementary School (LIES)—another featured school—arts integration has evolved as the student body and teaching staff have changed, which required a reboot of their original model.

At these four AI schools, as well as hundreds of others, literacy is viewed as something much greater than competency in the language arts. Why? AI expands educators’ perspectives on how humans first communicated and spotlights the role of the arts in 21st century communication. Indeed, the arts are now recognized as essential vehicles to understand and express thoughts and feelings, playing both leading and supporting roles as multimodal ways to represent ideas and emotions. No longer is literacy reduced to speaking, listening, reading, and writing words alone (i.e., the language arts). Today, literacy *is* the arts—all the arts!

As the traditional stars of the curriculum, reading and math are means to understand and express meaning. However, the arts equally and uniquely accomplish these same communication purposes but add more diverse results; indeed the arts have the potential to capture thoughts and emotions too slippery for words. Moreover, today’s multimedia-dominated and technology-driven world is captained by innovative thinkers—well-known masters of problem-based creative practice. Unfortunately, there is a short supply creative thinkers. How can schools help grow students’ capacity to orchestrate artistic processes needed to meet contemporary demands? Arts integration answers this question by making the creative inquiry process central to learning across curricula areas.

As the first communication tools of early humans, the arts were sought out for their power to uplift and elevate ideas and emotions. Today, the arts are treasured as repositories of culture

with immeasurable intrinsic value. In addition, the instrumental purpose of the arts has been rediscovered—in particular, how the arts are powerful communication tools that belong in the inner circle of learning. In AI schools, the arts are no longer sequestered from the rest of education, but rather are integral pieces of the educational puzzle. By uniting, combining, and orchestrating thinking and learning around artistic processes—summarized in creative inquiry—AI elevates the act of teaching to art. Thus AI students are stirred by the beautiful, invited to grapple with the profound, and allowed to determine for themselves what is good. Through the arts, students create meaning—thoughts and emotions extended through visual images, amplified with music and brought to life through dance and drama. In this manner, the arts also give voice to those whose words are inadequate to meet the difficult task of communication.

Indeed, the arts provide doors through which we can enter into real and fictional worlds or windows that allow us to simply peek in. The arts are microscopes that permit us to zoom in for an intense close up, or they can act as telescopes, making it possible to zoom out for a broadened perspective. The arts create bridges of understanding and give energy and passion to work. All in all, the arts give meaning and life to all they touch.

## Text Organization

This book is not only *about* integration, but is also structured in an integrated manner.

- Part I (Chapters 1–3) includes content that is integrated into all subsequent arts-specific chapters.
- Part II (Chapters 4–13) refers to information introduced in Part I, including repeated reference to figures that summarize essential components of the creative inquiry process.
- In addition, the arts-specific chapters (Chapters 4–13) refer to one another (e.g., discussions about classroom management and discipline, assessment, etc.).

What this means is that a reader who chooses to study chapters relevant to one art form will quickly see the need for access to other chapters and text features. To assist readers, the following tools have been built into the book:

- **Table of Figures:** This important reference is located after the Table of Contents. The titles of all the Ready Reference, Research Update, and Planning Page features in each chapter are listed, along with numbers (chapter first).  
*Example:* Planning Page 7.6 is found in Chapter 7, and is the sixth figure in the chapter.
- **Classroom Clips, Snapshots, and Spotlights:** These examples are included to make abstract ideas more concrete. Readers are invited to visualize how a menu of real arts-based teaching strategies can be synthesized into a lesson and see how specific schools have transitioned to a custom designed AI approach.
- **Bolded Strategies:** In most Classroom Snapshots, I have bolded key teaching strategies to uplift them for the reader’s consideration as s/he builds a personal instructional AI toolbox.
- **Website Citations:** Because of legal issues, full URLs are usually not listed within the body of the text. To locate websites, either do a search or use the abbreviated information surrounded by parentheses immediately following content to find full citations in the Bibliography at the end of this book.

## Content Organization

Chapters in the fifth edition describe *what* arts integration includes, *why* AI is now an important school reform, and *how* it can be variously implemented. Although there is no one right AI model, common principles or pillars are discussed that support designs that make the arts integral, as opposed to curricular add-ons. Ten AI Pillars serve as organizers for how to employ the arts as learning tools, while maintaining strong traditional arts education classes taught by specialists.

Since classroom teachers are center stage in AI implementation, I have synthesized *what* teachers new to AI need to know and be able to do to get started. Part I (Chapters 1–3) provides an overview of arts integration.

- Chapter 1 introduces the concept of arts integration as *creating meaning through the arts* using updated research and a discussion of connections to Common Core.
- Chapter 2 briefly describes the beliefs, research, and theories that support AI. This chapter features an in-depth discussion of the creative inquiry process including what it is, why it is the core of AI, and how to teach thinking and working skills embodied in creativity.
- Chapter 3 is an overview of the AI Pillars, a set of ten common principles that support diverse arts integration frameworks.

Part II begins a more in-depth look integrating each of five arts, with two chapters each for the literary arts, visual art, drama, dance, and music.

- *Even-numbered* chapters explain practical ideas for using the ten AI Pillars (e.g., rationale, planning units and lesson plans, arts literacy, best practices, differentiating instruction, assessment for learning).
- *Odd-numbered* chapters with thumb tabs are compendia of *seed strategies*—brief idea starters in the categories of (1) energizers/warm-ups, (2) ways to teach arts elements and concepts, and (3) curricular areas of English language arts, math, science, and social studies.

## Features New to This Edition

The fifth edition of *Creating Meaning Through Literature and the Arts* includes significant changes. To begin with, a revised AI definition now matches the book’s title. This definition is front-loaded in Chapter 1 and anchors the main message of the entire book. Other important additions and revisions include . . .

- ***Creative Inquiry:*** A student-friendly model of “creating meaning” is introduced in Part I and discussed in detail in Chapter 2. Since creative thinking is the centerpiece process in AI, strategies for teaching students how to use the “Two I’s and Seven C’s” are featured in every chapter.
- ***Common Core State Standards:*** Interwoven throughout the book are examples of how AI supports the standards, but more importantly goes beyond the floor these goals set. Moreover, AI is presented as an innovative approach to meeting any student expectations governed by 21st century work, learning, and life demands.
- ***Research Updates:*** One- to two-page figures summarize arts-based studies and research in newer fields such as brain research and visual imagery.
- ***Ready References:*** These figures outline sources and information teachers need to consult frequently as they implement AI. Some of these summarize basic arts literacy (by art form) recommended for classroom teachers, as well as provide guidelines for using key instructional tools, such as several protocols for asking inquiry questions (IQs).
- ***Planning Pages:*** These figures are examples of actual AI lesson and unit plans for each arts area.
- ***Snapshots and Spotlights:*** While there are encore presentations of favorite teachers, schools, and lessons from past editions, during the past year I had the pleasure of working with many new teachers, principals, and artists involved in AI. Their thoughts and ideas bring a fresh perspective on arts integration to this edition.
- ***Classroom Clips:*** Short vignettes of the creative work of real and imagined people—including teachers and students—pepper all chapters. I wrote these to continually bring the reader back to concrete examples of AI’s unique and powerful contributions to education.
- ***Seed Strategies:*** A revised collection of AI teaching strategy “seeds” form the meat of odd numbered chapters in Part II. Again, I think examples are everything to understanding, and the seeds are meant to be just that. I urge readers to use them to prime the pump for creative thinking about integrating aspects of each arts area with other curricular material.

- **AI Toolbox:** As requested by teachers, I culled a list of AI strategies as places to start. Often I selected these because they were in some sense easier to implement. At other times, I chose strategies that were repeatedly recommended by respected colleagues or ones that were simply my all time favorites.
- **Arts-Based Children’s Literature:** Bibliographies of children’s book selections have been updated for each arts area, although I have left many classics in the belief that books aren’t better merely by virtue of a later copyright date. For the first time, readers will have access to the Children’s Literature Database—an online list of literature searchable by arts area.
- **Video Clips\*:** At the end of every chapter, readers will find information about accessing short video segments that show classroom teachers and teaching artists using arts strategies or being interviewed, often by me.
- **Appendices:** These important tools give readers examples of key websites, a dozen assessment tools, strategies for differentiating instruction for students with special needs (including English language learners), and guidelines for arts-based field trips.
- **Seed Strategy Index:** This is a separate index to locate specific arts-based teaching ideas.
- **Photographs:** New photographs of faces of children and teachers add so much to the telling of the AI story. In particular, I invite readers to “look closely” (key AI teaching strategy) at the magnificent cover art created by child artists involved in a unit focusing on local Low Country artists.

Note: I interviewed and observed dozens of teachers for this book and they have given me permission to use their real names. However, in a number of instances the names of teachers and students are pseudonyms. Their words represent a collection of repeated experiences and expressions from schools all over the country, schools where children are lucky enough to have dedicated teachers who know how to make learning exquisite by integrating the arts into daily lessons.

## Acknowledgments

This book is tangible evidence of the dedication and creativity characteristic of America’s arts integration educators. The innovative AI efforts of principals, teachers, and students never cease to amaze me. It has been my privilege to work with and learn from all of you, and I feel honored to count many of you as friends as well as colleagues. In particular, I want to thank Jayne Ellicott, principal of Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary (ARCA), who has been a long-term true collaborator and one of the best principals I’ve ever known. Along with assistant principal Cathie Middleton and Curtis Pelham, Jayne coordinated solutions for seemingly impossible tasks, especially all the squirrely permissions for photographs.

Marvelle Ulmer, principal of Lady’s Island Elementary School (LIES), and her very capable arts team made it possible for me to enrich my understanding of arts integration through classroom observations and countless interviews and conversations with teachers. In particular, I want to thank the four-member arts team of teachers: Stephanie Riedmayer, Kristin Brady, Lisa Ten Eyck, and Lynda McLain. In addition, two classroom teachers at LIES welcomed me into their classrooms for observations: Jessica Goethie-Bacon and Charlotte Diorio. I thank these educators for their enthusiasm, generosity, and photogenic faces.

The ARCA and LIES teachers give this book life. For the most part, they form the cast of actors for lesson scenes that make up the Classroom Snapshots and Spotlights. I want to acknowledge both the ARCA teachers I’ve worked with in the past and those who were involved in this edition:

Elizabeth Allen, Judi Beaudrot, Heidi Blanton, Susan Brandon, Ann Cheek, Bernadette Chilcote, Carol Cope, Chris Crawford, Natascha Ferguson, Robin Fountain, Janelle Fredrich, Alison Graham, Jennifer Hanson, Cindy Hines, Sylvia Horres, Kelly James, Jeff Jordan, Ismaker Kadrie, Marty Kearney, Amanda Kilbane, Jeannie Laban, Cheryl Leonard, Michelle Lowe, Barbara Lunsford, Mary Mac Jennings, Megan McComas, Brooke McMurray, Deborah Menick, Dianne O’Neill, Susan Peebles, Fannie Petros, Sean Pribanic, Carole Rathbun, Jill Roberts, Linda Roberts, C. J. Rozzi, Ashley Sires, Cherrie Sneed, Jill Sneed, Kathryn Stonaker, Stacey Sturgell, Lisa Trott, Judy Trotter, Amy Walker, and Joyce Wiggins.

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\*Please note that video clips are only available via the Pearson eText, and not other third-party eTexts, such as CourseSmart or Kindle.

I especially want to thank Bill Langston for his expert work on the videos that support this edition.

In addition, preservice teachers were much in my mind during the writing of this text, so it was wonderful to have Winthrop University education major Kelsey Swatzyna's very able help during the ARCA photo shoot.

Over the years I have been fortunate to work with so many others who have contributed to this book in some measure: Charlotte Smelser, director of ArtsSmart in Texarkana; Kay Thomas and Jennifer Unger, teaching artists at ArtsSmart; Laurel Shastri, teaching artist and associate director of Ballet Tennessee; Hollie Steele and Carolyn Attaway at Battle Academy in Chattanooga, Tennessee; Rodney Van Valkenburg, Allied Arts of Greater Chattanooga; Kristy Calloway, executive director of Arts Integration Network; Wrenn Cook, Columbia College; Ava Hughes, Arts Partnership of Greater Spartanburg; Mary Lou Hightower, University of South Carolina; Christine Fisher and Ray Doughty, South Carolina ABC Schools; Gretchen Keefner, principal, and the teachers at Hilton Head School for the Creative Arts (Colleen Skibo, Tara Caron, Erin Duffy, Tennille Kasper, Karen Cauller, and Marcia Underwood); Terry Bennett, former principal, and past teachers at Lady's Island Elementary; Amy Goldin, New York University Steinhardt School and Progressive School of Long Island; Debbie Fahmie, Tallahassee, Florida; the Executive Board of the South Carolina Alliance for Arts Education; and members of the Beaufort Art Association.

I also wish to thank the reviewers of my manuscript for their comments and insights. This is a better book because of the efforts of Brandon Marshall Butler, Old Dominion University; Kimberly M. Kopfman, Ph.D. candidate, George Mason University; Darla Meek, Texas A&M University-Commerce; Dr. Michelle L. Summers, University of South Florida Sarasota-Manatee. In particular, the detailed reviews and creative ideas of Susan Antonelli, Kay Thomas, Laurel Shastri, Teresa Love, and Kori Wakamatsu were invaluable.

Of course, it is through the skill and artistry of the folks at Pearson Publishing that typed pages are transformed into beautiful books. I was delighted to once again work under the wise tutelage of Linda Bishop, my editor for the third edition. Her good humor, wisdom, creative problem solving, and patient handholding made it possible for me to make my deadline without totally losing my mind. It was wonderful to work with someone who adeptly mobilized the forces of the creative process—so central to the book's theme—to actually create a manuscript. Sadly, Linda did abandon me near the end. I reluctantly congratulate her on her semi-retirement. Luckily, I landed on my feet with another knowledgeable and amiable editor, Meredith Fossil. I also want to thank Meredith and Editor-in-Chief, Jeffery Johnston for the compassion they showed when, in the middle of the bookmaking process, I had to have surgery. As for my permissions specialist, Becky Savage, I don't have words to describe how much I appreciated her remarkable skills; I am most grateful for her painstaking work. To other members of the Pearson team, particularly, Cynthia DeRocco and everyone at S4Carlisle Publishing Services—especially Lynn Steines—I want to express my appreciation for all the careful, creative, and detail-oriented work each of you did. We made this book together!

On a more personal level, I want to acknowledge the many friends and family members who were so supportive during the arduous writing process. The emails, phone calls, meals, and occasional bridge games allowed me to come up for air and then forge ahead. And Collette, I tell you again that I am indebted to you for setting this journey in motion.

Finally, first and last, time present and time past, there is dear Charles, to whom this book is dedicated. Without his superb research skills, insightful suggestions, and unwavering support, I could not write books. He feeds me in every way and still makes me laugh each day.

*Claudia Cornett*

# 1

# Creating Meaning Through Literature and the Arts

## Core Chapter Questions

- What is arts integration (AI)?
- What special contributions do the arts make to learning?
- How does arts-based education align with 21st-century learning and work requirements?
- Why is AI a recommended approach, especially given the thrust of Common Core?
- What contributions does integration make to learning?
- How is AI put into practice?

## Introduction

*Teachers who cause students to fall intensely in love with learning, change minds. A changed mind leads to a changed life.* Claudia Cornett

I know thousands of teachers. Many of those thousands have been my students—and being their teacher has been both a pleasure and an honor for me. I tell you this to add credibility to the next statement: I personally know something about what motivates teachers. And it is certainly not the prospect of giving tests and grades or assigning worksheets and computer drills. Teachers want to change children’s minds. Great teachers do so by making learning memorable.

Memorable learning is the consequence of creative teaching, and creative teaching embraces the arts. If you are fortunate, you’ve had a few creative teachers—ones like those who challenge students to write long division raps, choreograph geometry dances, perform World War II radio commercials, and paint literary quotes on ceiling tiles. If you have not been so fortunate, you can vicariously experience the transformative force of creative teaching through literary works such as the award-winning Newbery book, *Bridge to Terabithia* (Paterson, 1977) or stirring films like *Mr. Holland’s Opus*.

This book celebrates and honors creative teachers. It is also an invitation to become one by making the arts integral to your teaching. By considering the ideas in this book, you are taking a step in that direction.

## Definition: Arts Integration

*It doesn’t get any more complex and higher level than creative thinking.* Zoomie (2014)

Creative teaching can begin in many ways. Presenting examples (versus offering a definition) is a good place to start. I’ll demonstrate by defining arts integration using two short examples—lesson clips featuring teachers guided by familiar standards that expect students to use text-based evidence to draw conclusions. Surprisingly, their instructional approach, despite three decades of history and research-based success, may not be familiar—it may even seem strange to you.

Both of the teachers in the following clips are using arts integration (AI), a reform model that naturally aligns with myriad 21st-century educational goals—especially those that aim to develop

independent creative problem solvers. In preparation for lessons, AI classroom teachers collaborate with arts specialists to explore how the arts might support learning; this collaboration is roughly parallel to how content teachers use reading and writing to forward the study of science, social studies, and math. And the academic effects can be stunning (Barry, 2010; Deasy & Stevenson, 2005; Ingram & Meath, 2007). What's more, AI has a track record of doing more than raising test scores. AI can create a sea change with a transformative power drawn from two sources: (1) the unique *motivational force* of the arts and (2) the well-honed *thinking process* at the core of arts making and arts understanding—creative thinking.

In the following clips, notice how the teachers challenge learners to dig in and investigate, to work like detectives to uncover clues to questions. The focus is on engaging students in creative inquiry—a process often neglected in traditional instruction—but ubiquitous and critical in the innovative world of evolving workplaces, as well as in the high-minded collegiate culture. Indeed, creative practices are at the heart of work in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics. And of course, creativity is omnipresent in the arts.

## Classroom Clip

### Creative Inquiry

#1: Lights are low as students lean forward, listening closely to a text\*—a CD of folk songs, popular during the Civil War. Previously, the teacher challenged his students to draw conclusions about relationships among people (i.e., understandings). Sitting to the side, he now coaches them to make sense of the music, including the lyric. He uses a series of open ended inquiry questions to direct thinking toward the collection of relevant ideas:

- What details stand out? Why?
- What does the composer seem to be saying? What makes you think so?
- How does the song feel? How does the minor key affect you?
- What do you notice about the form of the song?

An even greater challenge looms. Students know they will subsequently work collaboratively to compose a ballad—a slow, sentimental song that narrates a story. Synthesizing information from several sources, including the songs, primary source documents, and the social studies book, small groups will cooperatively write short stanzas. Thus, the class will compose a whole ballad—a new text that will provide a concrete demonstration of their new understandings about history.

#2: In a science class, students share drafts of original compositions, giving each other feedback. They focus their comments on (1) what works or makes sense and on (2) asking for clarification using questions like, “Are you saying that . . .?” Interestingly, the compositions are not written; they are previously choreographed short *dances*—texts that show conclusions drawn from an informational book about the water cycle. As groups take turns performing dance drafts, an audience of peers intently watches. In this manner, everyone will assume the perspective of performer and audience member and give in-role feedback. Afterward, dances will be revised based on detailed constructive comments meant to clarify the science conclusions. In addition to the content critique, students will help each other enhance their dance communication skills (i.e., offer feedback on the artistic movement of the body used to convey thoughts and emotions about the water cycle).

\***Note:** The term *text* is used here to refer to any form of communication, from print text to video productions (Committee on Conceptual Framework for the New K–12 Science Education Standards, 2012). 

## Titles Matter

Operating in these two lesson clips is an arts integration definition that matches the title of this book. Indeed, a book's title should reflect its essence—the biggest and most important ideas—what it is really about (i.e., the overriding theme). And after four editions, *Creating Meaning Through Literature and the Arts* remains the title of this book. It also is the AI definition that I think comes closest to illuminating how teachers can make the arts integral to teaching and learning. Without a determined focus on the concepts expressed in those seven words, AI lacks the voltage to motivate students to think deeply, which is what changes minds. More specifically, AI zeroes in

on *creative* thinking because the creative process is central to comprehending and communicating, both in the arts and the language arts. Also called creative practice and creative problem solving, throughout this book I usually refer to the process as creative inquiry.

It will take this entire book to explain the *whys* and *hows* of undergirding arts integration—an educational approach credited with increasing test scores, raising grades, narrowing achievement gaps, and creating happier learners and teachers. Underlying these significant effects is how the arts develop motivation to learn, which among other things boosts school attendance, and “being present” makes a big difference in learning success (Barry, 2010; Walker et al., 2011a, 2011b). For now, a parsing of the definition of AI provides a good introduction to important arts integration elements. Here is the breakdown in four bullets.

- **Creating.** The process of creating is not as unusual or hard to understand as we once thought (Jung, 2012). In truth, we all use creativity daily to survive and thrive. Through creative thinking, we are able to solve problems, answer questions, and meet challenges—some little, others enormous. Thus, we bring into existence things and ideas, both new and useful, that take a multitude of forms—from invisible mental transformations (e.g., learning) to concrete inventions like the neon pink 16-gig thumb drive protruding from my USB port. Creativity is everywhere, from novel perspectives in newspaper cartoons to helpful innovations like the iPad and ballads written to summarize conclusions about history.

Creative thinking is not one kind of thought, but a bundle of processes or practices that fall under the umbrella of inquiry. Think of a current personal challenge or problem. In wrestling with an issue, we have an innate predisposition to . . .

- *imagine* possibilities,
- *collect* information,
- *connect* ideas, and eventually
- *draw conclusions*, including problem solutions.

These processes progressively ratchet inquiry toward “creating” something—a plan, theory, or a new product.

Arts integration puts creative inquiry at the forefront of teaching and learning, not in a casual way, but explicitly. By consistently labeling the mental actions just listed, modeling them, and coaching students to use them, over time students learn to strategically deploy these innate thinking tools and practices. And as they gain confidence with creative inquiry, students are able to rise to greater and greater learning challenges. Eventually, creative inquiry becomes an automatic response when an obstacle presents itself. Thus, students are made ready to solve problems independently throughout their lives. Take a moment to find places in the two lesson clips where elements of “creating” are evident.

- **Meaning.** The second word in this book’s title is “meaning.” The question, “What do you mean by that?” seeks understanding about another’s thoughts—the sense in it. Meaning underlies understanding. In professional literacy circles, understanding is called comprehension, which is the result of *constructing* or *creating* meaning—also called making sense. It all relates.

All art forms are created—using inquiry—to show the meaning of something, such as an artist’s understandings or feelings about war or poverty or beauty. Once again, it is important for teachers to note the impetus: first comes a challenge or problem (see previous bullet). Much as a pearl grows from an irritating grain of sand, meaning making begins with a disturbance, some sort of mystery or question or problem or need, which scientists, historians, anthropologists, engineers, and artists accept as a challenge. Thus, creative thinking unfolds, naturally—unless it is impeded. Later in the book, I’ll address how rigid traditional schooling suppresses creativity. But when the context is supportive, all humans (not just artists) are born inclined to create meaning. They imagine possible sources and ways to approach a problem, and then proceed to collect ideas using various experiences—inputs from reading, listening, looking, touching, tasting, and so on. The input can be firsthand experience or a virtual one, such as a simulation. Input becomes what is commonly called food for thought. Next, through sorting and experimenting with ways to connect potentially important details, facts, and ideas, conclusions are formulated and decisions are made about *how* best to express what was learned. Conclusions are a main outcome of inquiry, formed using both step-by-step logic and creative leaps.

Key to AI success is causing students to do *more than* literal thinking, to not simply “get meaning.” AI lessons strive to cause learners to “*create* meaning.” Montaigne put it poetically, suggesting a mind “should be well made rather than well filled” (1575). Thus, learning is not reduced to memorizing, matching, imitating, echoing, and copying—low-level activities that have a place, just not in the front row of education, which should be reserved for higher level thinking. Another way to say this is that AI is about teaching students how to use artistic approaches to make sense—to alternate between divergent and convergent thinking as they work any problem.

Ultimately, the goal is to create a solid solution/conclusion (meaning) that can be articulated. Speaking and writing are options, but in AI classrooms communication options are greater. The rich forms of visual art, dance, music, and drama/theatre stand alongside the language arts to express meaning and cause learning to be made more memorable.

So, creating meaning is the centerpiece of AI, but the context for meaning making is science, social studies, literacy, and math—critical content for life success. Once students derive well-founded big ideas/conclusions from reading/listening/viewing content, AI allows them to express the same using speaking, writing, performing, exhibiting, and so on. For example, in the clip that featured dance, students accepted the challenge to construct meaning about the water cycle, first by collecting information from a nonfiction book and eventually showing conclusions through movement. Because it was an AI lesson, the dance was anchored in showing science evidence (AI is not “arts for arts sake”). Their choreography drew upon collected details and facts that were connected up in new and useful ways to communicate learning. Science conclusions were situated in dance conclusions (i.e., science informed the dance composition). Dance, in turn, made learning visible, a major contribution to assessment. In fact, all the arts are tools that students can use to make their created meanings concrete, just as a written form like a persuasive essay can. However, the arts expand how meaning can be created and then expressed. Of particular value is how the arts provide communication access to kids who struggle with the limits of words, and add richness to the communication of those who don’t.

- **Through.** The third word in the book’s title is “through.” The majority of school learning happens through or “by way of” or “via” the four language arts, divided into two *receptive* forms—listening and reading—and two *expressive* forms—speaking and writing. However, outside of school receptive and expressive communication is more diverse, with much of it happening through the fine and performing arts. (Think about music, dance, and visual art in television ads and computer apps). In the lesson clips, teachers brought students into and out (*through*) social studies and science content using the engagement force of the arts—music and dance in the examples.

One educational challenge is to close the academic achievement gap (especially in literacy) between rich kids and poor kids. It is an environmental fact that affluent students have more arts opportunities than poorer students. Since the arts are key forms of communication, it is reasonable to ask, Might not our persistent literacy achievement gap between economically advantaged and disadvantaged learners be somehow related to the arts gap? Might not more arts experiences grow communication capacities, and possibly grow student engagement in reading and writing? AI advocates believe so. Research findings support this conclusion; diverse student groups, especially children from impoverished circumstances, are more likely to thrive in arts-integrated environments. (Research Update 1.4, later in this chapter, lists studies.) Following Elliott Eisner’s advice, AI educators are now putting the arts back in the language arts.

AI embraces the view that *all* the arts should be available to *all* students so all can more adeptly and more freely receive and express thoughts and emotions. Thus, communication is expanded, enlarging the means *through* which students can learn and then show what and how much.

- **Literature and the Arts.** Since I devote ten subsequent chapters to each of five art forms (literary art, visual art, drama/theatre, dance, and music), for brevity’s sake I’m going to cheat here and not discuss the final four words in the title separately. I will point out that the literary (word/print based) arts are intentionally included as arts for many reasons, not the least of which is the high incidence of arts-based lessons which employ literature and/or creative

writing of some sort. What's more the literary art form called literature is the most widely integrated of all art products.

I have already alluded to how the arts are “fundamentally a means of communication” (INTASC, 2002, p. 30; NCAS, 2013). Communication should bring to mind the evolving concept of literacy. Today, literacy rightly sits at the head of the education table. But literacy was a creature with humble beginnings, basically linked—a hundred or so years ago—with the skill of being able to sign one's name. Now, it seems silly to think of “being literate” as requiring so little. Equally ludicrous are faded concepts of literacy (e.g., wrongheaded notions that reading is equivalent to sounding out words). A life realignment is warranted. We desperately need literacy expectations inside school to parallel communication requirements outside. And beyond school walls, literacy is plural. Today, the term *literacies* reflects the multimodal, multifaceted, multileveled ways we communicate. Either you become adept at emailing, texting, blogging, and tweeting or you are left out. What's more, our dazzling tech-based communication exists because inquisitive individuals took on challenges and did creative thinking. Amazingly, many must-have gadgets originally were conceived and brought to fruition under circumstances as humble as the family garage. Indeed, the world outside of school is totally arts integrated. It's time we brought the outside world in.

In fact, the arts began as human necessities, and historically have not been pigeonholed into decoration and entertainment. The fundamental purpose behind early arts was and now is *to communicate*. And what we communicate can be boiled down to *thoughts and emotions*. Of course, there is extreme variation in the quality of the creative thinking behind arts—ranging from the sublime to the disgusting—which provokes perpetual debate about what's good and bad art. But there is no debate about the growing amount of art. The creative human mind cranks out incalculable varieties evidenced in how we routinely talk about the art of cooking, the art conversation, the art of public speaking and even the art of war. In this book, I zero in on five basics:

- the literary arts, which are verbal (word/print based),
- visual art, which is primarily nonverbal,
- music, which is organized sound (auditory communication),
- dance, which uses bodily-kinesthetic communication, and
- drama/theatre, which can include all of the above but focuses on storytelling and pre-tending in roles.



Creating Meaning Through Music

The key takeaway here, related to the definition of AI, is that the arts are ways people express ideas and emotions or thoughts and feelings; the arts are means to create and communicate meaning. Reading and writing share the same function—to communicate meaning. But interestingly, they are rather new on the human history scene with early writing appearing about 5,000 years ago. In contrast, the arts are ancient. Tens of thousands of years before hieroglyphics were invented, people painted scenes on cave walls, sculpted images in stone, beat out rhythms on skin-topped drums, blew notes through bird bone flutes, and undoubtedly mimed and danced out ideas and emotions. And unlike their younger cousins, reading and writing, the arts are innate; we are born with the arts in us. Babies arrive prewired to sing, pretend, draw, and dance.

That's it. *Arts integration is teaching students to create meaning in all curricular areas through the arts—all arts, not just the language arts.* Given the inherent motivational force of the “creative” arts, why wouldn't educators embrace them as essentials? Arts integrationists do. AI mines the engagement possibilities of the arts to enliven instruction with image, movement, sound, and emotion—to give life to learning. Picture kids out of their seats, purposefully moving and singing. Dull seatwork is passé, replaced with challenging brain and body work that capitalizes on the positive affect emotion can have on learning. AI engenders productive noise and constructive mess; classrooms ripple with laughter as students arrive at a-ha's, and conversations bubble through groups that erupt in ta-Das! Instead of walking quietly in straight lines, kids are urged to use their creative minds to move to destinations in novel ways.

## Aliases

Arts integration does go by other names—arts infusion, arts immersion, arts based, and interdisciplinary learning, to name a few. The terms *arts integration* and *interdisciplinary* appeared in the first generation national arts standards, and AI is sometimes subsumed under interdisciplinary and inquiry learning (National Art Education Association, 2002). Additionally, HOTS (higher order thinking skills) schools and schools implementing multiple intelligences (MI) research quickly find themselves involved in AI, the latter unsurprising since MI theory proposes a multi-factored view of intelligence that includes music, visual/spatial, and kinesthetic (dance and drama) skills. Gardner’s other five intelligences are arts linked as well (1993b). For example, verbal intelligence is obviously needed in the literary arts, drama, and music.

Mello (2004) and others draw distinctions among some terms, suggesting *arts based* involves teaching arts content while *arts infusion* does not. In this book, *arts based* and *arts infused* are used interchangeably with *arts integration*—an approach in which both arts content and arts processes are integral to learning across academic areas.

Currently, 88 percent of classroom teachers use the arts in instruction (Parsad & Spiegelman, 2012). By grasping a definition of AI you can take a first step toward joining them in making your teaching arts-based. The AI professional journey involves investigating the *why* and *how* of teaching creative practices, including how to set up challenges in science, social studies, math, and literacy lessons, and assess learning packaged in paintings, dances, songs, and dramatic performances. Furthermore, becoming an arts AI teacher requires a commitment to growing personal arts literacy, especially by working side-by-side with arts specialists and artists. Gradually, classroom teachers fill a backpack with arts-based practices and begin to assume the lead in teaching processes and concepts specific to different art forms (e.g., basics of drawing, pantomime, and how to write song lyrics). Working in grade levels and across grades and disciplines, AI teachers learn to thoughtfully tie it all together to reach demanding standards in science, social studies, and the arts, plus Common Core standards for literacy and math, with the latter standards helpfully emphasizing the kind of higher thinking and problem solving summarized in the creative inquiry process.

## Classroom Snapshot

### Multi-Arts Integration in Social Studies

Classroom Snapshots in each chapter invite you to experience AI in another sense. Along with short lesson clips, the longer snapshots give a more vivid picture of how teachers use their AI toolboxes to engage learners in creative inquiry.

For this first chapter, step into the classroom of a veteran first-grade teacher at a premier AI school—one of the first in America to implement the tenets of arts-based reform. The school is Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary in Charleston, South Carolina. Judy Trotter uses a concert of arts-based tools to cause students to create meaning. Some are bolded for your consideration. In particular, notice how she challenges youngsters with open-ended inquiry questions (IQs) that steer them toward important ideas. Further, her questions ignite creative thinking that drives kids to make decisions and form conclusions. Student conclusions in this lesson are then shared through a type of drama, pantomime.

Well aware of the effect of mood and context on creativity, Judy plays barely audible **background music**. The lights are off and the kids are completely silent. Sitting on the arm of a wingback chair, she gently closes a picture book, having just finished reading aloud *Barefoot* (Edwards, 1997), a story whose plot is driven by the plight of slaves desperately running from captors.

“Find your **personal space**,” Judy whispers. Students slowly stand up and begin to spread out, adjusting so no one is within reach of another.

Patiently, she waits for them to look at her and then says, “Okay, **show me** walking in place—barefoot. **Begin.**”

In personal “space bubbles,” 17 children begin to move in 17 different ways. Some drag, others shuffle, slide, or tiptoe, all to the slow steady beat of **background percussion**. Using the same tempo, Judy **side coaches** to increase engagement—describing specific behavior she notices, paired with compliments.

“I **see** faces full of effort. Good job of concentrating. I see everyone thinking about walking with bare feet in mud, (pause) on rocks, (pause) through water. Careful, don’t let them hear you,” she warns, prompting several students to hunker down.



Following the Drinking Gourd

“**Stop!**” Judy calls. Instantly, students relax. Once again, they are small first graders, eyes wide with expectation. She pushes a button and the music stops, leaving a solemn mood hanging over the class.

“Who were the other people in the story?” she asks quietly. Students name the slave hunters, and Judy **coaches** with more questions, teasing out details—what the hunters were like, what they wanted, and how they felt.

“Now let’s **pantomime their feelings,**” Judy says. “**Places!**”

Once again in personal spaces, the children stand ready.

“**Action!**” Judy **cues**, and a contrasting mime of “boots” begins. This time, children choose a very different array of body shapes, gestures, and facial expressions. They slash, stomp, squat, peer, and glare, showing they can easily communicate the colliding perspectives of the two opponent character groups.

“**Freeze,**” Judy directs.

In an extended follow-up to the read-aloud, Judy uses another drama strategy, *narrative pantomime* (Heinig, 1993). As she retells the plot, students mime the major plot events in the story set during the Civil War. No props are used, except a flashlight to suggest stars mapping a path for escaping slaves.

Did these youngsters create meaning using the arts? It is clear each used specific text details to draw conclusions about stunningly different character viewpoints. How did I draw that conclusion? At the gentle behest of a teacher, I saw bodies and faces of first graders almost magically transform; they *became* the book characters. I saw students express understanding of difficult material through use of distinct facial expressions, telling body shapes, and suggestive movement. Through the creative imaginations of six-year-olds, I saw the powerful effects of AI brought to life by a teacher committed to meaningfully infusing literature, visual art, music, drama, and dance. ✨

## Teacher Spotlight

### Judy Trotter

Judy Trotter’s teaching motto could be a saying from Immanuel Kant, “the mind should ‘act as a waffle iron on batter’” (quoted in Barzun, 2001, p. 508). I first met her after she had been teaching first and fourth grade off and on at Ashley River Creative Arts for more than 15 years. She is uncompromising in her beliefs.

“Teaching through the arts is the best way to teach,” she explains. “Teachers get in a testing panic and think they don’t have time for the arts. They get worried about our state tests. But if students truly learn, they will do well on the tests,” she states confidently. “Teaching should not be about teaching to the test. Teaching should be structured so students learn for the pure joy of it.”

Judy explains she is “always thinking about arts connections.” Simultaneously, she is doing another arts-based read-aloud (Cornett, 2006) using the chapter book *Because of Winn Dixie* (DiCamillo, 2000). With animated gestures, she describes how you can take any story and “go off in any arts direction.” “It just flows. The arts are a natural connection.”

That *natural* connection has to do with her concern about *meaningful* integration. She is passionate about teaching issues of social justice, big ideas, and compassion. She targets developing her students’ capacity to take new perspectives, and “a respect for the unknown.” Her remarks make clear that Judy believes school life should prepare students for life outside of school.

“I believe in teaching the whole child,” she explains. “Art is everywhere. It is totally integrated into our daily lives. We live in the arts and should be able to learn through arts. They enrich life and learning.”

Like all effective AI teachers, Judy plans standards-based units that use the arts as central teaching and learning tools; students are challenged to create meaning through the arts in every curricular area.

(continued)

“We were immersed in Asian culture at the time of the tsunami” she recalls before recounting some of the highlights of the unit. To develop visualizing capacities critical to comprehension, she read aloud poems, accompanied by Chinese music, and coached the children to take an imaginary trip to China. They drew upon a previously viewed CD-ROM of China that allowed them to expand their innate capacity to make mental “art.”

“Students are always learning to work with tools in various art forms—just as they need to learn how to use pencils to write and computer software. In this unit, they learned to use paintbrushes and black paint to simulate Chinese characters. They also studied the picture book art of Soerpiet, a Korean illustrator known for watercolors, seeking out details related to the artist’s style and technique. After listening to Chinese CDs, they made costumes to celebrate the Chinese New Year. Of course, there was a Chinese celebration,” she adds excitedly.

Judy also is passionate about assessment. “We must work with the standards,” she insists, “but I use many ways to gauge student progress—journals, for example, for poetry, math, writing, science, and social studies.” The journals, she explains, are simple black and white composition books. She laughs, “They know they have to prove they have learned it!”

And journals need not be limited to words; they can include sketches and collected images. These and other arts-based curricular responses, like the pantomime examples in the lesson, show dimensions of learning and thinking not assessable through verbal means, spoken or written. And not only do student arts creations provide assessment information, but they build pride as students gain skills, including how to be more expressive with face and body—part of drama and dance. That pride grows into lasting confidence when students have chances to make public the results of creative work. Thus, performances and exhibits are routine events at AI schools, events made to order for audiences—a powerful source of motivation for performers of any age.



Judy Doing Arts Based Read Aloud

### What’s Next?

Judy believes preparing new teachers for arts integration is as important as teaching first graders through arts integration. Not only is she on the faculty of the College of Charleston, but she also manages to do workshops for practicing teachers. Her specialty is integrating music and movement strategies. Since teachers often have concerns about managing dance, I ask her for advice.

“I teach my students how to control their voices and bodies and we take movement breaks daily,” she explains. Important in her answer is how she *teaches* students to develop poise and body control (i.e., she does more than tell them to do it). Gradually, students grow more confident about communicating through movement.

Right now, Judy is excited about an African culture unit using *Follow the Drinking Gourd* (Winter, 1997) and folk tales. “We will compare the art of the Chinese with African art. I want students to value how other people sound and look—deep down all people are so much the same. This is one of the big ideas behind the arts.” ✨

## Unique Contributions of the Arts

You may have seen the video of singer Susan Boyle stunning British television audiences with a rendition of “I Dreamed a Dream” from *Les Miserables*. Initially, the 47-year-old Scot endured judges’ anticipatory snickers when she admitted to never having dated nor been kissed. Then came her voice. After but a few bars, up went the judges’ eyebrows and down dropped their jaws. By her last note, the entire audience was on its feet. YouTube made it possible for the whole world to experience this moment—the power of the arts, music in this case, to stir deep emotion and change perspective. Joining millions who watched, I teared up and got goose bumps as her performance reached a crescendo.

Today, arts power, like that in Susan’s performance, is unleashed every day via the Internet. People seem addicted to publishing original poems, singing about every imaginable topic, posting videos of people of all ages dancing—as well as a cornucopia of odd animals—and releasing photographs into cyberspace like confetti. To accommodate it all, we jump on the bandwagon and buy bigger and bigger data packages. (BTW, a friend recently sent me a fabulous clip of a flash mob in Barcelona playing Beethoven’s Ninth Symphony.)

## Arts and the Communication Evolution

*Ars Longa, Vita Brevis.* (Art is long. Life is short.) Unique, diverse, ancient, and modern, different arts appeal to different folks, with specific works provoking completely different responses from individuals—much like our individual food preferences. But visual art, drama, dance, music, and literary artwork arguably have more varied and unexplainable effects, confounding attempts to create recipes for art. Why do certain songs lodge in our brains, playing repeatedly? Why does a painting like the Mona Lisa compel so many to look so long; how can one painting generate so many questions? And how can plays (basically actors pretending) evoke profound and deep emotions?

More perplexing is the question of why the arts are so prominent and influential in life, but not so much inside school. The mission of this book is to remedy that imbalance. The argument for rebalancing begins with a fact: The arts are timeless ways of communicating, predating both print literacy and numeracy. Like us, our earliest human ancestors seemed compelled to express thoughts and feelings using the arts. Seeking to understand the compulsion, theologian Karen Armstrong (2004, p. xix) proposes the source of art and religion appear about the same time and both stem from the deep need to make sense of existence. Evidence to support her conclusion appears in stunning cave paintings in southern France and Spain. Here in images are stories of violent hunts and prints of human hands—some child sized—dating back more than 30,000 years (Chauvet, Deschamps, & Hilliare, 1996). An ocean and a continent away, Alaskan petroglyphs show similar images, but carved in stone, and estimated to be as much as 12,000 years old. Recently, a musical instrument was added to the collection; found in a cavern near Ulm, Germany, it is the world’s oldest—a 35,000-year-old ice age flute whittled from a bird wing bone (Hotz, 2009). These well-preserved paintings and ancient instruments were more than decorations in the lives of early people, although art was made for that purpose, as evidenced by the 100,000-year-old bling unearthed from deep inside the Skhul Cave on Mount Carmel in Israel. Which begs the question, “What might jewelry communicate about a person?”

These works of art were also the latest technology of the time, vital forms of communication used to represent and express what people saw, thought, and felt. Chillingly, these artifacts connect us across time to the minds of their makers, providing insight into the depth and breadth of their creativity (Hotz, 2009). Thousands of years hence, the first writing system would be devised: cuneiform (circa 3,000 BC). In this and other primitive written symbol systems lies the genesis of alphabets: art. Think of our own alphabet; lines and shapes and other visual art elements are used to capture the notes of the human voice—phonemes that combine to make syllables and words.

Early words functioned similarly to painting and drumming, with practical roots associated with signaling, conveying information, and so on. As verbal language evolved, utilitarian functions were retained, but an art form emerged, too—word based art that eventually became the literary arts. For example, ancient stories likely first shared through visual art survive in timeless folk tales created by every culture. So widespread are these tales that researchers, drawing on neuroscience, psychology, and evolutionary biology, call humans the storytelling animals (Gottschall, 2012). Amazingly, look-alike character and plot archetypes (patterns) appear in stories of widely separated cultures. Featuring unforgettable characters in high action plots, these stories remain powerful tools to inculcate core beliefs and values regarding honesty, hard work, and the message that good usually triumphs over evil. What’s more, classic stories also highlight cross-cultural similarities. For example, themes about hope for “fairy tale endings” transcend cultures and time periods, with more than 300 versions of Cinderella from diverse cultures such as France (slipper is fur, not glass), Korea, Appalachia, Egypt, and Zimbabwe. Indeed, interest in this story persists; new versions are published yearly, including the lovely Mexican *Adelita* (dePaola, 2002) and a delightful jazz age version, *Ella’s Big Chance* (Hughes, 2004). Furthermore, the early verbal arts, document curious customs and troublesome rituals such as the Mother Goose rhyme “Eeny meeny miny mo” traced to “counting out” human sacrifices. All in all, these examples testify to how understanding a culture’s art is key to understanding a culture.

**The Arts as Meaning Makers.** A full explanation of what art is seems impossible. Attempting to use words to explain communication that exists because words are inadequate creates a mindboggling conundrum. But it is possible to examine unique contributions of the arts. Foremost in a long list is art’s singular potential to help us make sense of ourselves, our planet, and our universe.

Think of how empty life would be without art. Traumatized by war, weather, disease, and disastrous events, a world without the arts would leave us bereft of song or paint. Attempting to make sense of the incomprehensible, we could reason, but such attempts soon reach a dead end. Thankfully we can turn to music, visual art, dance, theatre, and literature. Born of problems, creativity is sparked as exemplified in Mozart’s dazzling symphony, written at age 16, and indicative of a difficult struggle to come of age (Lockwood, 2005). So too we find, embedded in Picasso’s stunning painting, *Guernica*, wrenching thoughts and emotions about the horrific Spanish Civil War. Furthermore, historical memorial sculptures (e.g., the Korean War Memorial in Washington, DC) act as emotional safety valves, as do haunting spirituals and gospels. For example, over 80 years ago Thomas Dorsey, wracked with grief over the loss of his wife and son, sat down at his piano. To purge unbearable thoughts and feelings, he composed “Precious Lord”—a spiritual second only to “Amazing Grace” and sung worldwide. Indeed, the arts seem to be incomparable ways of bringing us into a “third space” of new understanding (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005).

Now consider the differences between two literary art genres: ordinary prose and the poetry. Both use words to convey a message, but poetry does more. To illustrate, here is a line from a restaurant menu: “Tonight’s specials are swordfish, mahi mahi, and shrimp—blackened, broiled, or potato encrusted.” This informational prose offers customers key facts, but the writer probably spent little time selecting each word. In contrast, read aloud this short poem with an aabb rhyme scheme.

Mahi mahi, swordfish steak  
 Shrimp scampi, crab cakes  
 Blackened broiled, potato-breaded  
 I love fish, except with heads-on.

While the poem and menu give similar information, the poem uses musical devices such as rhyme, rhythm, and assonance (repetition of vowel sounds) to direct attention to the sound as well as the message. Good teachers know poetry is art that is meant to be *heard*, not read silently. A first reading brings the urge to read it again—for the sound of it. Poets write with an ear to musical elements of language that *challenge* us to solve a problem—to figure out the meaning. Such creative language choices are meant to invite new perspectives. So, we *feel* something about the words—delight, perhaps, at the poet’s inventiveness. While poetry and prose both use words, poetry seeks a different kind and degree of *emotional and sensory impact*—significant information if you are a teacher trying to help students unravel the “what is art” mystery. For example, knowing this fact leads me to ask my students inquiry questions (IQs) like, “How does it make you feel? Why?” “What do you see? Hear? Smell? Taste?” “What causes those sensations?”

Like poetry, visual art is created to communicate ideas and feelings, but without words. Visual images embedded in fine and decorative art, when left open to interpretation, can cause us to inquire cognitively and respond emotionally, sometimes even physically. As an example, visualize Leonardo da Vinci’s familiar *Mona Lisa* and, for contrast, the red and white label of a Campbell’s soup can. Both pieces employ the art elements of color, shape, size, and texture, and composition principles such as unity and balance. The artist for Campbell’s Soup Company undoubtedly worked hard to create a design to catch attention and raise associations with “m-m-m good” feelings. Red is a warm color, set off with white, and is faintly patriotic. The touch of gold adds a classy feel. Now, imagine Andy Warhol’s pop art *paintings* of soup cans. Warhol’s art and da Vinci’s paintings are classified as fine art because they provoke a different kind and degree of thinking and emotion than, for instance, advertisement or decorative art. Critical is the intensity of engagement provoked by the art—the degree to which it causes us to respond, feel, question, and wonder. The potential of art to arouse curiosity and trigger interest is not lost on AI teachers bent on harnessing these forces for learning’s sake.

## Intentional Dissonance

Complaints about fine art being hard to understand occur when viewers don’t know that artists may intentionally disconcert—to create cognitive dissonance—which elicits an emotional reaction. Artists seek to jar viewers or listeners out of complacency in order to change their perspectives. Thus, there is art that can awe us with its beauty and art that gags some with disgust—such as an art exhibit featuring a Christian cross, suspended in a jar of urine.

Da Vinci would likely be pleased that his Mona Lisa perpetually befuddles viewers. Like all good art, this work challenges us to make sense. We ask, “Why is she smiling?” “Who is she?” “Why did he use those colors?” “How did he get that expression on her face?” “How did he do that?” And so creative inquiry is engaged. As inquiry progresses, people move closer and closer to collect details, attempting to connect them up and arrive at some conclusions. Finally, the Louvre was forced to put a glass box over this painting of an unknown woman with an inscrutable smile.

## Human Essentials

Long before writing and reading existed, there was art. Humans proved themselves unique among animals in their inclination and ability to devise new ways to create meaning. Thus, the arts were conceived by human creativity in response to human needs, especially the need to share thoughts and feelings. Evolving into unparalleled communication conduits, the arts facilitate expression, continuing on when words fail, as in the aphorism “a painting is worth a thousand words.” The human bias for art also shows up in what and how we learn and how we spend free time.

Given that children are born with a penchant to draw, sing, dance, pretend, and tell stories, it seems fair to propose that to deny any child an upbringing and education rich in the arts is inhumane. Constricting the curriculum to bare bones verbal literacy (which happens) is an immoral educational omission that places alarming limits on children’s understanding and expression and creates life-long limits on the development of creative thinking and communication capacities.

## Gifts of the Arts

Sir Ken Robinson, an expert on creativity, explains, “If the human mind was restricted to academic intelligence, most of human culture would not have happened” (2000, p. 5). How dull, dark, and silent the world would be, stripped of stories, music, theatre, paintings, architecture, and dance. As “fruits of our creative nature,” Robinson points out that the arts are “rather large factors to leave out of a model of human intelligence” (p. 5). And Americans overwhelmingly don’t want them left out, believing the arts are vital to a well-rounded education (Deasy, 2008; Ruppert, 2006). But well rounded isn’t easily measured; tests, grades, and scores fall short of painting a full picture of any one person. The case for arts integration (AI) argues for greater measures and a more richly layered education for all and is supported by AI’s remarkable alignment among new standards, first generation arts standards, and 21st-century skills (College Board, 2011).

Ready Reference 1.1 summarizes special contributions the arts make to life and learning. The following discussion elaborates on why the arts are considered the fourth R (Broudy, 1979).

**1. Communication.** At their core, the arts spring from a very knowable source—our need to communicate. The arts are unparalleled communication tools—old “languages” that predate and transcend written communication. Used for millennia, the arts permitted our nonverbal ancestors to pantomime and paint the things they cared about, ways the arts are still used today. And they remain a prominent language for children, who respond intuitively to music, dance, and color, even before learning to speak (Boyer, 1993). As Eisner (2000) points out, the human range of thought simply cannot be captured solely with words. The arts are vital communication tools that expand communication and add both spark and substance to life and learning.

AI strives to grow students’ communication capacities by aligning the language-based literacy curriculum with 21st-century communication. Outside of school, arts-based digital and media literacies are omnipresent in personal life, the workplace, and institutions of higher learning. Taking an enlightened step forward, the Common Core embeds the arts and artistic thinking throughout standards, an acknowledgement that the language arts (reading and listening, speaking and writing) are integrally related to drama, visual art, music, and dance (College Board, 2012a, 2012b). This makes sense since today literacy is implicitly defined to include *all* means people employ to understand, respond to, and express thoughts and feelings.

Given the nature of contemporary work, study and living it is outdated and illogical to silo arts education in special classes. Alternatively, arts integration focuses on students using both the language arts and the arts as learning tools across academic areas, in the manner content area teachers have been urged to do for decades with reading and writing. Common Core expands this instructional imperative to include two more language arts—listening and speaking. Including creative arts communication options further expands content learning options.

## Ready Reference 1.1 Gifts of the Arts

1. **Communication.** Literacy is about effectively communicating thoughts and feelings. While the language arts are key players, other arts are crucial to understanding and expressing ideas and emotions. The arts are symbolic languages that succeed when words fail.
2. **Content** is born of the creative process; the arts are also creative products or texts, with rich content.  
**Intellectual.** It takes high level thinking to understand and create through the arts.
3. **Creative inquiry (CI)** is the problem-based thinking process used to construct meaning. It is at the core of arts making and understanding. CI is used to imagine, collect information, make connections, devise new and useful conclusions, critique ideas, and communicate them.
4. **Critical thinking** is a subset of CI. Critique is a detailed analysis using criteria to make judgments. It is a particular focus of the arts because of the value placed on quality work.
5. **Comprehension** is created understanding, achieved through the inquiry process. Across disciplines, comprehension results when ideas are discerningly collected and cleverly connected to devise respected conclusions. Arts products serve as texts from which comprehension can be made; art texts can also be created to show comprehension.
6. **Composition** is the process of creating an expression of meaning using words and other art forms. The arts contribute special principles, techniques, and materials to the composing process, offering a range of forms or structures to externalize thoughts and feelings.  
**Social.** Meaning making is altered by social circumstances.
7. **Culture.** The arts record culture in an enduring record of how people have lived and worked throughout history. The arts also contribute to culture by creating rich contexts for growth, including positive environments that support creative thinking.
8. **Cooperation/collaboration.** The arts support group work with a creative intention (e.g., ensembles, choirs, troupes, skits).
9. **Community.** The arts create a sense of belonging based on respect for the distinctive contributions of each person.
10. **Compassion.** The arts develop empathy by providing experiences that forge new perspectives.  
**Personal/emotional.** The arts engage the emotions and reflect personal values.
11. **Commitment/interest.** The arts develop intrinsic motivation because they are inherently engaging. For example, persistence, based on curiosity and choice, gives satisfaction. Pride results from successful completion.
12. **Concentration.** The arts capture attention and develop focus because they are compelling.
13. **Confidence.** The arts develop the courage to take risks and pride in one's unique contributions.
14. **Competence/control.** The arts build special strategies to plan, think, work, and produce, including skills to work with tools and materials and control over mind, voice, and body. As competence grows, artists feel free to break rules they have mastered.

**2. Content of the Arts.** The arts exemplify the creative *process*, but the arts are also products. Past generations bequeathed to us a vast array of stunning artworks, from pots to paintings to plays, that allow us to peer backwards in time at the values and attitudes, concerns and delights of their makers. Invented tools permitted early humans to make public their individually created understandings through visual art and music.

Today the worldwide treasury of arts products is readily available to classroom teachers—powerful content that makes learning richer. One can take a virtual tour of our National Gallery, the Met, and the Louvre. Nearly every artist has a website. Information about every art form, style, and period and every genre of music and dance from any conceivable culture can be streamed or downloaded (e.g., *Songs of the Century*). The work of local poets, playwrights, composers, and artists can also be compelling learning tools, as evidenced by the cover of this book.

AI teachers now use art prints, cultural artifacts, songs, music, and poetry to introduce and develop lessons and units. Art texts are used to challenge students to develop perspectives on myriad topics and provide exemplars of artistic skills and techniques that can inform how students create meaning. Using expert questioning, teachers challenge students to collect details with inquiry questions (IQs) such as “How do you think the artist created that mood?” Thus, students learn to work backwards from a finished product to understand thinking, skills, and values that are represented.



### Intellectual Domain

No art is created or understood without high level thinking, which requires careful observation, pattern finding, taking new perspectives, making qualitative judgments, visualization, and use of

metaphors (comparisons) and symbols. Artists use such thinking to transform and represent what is noticed and imagined. Similarly, these creative inquiry processes are central to the fields of science, math, and history (Eisner, 2005; Sousa & Pilecki, 2013).

The arts surprise us with the diverse views and inventiveness of artists, actors, musicians, and poets. They also provoke interest and curiosity, which initiates creative inquiry. We hear a song like Lennon’s “Imagine” or watch a dance performance such as “River Dance” and listen or sing along. Our pulse entrains to the tempo, and we intuitively begin to envision different worlds, ones in which we are Celtic dancers or where worldwide peace is possible. Powerful films have the same effect; viewers can’t help but vicariously suffer with victims in movies such as *Hotel Rwanda*. Empathy leads to intellectual unrest, and in the case of that film, the potential for broadened perspective about the importance of education in creating a civilized society.

According to Multiple Intelligences engineer Howard Gardner, painting or sculpting a slab of marble represents intelligences central to life (1993). The arts link cognition to emotion in forms ranging from advertising jingles and comic strips to symphonies and musical theatre. As students learn to think through the arts, they discover new capacities and experience pride in their efforts to create meaning. Thus, students become more motivated and adept each time they add a new arts tool—from pantomime to the ball-change dance step. So grows the communication repertoire made of means to make sense.

Cognitive contributions of the arts include four processes: creative inquiry, critical thinking, comprehension website and composition, as follows.

**3. Creative Inquiry (CI).** CI is coordinated thinking using a set of complex processes associated with artists. Refined over thousands of years, humans survived because of their evolving creative capacities. The CI process of constructing meaning parallels how expert readers comprehend, explains how writers compose, and summarizes how intelligent people problem solve in all fields. In fact, both mathematics and scientific investigation require CI, which includes imagining possibilities, collecting data, connecting (experimenting), making informed conclusions, critiquing, and communicating novel and useful problem solutions. Indeed, without creative insight, scientific thinking ends with accumulating evidence (Subramaniam, 2006).

Creative inquiry is also the process needed to address both ELA and Mathematical Common Core Standards (Ready Reference 1.2); CI is about seeking and synthesizing evidence-based conclusions that are both workable and insightful. When used to its potential, CI also includes purposefully capitalizing on mistakes (e.g., letting the blob of paint direct the work), making paradoxical connections, and embracing surprises that can produce the “next big thing.” Novelty, difference, and abnormality are valued. Key mental actions include *imagine* (visualize possible sources and strategies), *collect evidence* (e.g., brainstorm, observe, and research), *connect*

## Ready Reference 1.2 Aligning Math Standards with Creative Inquiry

CCSS standards (Core Standards, 2010) for math align with processes to understand art as well as habits associated with art-making and creative inquiry.

### Mathematically Proficient Students . . .

#### Imagine Possibilities

- Define the problem
- Use concrete objects or pictures
- Look for entry points to its solution
- Analyze givens, constraints, relationships, and goals

#### Collect Information

- Hypothesize about the form and meaning of the possible solution
- Plan a solution strategy rather than jumping into solution attempts
- Consider analogous problems

#### Connect Ideas

- Try special cases and simpler forms of the problem to gain insight into its solution
- Monitor and evaluate progress and change course if necessary
- Continually ask, “Does this make sense?”

#### Conclude

- Check answers to problems using a different method

#### Critique

- Can understand the approaches of others to solving complex problems and identify correspondences between different approaches.

(experiment with ways to sort and find patterns), *incubate*, and synthesize *conclusions*. Once drafted, conclusions are then *critiqued*, revised, and transformed into *communicable* forms from motion pictures to both fiction and nonfiction books. Creative inquiry is discussed in more detail in Chapter 2.

**4. Critical Thinking.** A particular focus of the arts is quality work. Critical thinking or critique occurs during creative inquiry when inquirers purposefully zoom in on particulars to judge importance and quality, as in art critique during which students learn to closely examine details and patterns, and use evaluation criteria to make judgments (Soep, 2005). Critical thinking produces a heightened focus on what works and doesn't work with reference to thoughtful and skilled use of ideas, techniques, and materials. Opinions matter, but only if supported by evidence.

Even young children can be coached to use critical thinking using IQs such as, “What did you hear that made you feel that way?” “What in the text caused you to conclude that people will steal if they have the chance?” or “Show me something in the painting that makes you say that.”

Critical thinking requires concentrated work. But students persist at focused difficult tasks when they are self-rewarding. Arts-based projects fit the bill (DeMoss & Morris, 2002). Pesky details and obscure patterns become sought after details, when teachers present art texts as puzzles to be decoded. Working like detectives, students can learn to ferret out clues to meaning, just as artists like Claude Monet did. Intrigued by questions about effects of light, he investigated and gradually concluded tiny details matter. Thus, he became mesmerized with experimenting with light on haystacks—their changing appearance at different times and in different seasons. In the same fashion, writers dwell on a few seminal issues, such as women's rights, religious freedom, or creativity (Calkins & Harwayne, 1987). Writers are artists, too, but they do intellectual tinkering with the word, rather than paint or musical notes. Teachers who understand the role of critical thinking in creative inquiry coach students to consider the effects of single words, small sounds, and slight gestures—all can speak volumes, as with Mr. Spock's raised eyebrow.

**5. Comprehension.** Comprehension has long been considered the pinnacle of reading, its *sine qua non* (Beck & McKeown, 2002). A 21st-century view of comprehension—and the view taken in the ELA Common Core—emphasizes deep understanding, not the number of books read or words written. Across disciplines, comprehension involves active sense making, not simply memorizing facts and low-level literal recall. However, disciplinary standards don't explain how to teach anything, not even how to make sense; standards simply state the expectation that students learn to comprehend. In this book, creative inquiry is put forth as a process that leads to comprehension (i.e., understanding). Indeed, comprehension requires problem solving—inquiry to construct sense (Cornett, 2010). For this reason, CI is the cornerstone of AI. Furthermore, CI outlines a *common* process to create meaning (including arts products) and shows understanding that is portable across subject areas, making transfer more likely and learning more deep.

Embedded in creative inquiry are arts-related mental operations essential to comprehension. For example, visualizing—a mainstay for good readers—draws on visual art elements to picture words. Further ability to take alternative perspectives is developed through role taking, which is the core of drama. And, of course, all the arts advance the act of forging original connections among ideas.

While comprehension is a *process* parallel to creative thinking, it is also a *product*, as in “His comprehension is excellent.” The comprehension product is the meaning that is made—conclusions or big ideas that are found and constructed from texts (e.g., books, paintings, songs) and then transformed into written and spoken forms (new texts), including artworks.

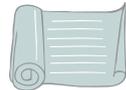
Common Core standards promise reading comprehension gains in the same way the No Child Left Behind Act did. But during implementation of the latter, a frenzy over assessment caused attention to *teaching* comprehension to decrease, as did the amount of time students spent reading fiction and nonfiction. The Institute of Education Sciences branded the program a megaflop when it was found that comprehension of participating students was no greater than those not in the program (Whitehurst, 2008). One culprit was an emphasis on lower level reading elements (phonemic awareness, phonics). Without learning how to strategically use the full-bodied meaning-oriented high level inquiry processes, many students simply never develop mature comprehension (Kamil, 2004; Williams, 2002). They remain at the bottom in the race to the top.

Calls for “comprehension first” come from across the literacy spectrum (Cambourne, 2009; Cornett, 2010). Beginning with young children, who intuitively use rudimentary creative thinking—watch a toddler figure out novel ways to open any container—inquiry can be coached

to produce high level comprehension. And long before kids have adequate print fluency to comprehend word-based texts, they are able to mine visual art and songs for details and can be coached to craft solid conclusions. IQs such as “What do you see? How does it make you feel? What is this about?” invite students to point and show (e.g., mime) what they know, rather than limit their communication to words.

**6. Composition.** Composing is about forming and *expressing* thoughts and feelings using language (words), as well as art forms. In any medium, the composition process begins with seeking possibilities to address a question (i.e., inquiry). Whereas the main challenge for a reader is to make sense of print text, which relies on *receiving* thoughts and feelings from texts, composition is the reverse. Writers make meaning by *expressing* it through created texts that show their ideas and emotions. All artistic composition is the same; you just change up the tools and materials. Digital communication offers additional composition and product options, such as multimedia slide shows.

Students who grow up creating, responding, and performing in the arts have a history of using creative inquiry to develop diverse compositions. And through pantomime, dance, and drawing, youngsters are able to do complex arts-based cognitive work long before they have the print skills to do so (Cunningham & Shagoury, 2005). Drawing upon this child development information, several outstanding programs now make the arts central to growing children’s reading comprehension and written composition. Olshansky’s (2008a, 2008b) research stands out. Her “make art first” strategies produce superior writing results.



## Social Domain

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Humans are herd animals. Most of us feel that life is made richer by good relationships with other people. Social groups heavily influence how we think and feel; that can be good and bad. On the positive side, the arts can make significant contributions to positive social development.

**7. Culture.** Eisner (2002a) explains two meanings of culture. First, culture has to do with shared ways of living with the arts serving as vaults housing records of ways people have lived together for thousands of years. Artifacts found within the world museum of our collective memories include ancient pots, paintings, and plays that reveal what humans needed, valued, worried about, and held important (Paige & Huckabee, 2005). AI teachers recognize these materials as rich instructional resources, especially for social studies. The second meaning of culture is about providing a rich medium for growing things, like that in a petri dish. Classrooms are such mediums; the more powerful the arts, the richer the learning.

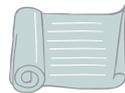
Over 400 languages are now spoken in American schools. Demographic projections for the United States predict that minorities, with distinct cultures, will be the majority in a few decades. To live in harmony in such diversity requires us to embrace positive aspects of each culture. The arts can help. Naturally interdisciplinary, the arts have proved neutral ground for this transformation. Concerts, plays, and other arts venues give glimpses into new cultures. At first, an audience may simply feel entertained. But from pure sensory stimulation can come more. From experiences with varied images and sounds that portray different languages, ideas, and values, listeners and viewers can gain aesthetic appreciation, new knowledge, and understanding. For example, consider the millions struck by the spectacle of *Les Miserables*. Further, think how the musical teaches memorable lessons. More than an operatic retelling of the French Revolution, the play brings us vicariously into the worlds of Jean Valjean, Fantine, and Cozette. Such period songs, music, dances, paintings, plays, and poems are cultural and historic windows that invite students to inquire into the perspectives of diverse peoples. Thus, the arts are remarkable ways we construct and express meaning.

**8. Cooperation/Collaboration.** Teamwork is integral to 21st-century living and working. When students take part in ensembles, choirs, troupes, skits, and visual art making (e.g., collages, murals), they build skills that forge cooperative relationships. Students also learn that when they work as a team, more ideas are produced to address challenges and solve problems. Mutual dependence yields success for all as groups collaboratively imagine possibilities, collect ideas, respect diverse connections, share conclusions, and provide constructive critiques to increase the quality of the product. In AI schools, arts clubs such as photography club, clay club,

and drumming circles set up conditions for participants to build collaborative relationships that can last a lifetime.

**9. Community.** An artful view of learning sets in motion a cascade of physical and psychological changes. In the words of Jayne Ellicott, principal of Ashley River Creative Arts, “Arts integration makes school a happier place.” A sense of belonging emerges, born of delight in and respect for the distinctive contributions of peers. As kids regularly take roles as audience members and performers, they connect in reciprocal relationships, which heighten motivation and learning. In other words, as arts *consumers* and *producers* they learn to depend on one another. Such relationships add a special dimension to any community, often making indelible marks on a person’s sense of belonging. In the extreme, consider how fans bind themselves together in adoring clubs (e.g., *American Idol*). In the same vein, concertgoers and museum visitors form bonds as they unite in listening and viewing, joining a community that enjoys similar things and shares a background.

**10. Compassion.** By their nature, the arts grow empathy—the ability to fully imagine oneself in another’s circumstances. With emphasis on understanding new perspectives and respect for the unusual and extraordinary, the arts permit us to look inward to understand ourselves, as well as outward to grasp the others’ viewpoints and thereby share their passions. Through the songs, dances, art, and theatre of other cultures, we can develop concern for, sensitivity to, and “response ability” for those in less fortunate circumstances. In turn, such deep understanding unlocks new ideas that students can express in varied art forms, particularly emotional expressions that are baffled by language.



## Personal and Emotional Domain

Brain researcher Robert Sylwester points out, “Emotion drives attention and attention drives learning” (1995, p. 86). No longer can educators justify divorcing emotion from cognition. Research confirms what experience has long told us: Students are whole persons. Full brain and body engagement is key to academic success. What’s more, engagement is more than entertainment. Engagement seeks understanding, not fleeting amusement.

Arts integration, unlike conventional instructional approaches, doesn’t compartmentalize intellectual and emotional aspects of being human. AI taps the arts for their unique ability to integrate the personal and emotional into all learning. In particular, the arts turn on areas of the brain that uplift spirits—a common response to beautiful music and intriguing paintings. Further, when students use creative inquiry to think and feel about and through the arts, they engage more full-bodied meaning making. Somatic perception (body)—prominent in dance—can also be a learning vehicle. (Note that most creative work usually isn’t solely mental.) As students experience the joys of playing with ideas and the pride of creative discovery, enthusiasm for learning deepens. And the heightened emotional thrill of experiencing an aha (conclusion) is routinely and curiously often followed by the ha-ha response—another vivid emotional reaction expressed through the sense of humor (Koestler, 1964). Research Update 1.3 summarizes a study that speaks to this a-ha/ha-ha connection—how fun is fundamental to learning.

**11. Commitment/Interest.** The arts compel interest, as evidenced by artists who work with intense involvement—as if they are addicted—and produce startling results. What’s more, rarely do artists feel a work is finished, which further motivates them to return to the same themes and topics. Persistence derives from curiosity—interest in inquiring into more possibilities.

Arts integration gives students opportunities to experience many of the dimensions of intrinsic motivation experienced by artists, including the pride and satisfaction that follow project completion—and doing “good” work. Of course, not everything is worth finishing; there are dead ends and times not right for a project. (Right now, I have a 150,000-word *novel* in this computer that I’d like to publish!) But when completed, artworks engender a sense of ownership that never develops with worksheets and computer practice work. Given the abundance of refrigerator art, that feeling seems to extend to proud parents.

Similar to how commitment to come to and stay in school can stem from sports involvement, sculpture projects in social studies and chances to learn to play an instrument in music class can nurture the development of dedicated behavior. For an example, flip to Arlene Sneed’s story in Chapter 13. AI teachers tell story after story about suspended kids sneaking back into school to

## Research Update 1.3 AI for the FUN of It: From Entertainment to Engagement

Students in grades 1 through 8 were studied in an effort to parse out what they meant by “fun.” Before and after non-arts and arts-based units, probes of learning experiences were conducted. Here are the results:

### Arts-Based Lessons versus Traditional Lessons: Students . . .

- saw learning as more fun *versus* boring.
- equated fun with working in groups to solve problems that often resulted in a performance or exhibit *versus* not fun was to work alone or in competition with peers.
- thought many arts tasks were hard, but perceived hard as something they could deal with *versus* believing tasks were hard because of the teacher or materials or they blamed themselves.
- pursued learning outside of school: 42 percent in the arts-based *versus* 27 percent in traditional.
- thought the goal of learning was to understand; to figure things out *versus* take tests and complete worksheets.

Source: Based on DeMoss & Morris (2002).

rehearse a play or finish a collage. Creative teachers generate this kind of response, similar to teachers in memorable children’s literature: Jesse’s music teacher, Miss Edmunds, in *Bridge to Terabithia* (Paterson, 1977) helped him find beauty in a dismal life. Mr. Isobe, in *Crow Boy* (Yashima, 1965), tacked up an outcast child’s art and altered Chibi’s life with a stage performance.

**12. Concentration/Attention.** The arts capture attention and sustain concentration because they provoke interest—a desire to know. Herein is another print literacy connection. Compared to details in a work of art or the nuances of sounds in music, letters can seem dull and inaccessible. To begin with, to develop meaning letters must undergo a long process: arrangement to make words, more arrangement to create phrases and sentences, then an adding up of sentences to make paragraphs that eventually become full texts. Many children simply will not persist with wading through years of drills intended to move them up the ladder to interesting texts. In this way, interest gets killed off early. Some never experience the intrinsic rewards that await them because they never achieve sufficient print fluency to comprehend independently. The arts can offer hope. In artworks, details are not out of context in the way letter names and sounds are. Color, line, volume, and pitch are seen and heard within a whole—a song, dance, or painting. And since we are born able to communicate through the arts—to know that blue is cold and red is hot—the meaning of details can be discovered and enjoyed with minimal background, even at a young age. Reading and writing, on the other hand, must be accrued.

So, how are kids taught to read in an AI class? Here is an example. Creative teachers model how to “read” visual art and then coach children to look at pictures and make sense. They ask, “What do you see? Why is that there? How does that make you feel? Where else do you see that? What does this mean? What is it about?” Inquiry questions (IQs) lead learners through the creative process, which culminates in a feel good “I get it” experience. Essentially, students learn to make sense from and with pictures, concurrent with learning to decode print. (Kids also frequently make art *first*, and then write about it after.) In contrast to learning to read and comprehend print, understanding of visual art doesn’t have to be postponed until obtuse details are learned (e.g., letter names and sounds). Fortunately, most children arrive at school ready to access the arts; constructing meaning from art can begin on day one.

With artful teaching, creative inquiry and its positive associations can be transferred to print—another visual symbol system, although of the very abstract art variety. Tapped for their capacity as meaning makers, the arts engage youngsters mentally, emotionally, and physically, causing them to attend, concentrate, think, and respond to challenges. With interest well established, vulnerable children eventually understand that, just as they can unravel a piece of art, they will one day be able to comprehend a book. In this way, the arts motivate learning, which is particularly important for young or struggling learners.

**13. Confidence/Courage.** A teacher in an arts-based program for troubled youth once described the arts as “the soul of the education program” (Larson, 1997, p. 94). If the arts are the soul and the soul is the vital force, then AI is about giving life to learning. No student group needs

that more than kids who have trouble learning and/or have gotten into trouble. Interestingly, this is the group most positively affected by arts-based approaches (Walker et al., 2011b). It works like this. The arts act as a bridge to other areas. In case studies of disadvantaged students in New York City’s ArtsConnection, kids developed more self-control and a sense of identity—a sense of being special that builds confidence. As one student explained, “It’s like I became addicted to dance” (Oreck, Baum, & McCartney, 1999, p. 70). Just as sports can build resilience, so can the arts. And today’s children need to be able to bounce back when life hits them hard.

AI helps develop strong minds and bodies. Students learn to take prudent risks—necessary for constructing personal meaning. A watercolor, a small dance phrase, a few lyrics penned to an old melody—these are the bricks. One by one, teachers and students erect a few arts structures, experimenting and increasing creating practice, becoming braver as each piece is cemented. With confidence comes increased willingness to take more risks, be more flexible, and eventually become resilient.

**14. Competence/Control.** Work in the arts develops self-control and builds skills with special tools and materials. Workplace strategies are reinforced—how to plan, think, stay on task, and produce results. Anyone who ever learned to play an instrument knows about this—the hours of practice necessary to become good. At the moment, piano practices seemed never ending. This was a frequent topic in the Arts for Life journal assignment in my classes. Many students wrote about forced music lessons, first endured to please parents. But as their competence grew, the lessons became more pleasurable. Add in the audience factor and the first earned applause—clearly more than a polite response—and wow! Eventually, outside forces like parent approval and audience attention become trumped by a more powerful force—making music simply feels good, plus it provides escape and a way to relax and change moods. While other kids get high on drugs and booze, the kids with flutes, guitars, and keyboards get high on the arts, literally—the brain calls for the release of catecholamine, an alertness chemical—an upper.

Of course, everyone wants and needs healthy ways to feel good. Sticking destructive substances up your nose, down your throat, or in your veins has horrible side effects. The arts offer healthy alternatives and develop more control over mind and body—all while stimulating positive emotions.

## Arts-Based Education and 21st-Century Life and Learning

*Engineers build bridges with math, science and technology, but it takes creativity to imagine a bridge in the first place. Zoomie (2014)*

The history of American arts education began in the early 19th century. And for decades now, arts education has emphasized quality comprehensive and sequential classes that everyday people think of as “arts for arts sake.” In truth, the coursework has much broader goals. Taught by arts teachers, the specialized arts curriculum prepares students for the greater world of work, arts careers, avocations, and higher education. As evidence for the latter, consider the results of a 12-year study of 18,000 students: 71 percent of those from low socioeconomic families, who had arts rich experiences, attended college, compared to only 48 percent of a matched group with low arts (Catterall et al., 2012, p. 10). And when it comes to a strong economy, research confirms the long-term benefits of a workforce possessed of a strong arts background (Catterall, 2009; Richmond-Cullen, 2005). Arts education delivers exactly the kinds of thinking, learning, and innovation skills needed now and in the near future (Lichtenberg et al., 2008). In light of the arts gifts previously discussed (Ready Reference 1.1), consider the following four desirable habits of the mind from the Partnership for 21st-Century Skills (Partnership, n.d.).

- *Creativity*, the highest form of thinking, is grounded in imaginative inquiry, information collection, and experimentation to produce novel and useful solutions and products.
- *Critical judgment*, used within creative inquiry, employs analysis to hone quality of ideas and form concrete products.
- *Communication* is expanded to include multiple and multimodal literacies (language arts and the arts) and technological competency.
- *Collaborative skills*, founded on respect for diverse ideas (e.g., “crowd source” creative solutions to difficult problems).

What's more, arts education promotes an array of desirable character traits such as prudent risk taking, self-discipline and monitoring, persistence, initiative, and flexibility (Catterall, 1998; Korn, 2010; Weinstein, 2010).

## Arts Integration Models

During the last half of the previous century, an alternative educational model evolved around the concept of “arts for learning’s sake.” Arts integrationists recognized that a 45-minute music or art class on Tuesday was not enough arts, any more than a once-a-week class in reading or writing is sufficient to develop language arts proficiency. The proposal to integrate the arts *in* education was conceived to add arts-based learning to the basic school curriculum by involving classroom teachers. From the outset, arts integration never was and is not now about supplanting traditional arts education or taking away jobs of arts specialists; it is about classroom teachers working with arts specialists to enhance all teaching and learning by infusing the arts (Burnaford, 2007).

Even in its earliest incarnations, AI focused on leveraging learning by using the unique lift power of the arts. But unlike specialist-led arts classes, arts integration concentrates on using the arts to support learning across disciplines. Since classroom teachers are the primary implementers, the arts can be present in all learning every day. Standing shoulder to shoulder with separate arts classes, AI lends a hand in meeting arts standards, while simultaneously focusing on all other curricular standards. Working collaboratively, classroom teachers and specialists examine ways and means to address one another’s standards, honing in on overlaps that they can economically group into units.

From the aforementioned concepts, differing models of AI evolved that are now credited with boosting the kinds of communication skills, creative thinking, character traits, and job skills also linked with traditional arts education. Additionally, AI shows the capacity to positively impact school attendance, recidivism rates, and self-esteem—especially for at-risk populations, including kids entrapped in juvenile crime. Given the supportive and engaging educational conditions fostered by integrated arts approaches, it isn’t surprising that students earn higher scores. And this is a big “if.” Casual and sporadic insertion of songs or arts projects into math and science doesn’t cut it. While a song about the order of planets can be a test aid, memorizing catchy tunes doesn’t touch the core of the arts integration’s potential. The kind of AI that produces great academic and social gains is more planful and begins with thoughtful examination of educational beliefs and implementation principles, the role of constructivist teaching using creative inquiry.

**Effects of AI.** Arts integration is trending. Daily, tens of thousands of ordinary lessons are made extraordinary through arts-based teaching. Search YouTube to find hundreds of lessons—a glimpse of the cornucopia of available resources. Why are hundreds of schools and thousands of classroom teachers now claiming AI as their own? Picture unresponsive students becoming engaged, motivated to learn for the joy of it. Imagine formerly inattentive “discipline problems” readily delving into demanding schoolwork. These images aren’t imaginary. The arts can generate incredible special effects on learning: attracting attention, promoting concentration, raising curiosity, and provoking higher thinking—especially deep inquiry to construct sense and solve problems. Students demonstrate a willingness to do hard thinking, *if* learning is presented as a series of challenges to conduct investigations into *whys* and *hows*.

**More than Scores.** American education goals have never been simply about raising test scores (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005). Today, educational leaders know the future favors those in command of creative practices (President’s Committee on Arts and Humanities [PCAH] 2011). Among those are educators committed to school restructuring that prepares students to create meaning through literature and the arts.

The choice can be transformational and not limited to kids (Bellisario & Donovan, 2012; PCAH, 2011). Positive effects of AI extend to teachers who find themselves professionally reinvigorated, especially by arts specialist collaborations, which often dramatically alter instructional practice. Why? Basically, AI gives teachers and students alternative ways to create understanding and communicate conclusions—to show what they know—all in the context of a naturally motivating human endeavor: arts making and arts sharing. In addition, communities become more involved and supportive when the arts are integrated (Deasy, 2002; Deasy & Stevenson, 2005; Jack, 2005).

There is more. Children who start school expecting success and continue to enjoy learning are more likely to stay in school. Arts engagement is thus important to dropout prevention (PCAH, 2011). These kinds of AI effects are supported by a growing number of studies

(Burnaford, 2007; Deasy & Stevenson, 2005; Ruppert, 2006). Students involved in the arts enjoy enhanced motivation, problem-solving skills, creative capacities, and broader multicultural understanding—all factors connected to better attendance and higher scores. And keeping students in school is of significant economic value; the annual cost of truancy is over \$200 billion, and 85 percent of daytime crime is committed by truant youth. In addition, training unskilled dropouts approximates \$30 billion annually (Boston, 1996).

A particular loss is our most creative students, ones who dismiss science and math, if they are presented as dismal piles of facts, dates, and graphs. These unconventional thinkers are typical of others who had little school success—Edison, Einstein, and Steve Jobs, to name a few. Education that emphasizes deep arts and academic relationships can help such students realize the interconnectedness of ideas and relevance to their lives. Arts-based learning hooks curiosity and yields enjoyable insights as students build knowledge and habits of the mind—reasons to return to the arts in the future (Rabkin & Hedberg, 2011).

## Legislating the Arts

*Isn't it ironic, the state doesn't test what really makes us special. They don't even know how.*  
Terry Roberts (2004)

The controversial No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002 promised to eliminate the achievement gap, improve teacher quality, empower parents, and promote school safety. It had mixed success. However, arts education and AI projects benefited when NCLB continued the designation of the arts as “core academic skills.” First written into law in Goals 2000, the legislation suggested school arts should be treated comparably to language arts, math, and science.

Unfortunately, mandated expectations always cause schools to cut or curb programs and instruction not protected or directly linked to preferred areas of achievement. Historically instructional priority has gone to knowledge and skills emphasized on standardized tests. This will happen under Common Core, too. Unless the arts are viewed as integral dimensions of communication, critical sources of content (e.g., ways to investigate other cultures, time periods, viewpoints), and contexts for developing creative-critical thinking, curriculum constriction is likely and can lead to decreased test scores (Yen & Ferrara, 1997) and low teacher and student morale.

Fortunately, Common Core makes demands on learning that are unachievable without the arts. Additionally, repeated voices in the U.S. Department of Education (DOE) have called learning in and through the arts “central” to improved student achievement (Duncan, 2012). Moreover, three consecutive DOE secretaries have attempted to educate America’s school superintendents about the importance of the arts in achievement. Secretary Rod Paige’s letter reminded educational leaders that, “the arts are a core academic subject” and referred to the National Longitudinal Study of 25,000 students, which found a strong correlation between arts involvement and higher scores (Catterall, 2009). High-arts students are also more active in community service, watch less television, view school as less boring, and are less likely to drop out. Such findings hold for students in high poverty circumstances “belying the assumption that socioeconomic status, rather than arts engagement, contributes to such gains in academic achievement and social involvement” (Paige, 2004, n.p.).

## AI Evidence

Arts integration can benefit all students, in many ways, and provides educators with a wider strategy repertoire to accommodate diverse students, including learners with special needs and disadvantaged students. Indeed, students under the greatest academic pressure have made the greatest academic gains when given the chance to learn through the arts (Burnaford, 2007; Catterall, 2012; Deasy, 2002; Deasy & Stevenson, 2005; Gunzenhauser & Gerstl-Pepin, 2002; Weiss & Lichtenstein, 2008).

Unlike some educational interventions, arts integration is not a quick fix. AI is based on a thoughtful and well-reasoned look at a substantial body of research that shows strong positive relationships between arts involvement and academic, social, and emotional gains. Nationwide, projects continue to strengthen in numbers, varieties, and substance. Useful summaries explain positive findings from dozens of studies: *Champions of Change* (Fiske, 1999), *Critical Links* (Deasy, 2002), *Third Space* (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005), *Arts Integration Frameworks, Research & Practice: A Literature Review* (Burnaford, 2007), and *Doing Well and Doing Good by Doing Art: The Effects of Education in the Visual and Performing Arts on the Achievements and Values of Young Adults* (Catterall,

2009). In addition, ArtsEdSearch, sponsored by the Arts Education Partnership, has an excellent searchable research database.

Across America, AI is now in full bloom in many schools. After more than a decade of implementation in large-scale projects in urban schools like those in Chicago and Minneapolis, the results are in and impressive. Test scores are up and kids report loving to work and study in arts-based classes. AI is still a seedling in small rural schools in Tennessee, South Carolina, Arkansas, and many other states (Burnaford, 2007; Weiss & Lichtenstein, 2008). But AI sprouts planted in good soil show uncommon vigor. For example, South Carolina Arts in the Basic Curriculum (ABC) schools now number 55 sites, up from a handful a decade ago (Fisher, 2013). Shy students grow confident and articulate during dramatic pantomimes and dialogues created by students to show understanding of fiction (e.g., Greek mythology) and nonfiction texts (e.g., primary documents from WWII). Formerly passive learners readily collaborate to plan and construct group murals (e.g., depicting conclusions about the solar system). Kids, who struggle with attention difficulties show they can sustain focus when a lesson is introduced with music and coupled with the challenge to discern science connections. These examples come from schools across the United States, Canada, and other countries. Why does making the arts integral to learning have such an impact? Consider how . . .

- Literature allows readers to see into the hearts and minds of characters, revealing innermost thoughts and emotions, drawing us closer to fictional characters than to dear friends.
- Visual art—even a newspaper cartoon—can startle with new viewpoints, perspectives that amaze but also satisfy our need for beauty.
- Drama invites us to suspend disbelief and pretend in the role—to vicariously experience and consider “what if.”
- Dance—nonverbal communication using the body—relies on artistic and expressive movement that can silently shout feelings and thoughts.
- Music can sooth our souls and lift spirits, giving insights that elude words.

The arts truly bring life to life, and liveliness to learning.

However, we live in a society that values measurement, and no educational decision is exempt from data-driven analysis. Photos of smiling children’s faces do little to sway arts-phobic skeptics (Fiske, 1999). Research Update 1.4 provides data to support claims made in previous paragraphs. In particular, note gains among low performing learners in high poverty schools, where principles of AI have been thoughtfully implemented. Finding this kind of hope is especially exciting. In fact, low achievers and English learners are the greatest beneficiaries of instruction that employs the arts as essential learning tools.

## STEM to STEAM

Americans are beginning to realize that the skills the arts teach are mandatory for success in the 21st century (Deasy, 2008; Esquith, 2008; Rose & Gallup, 2005; Sousa & Pilecki, 2013). As proven instructional tools, the arts are essential to shrinking achievement gaps and meeting standards (Burnaford, April, & Weiss, 2001; Coleman, 2012). Arts-based approaches raise the learning bar by creating a culture of excellence that expects more than high grades. This kind of qualitative focus has long been associated with the arts, as demonstrated in the world arts treasury—a resource that stands ready to ignite students’ inquiry. As remarkable communication tools, the arts give the curriculum “sense and soul.”

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) schools created in response to lagging math and science scores and a mounting need for workers in those fields, are adding another vowel. A chorus of informed voices have alerted educators to the fact that STEM relies on innovation, which is the result of creative problem solving. Enter STEAM—arts-based STEM (Sousa & Pilecki, 2013; Stemschool, n.d.).

## The Push for Arts Integration

The impetus for AI has come from *inside* schools where principals and teachers lead the charge to align instruction with standards, research, learning theories, and the expectations of higher education and 21st-century careers. Educators, like those at Ashley River, reach out to forge collaborations with the arts community, including artists, who see the potential of infusing the arts in teaching and learning. Bringing the outside world inside is no longer an option. Economic,

## Research Update 1.4 Arts Integration and Learning

- **Chicago, IL.** Twenty-three arts-integrated CAPE schools showed test scores rising up to two times faster than in demographically comparable schools without arts integration (Deasy, 2002).
- **Dallas, TX.** A 3-year study of *ArtsPartners* schools found that disadvantaged and struggling students performed better in reading comprehension than a matched control. Achievement gaps among whites, Asians, Hispanics, and African Americans narrowed dramatically for writing. Students appeared more engaged (e.g., asking questions, revising work). Effects were most pronounced for low achieving students (Big Thought, n.d.).
- **Minneapolis, MN.** Arts-integrated schools reported substantial academic gains for all students. For example, students in grades 3–5 made significant year-over-year reading gains. The greatest beneficiaries were English learners and low performers whose higher thinking and motivation to learn increased (Ingram & Meath, 2007; Ingram & Riedel, 2003; Rabkin & Redmond, 2005a, 2005b).
- **Minneapolis, MN.** Developing readers, led by teaching artists, showed positive impact on learning, reading skills, and attitudes toward reading (Dretse & Meath, 2010).
- **New Jersey.** AI significantly increased students' chances of passing state tests in language arts and math. The gains held the following year (Walker, Tabone, & Weltsek, 2011a, 2011b).
- **North Carolina.** Students in A+ schools achieved gains over a 3-year period equal to statewide gains in mathematics and reading—a profound finding since A+ serves larger proportions of minority students. Student and faculty attendance, discipline, and parental involvement also improved (Barry, 2010; Corbett, McKenney, Noblit, & Wilson, 2001; Marron, 2003; North Carolina A+ schools, 2013).
- **Mississippi.** More Whole Schools Initiative (WSI) sites attained growth targets than matched comparison schools. WSI students experienced the added values from arts-based learning *and* performed similarly to peers in schools throughout the state—not an inconsequential finding given narrowed curricula in other schools (Corbett, Wilson, & Morse, 2005).
- **New York City, NY.** A multiyear study of ArtsConnection schools found a strong link between English/language arts and drama that enhances creative thinking. Speaking and listening showed particular improvement. Other gains occurred in confidence, positive risk taking, cooperation, expression of ideas, and ownership of learning. Teachers grew more comfortable with the arts, more collaborative, and were able to view students from new perspectives (Hefferen, 2005).
- **New York.** A 5-year evaluation of Empire State Partnerships schools showed increased student engagement in learning and collaborative work. While scores were mixed, low achieving students performed better than expected and grew in their expectations of success (Baker et al., 2004, p. 43).
- **Oklahoma.** From 2002–2011, the state's A+ schools outperformed district and state averages, had better attendance, had fewer discipline problems, and teachers were happier and more effective in that they provided more creative and focused instruction, which increased student engagement and parent/community involvement (Oklahoma A+ schools, n.d.).
- **South Carolina.** In an examination of three years of state tests in English/language arts and math, evaluators found a steady increase in the percent of students identified as proficient and advanced at arts-based ABC schools, as compared with schools with similar student profiles (Horowitz, 2004).
- **Texarkana, TX.** Based upon two years of evaluation, a team concluded that ArtsSmart positively impacted academic learning, artistic development, expression, creativity, imagination, self-confidence, engagement, and motivation (ArtsSmart, 2006; Texarkana Regional, n.d.). Trice Elementary nearly tripled the number of third graders at the advanced literacy level and doubled the number of fourth graders. In math, numbers of third graders doubled and in fourth grade there was more than triple the number at the advanced level (Blaine Sapaugh, assistant principal, 2009).
- **Tennessee.** Students in an arts-based middle school had higher standardized test scores than the students in the traditional curriculum group (McClure, 2009).
- **Tucson, AZ.** Students at Opening Minds through the Arts (OMA) schools have significantly higher scores in math, reading, and writing than non-OMA students. The arts have closed the gap between minority and white students (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005).
- **Coast to coast.** A study of ten “high-poverty” American schools found that arts-based education contributed significantly to higher test scores and closing achievement gaps, especially in reading and math (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005). Students in 130 arts-based Waldorf schools outperformed national averages on the SAT (Oppenheimer, 1999).
- **National Endowment for the Arts.** “Socially and economically disadvantaged children and teenagers who have high levels of arts engagement or arts learnings show more positive outcomes in academic and civic behavioral measures than low arts-engaged peers (Catteral, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012).
- **Canada.** A three-year study of 6,000+ elementary students in Learning to Read Through the Arts showed an 11-point increase in math. Literacy scores remained the same, but students reported being happier about school and researchers saw them as more engaged (Upitis & Smithrim, 2003).
- **U.S. Department of Education (2012).** See videos of grantees discussing ten years of arts integration.

political, social, and technological changes have accelerated the need for an educational revolution (College Board, 2011). The push is on for learning to become embedded with creative thinking, creative ways of working, and the kinds of multifaceted communication prevalent in contemporary life (i.e., arts think).

## Integrated World of Work

*You know, I often say that I might not have been president if it hadn't been for school music.*  
Bill Clinton, President of the United States of America (2000)

President Clinton translated his school experiences into a theory of education that connects the arts with the motivation and self-discipline needed for career success. He is not alone among American civic and business leaders who attribute their achievements to an arts-rich upbringing.

Life outside school is totally arts-integrated. And according to the National Governors Association (NGA), arts-prepared individuals have a competitive workplace advantage (2002). From company executive to car repairer, employees are expected to problem solve, think flexibly, and be skilled in forming interpersonal relationships—all common elements of arts study.

Schools that remain lodged in the last century, emphasizing memorization of facts and application of rigid directions, can't properly prepare students. Jobs dependent on formulaic decisions have virtually disappeared, replaced by outsourcing and automation (Pink, 2006). According to the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (Partnership, n.d.), many jobs now require workers “to think unconventionally, question the herd, imagine new scenarios, and produce astonishing work.” Their Arts Map, prepared by leading arts professional organizations, details relationships between the arts and workplace skills. Indeed, the ability to mobilize creative practices is a basic competency in jobs most predicted to increase, such as engineering and technology; add to these the unimaginable jobs—ones that don't even exist, but will, given changes in science and technology (Chambers, 2000). For example, ten years ago, who would have envisioned “social networker” as a key position in a national political campaign?

**Arts Careers.** The arts not only prepare students for workplaces that demand creative thinking and collaboration, but they are also important career destinations. The options are wide ranging—from architect to dance teacher, theatre lighting to automobile designer. Such career options widen futures for our youth. The creative arts industry alone is enormous—a multi-billion-dollar business with a staggering economic impact (Florida, 2004). We're talking billions of dollars and millions of jobs. For example, a Cezanne exhibit in Philadelphia generated more than \$100 million and a Bruce Springsteen concert series grossed \$40 million and nearly \$200 million for Nashville's economy. And every \$1 billion in spending by nonprofit arts organizations and their audiences results in some 70,000 full-time jobs (Americans for the Arts, n.d.). With nearly 600,000 arts-centric businesses employing nearly 3 million people, arts education becomes a critical tool for future creative industries (Richmond-Cullen, 2005; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2005). Arts-trained workers are needed. One-third of today's students will become employed in arts-related occupations (Education Commission of the States, n.d.).

The challenge is how to prepare students for a world we can't imagine—one sure to be fraught with difficult challenges. There are no right answers or pat solutions. Only creative thinkers can address these challenges. Research is one source of ideas, and coupled with wisdom, honed from experiences of respected educators, it provides solid support for arts-infused models (Deasy, 2008; Duncan, 2009; Pink, 2006).

Innovative solutions have never been more needed than in the first decades of the 21st century (Duncan, 2009). And for over a decade, CEOs have lamented the “crisis of creativity” (Boston, 1996, p. 2; Kim, 2011; Pink, 2006). With an economy dependent on individuals who can imagine and design products for the global market, business leaders from 60 countries put creativity in the top five skills needed by employees (IBM, 2010). Responsive educators are making the creative process central to learning, well aware that the transition to teaching students to think like scientists, engineers, and artists can be uncomfortable. But in the work world, leaders know that difficult changes aren't an option. From 3M to Pixar to Apple, successful companies accept that problems, questions, and challenges rarely have a single answer and encourage employees to think outside the box (Lehrer, 2012). All educators need to follow suit, presenting challenges rather than assigning material to be covered and asking questions that seek multiple evidence-based answers.

## Arts Integration and National Standards

*Let's be clear—we are failing too many of our children. We're sending them out into a 21st century economy by sending them through the doors of 20th century schools.* Barack Obama (October 25, 2005)

For decades, the National Assessment of Educational Progress, a congressionally mandated standardized test, has shown that the average reading and math performance of high school students is basically flat. Two-thirds of American adolescents read at or below basic levels, able to do literal thinking, but not anything higher (i.e., inference, analysis, or critique). The same goes for writing. Students can produce simple narratives and informational paragraphs but not write extended text or construct persuasive arguments. And little progress has been made in closing achievement disparities that separate African and Hispanic students from Caucasian and Asian peers, gaps forecasted to have consequences comparable to a perpetual nationwide recession (McKinsey and Company, 2009). In addition to this dismal domestic education picture, the performance of U.S. students doesn't stand up in international comparisons (Duncan, 2010). Place these humbling facts within the context of U.S. economic and social problems. Enter the Common Core.

## Common Core: Standards for the Nation

*“ . . . the arts have a central and essential role in achieving the finest aspects of the Common Core.”*  
David Coleman, CCSS Architect and President/CEO, College Board (2012)

Educational standards outline learning goals expected for all students by and attempting to embody the key concepts, processes, and traditions of study in school subject areas. Standards now drive improvement in the delivery system for education. But until the 1980s, this wasn't so. At that point, many states wrote and adopted their own standards. By 2003, each state had an individual set that governed districts and the schools within its borders.

What America has never had before 2010 is a set of *common* national standards. In contrast, most other countries do, while a few do not, including Canada and Germany. However, all countries, with and without national standards, report both impressive and non-impressive achievement scores. This begs the question, what can we realistically expect from our new standards and where do the arts fit in?

Since 2010, new education standards have taken effect in the most states—46, to be exact, plus the District of Columbia. All but four states signed on to the Common Core State Standards Initiative, a state-led project sponsored by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association. Written by teams of curriculum specialists and vetted by academics, teachers, and other educators, Common Core State Standards (CCSS) spell out what K–12 students should know and be able to do in English language arts and mathematics, to be appropriately prepared for college and/or today's work arenas (Core Standards, n.d.). The CCSS goal is to *incrementally* prepare students, starting in kindergarten, for a more productive future by placing higher demands on them. And while the rigor of the new standards is disputed, the bar for school achievement has definitely been raised for most American students (Loveless, 2012).

**Visible Changes.** If fully, appropriately, and creatively implemented, CCSS have the potential to profoundly change American schooling. Impacts are already evident in literacy and mathematics. Teachers must now engage students with content at a much deeper level; they focus on instructing students in how to deploy suite of inquiry practices aimed at developing well-founded conclusions.

Thankfully, Common Core makes it unacceptable for students to sit silently at desks, hour after hour, filling out page after page of worksheets. Increased intellectual expectations call for learners to be active—mentally and physically. The new standards call for deep conceptual understanding, in-depth thinking, and reasoned conclusions with students now challenged to take positions, support conclusions with logic and evidence, and argue or make a case for their positions. It is hard to imagine a dull teacher inviting the kind of passion, independent research, creative thinking, role taking, verbal fluency, and confidence the new English language arts standards—laced with dozens of arts references—require. This goes for mathematics as well, where there is clear emphasis on problem solving versus memorizing facts.

To meet Common Core, curriculum, instruction, and assessment are under reform. Professional development, underway across the country, is providing teachers with new vision, instructional strategies, and materials to bring the ambitious mission to life. Another visible classroom change is reading material. Nonfiction has always dominated the workplace and is prominent in the college curriculum. In response, beginning in kindergarten, the goal is a 50–50 split between narrative fiction materials and informational/explanatory nonfiction, which includes primary-source documents like actual letters and speeches. Not only is this balance of genre recommended but

more *complex* texts are emphasized, which presents challenges for teacher preparation: How can all teachers learn to teach for deep understanding using harder materials? And what about the issue of kids who had trouble even with easier materials? They will now have to do more with more difficult texts. The caliber of instruction envisioned has not been the norm in America. Furthermore, in many classrooms there hasn't been a tradition expecting students to take an active role in motivating and managing their own learning. Allowed to sit passively at the back of the room, it is unlikely anyone could learn to defend conclusions and challenge the thinking of others. In the educational road ahead these are some of the potholes.

**Ahead of the Game.** Of course, deep intellectual work is not new to all students, and certainly not all teachers. Decades before Common Core planning began, many educators were using project and problem-based learning models. Arts integrationists are among those educators. Within the Common Core philosophy, AI teachers spot much that is familiar. Moreover the standards are educational ends (i.e., destinations, not the route or the transportation mode). The crucial factor in elevating achievement has always been creative teachers and effective instruction. Standards are only ideas; they must be brought to life by teachers. Arts-integrated instruction provides means to the mission and vision of Common Core. The following are examples of AI hallmarks that explicitly and implicitly support Common Core beliefs and goals:

- Students participate actively in learning, taking roles as investigators of questions and evaluators of their own progress.
- Focus is placed on producing high quality work, a special domain of the arts.
- Students develop an inquiry orientation that taps the innate inclination to understand deeply—to create meaning.
- Students learn how, when, where, and why to use the set of inquiry or problem-solving practices commonly employed across disciplines by artists, scientists, engineers, writers, and so on.
- Study of complex texts (i.e., artworks, such as paintings or music) provokes sustained inquiry.
- Students learn how and why to attend to details, using long-standing arts strategies such as close looking at art and close listening to music.
- Students learn to synthesize, adeptly critique, and use diverse forms to communicate well-founded conclusions.
- Arts-based instruction presents a wide range of instructional accommodations for the communication needs of diverse learners.
- Literacy (effective communication) includes the language arts and the fine arts, media arts, and performing arts.
- Students develop traits critical to career, college, and personal success including initiative, responsibility, respect for diversity, and collaborative problem solving.

Ready Reference 1.5 shows additional arts-based instructional practices congruent with Common Core.

## Ready Reference 1.5 Arts-Based Strategies Congruent with Common Core

**Note:** The terms *art*, *artworks*, and *text* refer to creations across visual art, music, drama, dance, and the literary arts. Within AI, teachers teach students the *how* and *why* for each of the following:

1. **Close observation.** Students are coached to do close reading, listening, and viewing to *collect* details during creative inquiry.
2. **Inquiry questions (IQs).** Students are challenged to *collect* telling details from works—what they see, read, and hear—and then experiment with *connections*. They are asked to discern criteria for what makes solid inferences that lead to solid conclusions.
3. **Start with the art.** Students seek messages from actual artworks, prior to delving into its historical, social, and political context.
4. **Making sense of art.** Students learn how to “read” (comprehend) artworks using guidance on how and where to begin and what to look and listen for.
5. **Deep dive study.** There are prolonged investigations into challenging artworks that will sustain interest. Example: Use the same art print to provoke discussion and writing for a week or more, then change to a new one.
6. **Complex texts.** Quality artworks are selected for inquiry that spans genres, cultures, and eras.

(continued)

## Ready Reference 1.5 (continued)

- 7. Think like an artist.** Students learn to “look and listen as a maker and make as a thoughtful looker and listener” (Coleman, 2012). Artworks inspire discussion of how the artist thought and worked, guided by think questions such as, “How did the artist create that effect? What does the artist want us to think/feel?”
- 8. Ape the greats.** Students practice imitating the style, processes, and techniques of masters, but transition into applying ideas in new ways. Example: Create a Picasso-like cubist work using details about a planet.
- 9. Compare/Venn diagram.** Multiple renditions of the same work are investigated: (1) ones in the same media (e.g., versions of the same film) and (2) ones using different arts media (e.g., read *Charlotte's Web* and then watch the film).
- 10. Choices/impacts.** Students analyze the impact of choices artists make (e.g., design, composition). After close observation and debriefing (e.g., describe and label what you saw and felt), teachers ask IQs about what the artwork means (i.e., questions that seek evidence-based connections to support conclusions).
- 11. Consumer choices.** Students learn to deconstruct the concept of “aesthetics” (beauty, good design, good art) and how it influences consumer behavior and thus our economy.
- 12. Outside-in/inside-out.** Students examine the social, political, cultural, and economic influences on and messages of works of art.
- 13. Quality rewind.** Students learn the habit of returning to texts to check quality and accuracy of ideas used to construct conclusions.
- 14. Arts alive.** Students experience the liveliness of the arts through carefully planned visits to museums, concert halls, galleries, theatres, studios, and other performance spaces. Second best are virtual visits, available online.
- 15. Age and stages.** Developmentally appropriate materials are used, but arts texts grow increasingly demanding during the year and across grades. Even the youngest are directed to notice details in artworks, such as specific elements in paintings and instruments in music.
- 16. Possibilities alert.** Students learn to attend to how the arts emphasize multiple solutions. Students are coached to be alert to examples, including how artists follow mistakes that can lead in productive directions.
- 17. Revision insights.** Students study artist sketches, viewing them as drafts, to learn about making choices, especially how a product can change during revision.
- 18. Revisit and rework.** Students learn to return to earlier works and rework them, as artists often do, making changes that reflect new approaches.
- 19. Curiosity piques.** Students develop lifelong inquiry inclinations through regular discussions about key arts questions: What is beauty? Why do many artworks transcend time? Why do people pay millions for some art? What makes certain art memorable? Remarkable? Why is a certain work so distinctive? What is at stake in this music, dance, and so on? What makes something fresh? How is art powerful? Why?

Source: Based on Coleman (2011).

## Classroom Clip

### Tale of Two Lessons

At first glance, a typical integrated arts lesson might look similar to one directed by Common Core in a non-arts school. Consider a fifth-grade social studies unit about World War II. Students grapple with issues such as the Japanese internment camps. They might read a biography of a boy forced into a camp as well as examine President Roosevelt’s letters and press releases.

But instead of restricting resources to print only, the AI-minded teacher would immediately think of arts texts or drama (e.g., 1940s radio broadcast, archived on YouTube). And instead of assigning the task of individually writing an argumentative piece, groups might be challenged to plan a drama scene. The teacher would coach students to choose roles—the president, camp survivors, news reporters, and so on. The scene is set at a moment in time: a release at the camp.

“Show me how you feel with your face and body,” the teacher directs and asks, “How will your voice sound?” The class collaboratively creates a checklist of scene requirements, including how they will enter, begin, and end and the location of each person in the scene. During the hubbub of planning, students refer back to details in the biography and other sources, and they take notes. Eventually, the scene takes shape. Based on a draft of synthesized conclusions, they rehearse—speaking lines, listening to one another, and providing peer feedback centered on telling details that make characters more believable. Students experiment with how to read lines written for different characters, using their voices, faces, and bodies to communicate thoughts and emotions. All the language arts are employed; in addition, students are motivated (and a little nervous) by the prospect of a drama performance.

At the five-minute cue, students excitedly prepare to take turns as audience members and actors. Motivation climbs as scenes are set and actors take the stage, presenting diverse perspectives, making the audience believe it is 1945 instead of 2015 (Brandon, 2013; McComas, 2013).

Students have a high degree of personal investment in this kind of arts-based work, dependent on self and peer assessment of progress. In turn, the yields are high. Posture straightens, eye contact intensifies, and voices become strong as confidence soars, along with pride in producing quality work. AI created conditions for student success under past standards; now it promises more given Common Core standards, ones better aligned with the philosophy and principles of arts-integrated instruction. ✨

**Symbiotic Relationships?** We are at a crossroads of opportunity. The potential for mutual symbiosis exists between the arts and Common Core. Arts integration creates an intrinsically motivating learning context and promotes dedicated teaching of creative thinking, thus providing supportive circumstances and a set of inquiry practices essential for learning success. In turn, the standards should serve to boost arts learning, especially given: (1) overlaps related to problem-based learning, and (2) explicit standards recommendations calling for the use of arts for communication. Ready Reference 1.6 describes how first generation arts standards content and process are connected to the Common Core standards (College Board, 2012b). Individually, the learning effects of the standards or the effects of the arts couldn't possibly be as strong as if both are implemented in concert. Together they could create an unstoppable synergism, steeling and invigorating students for the academic challenges of college, the innovative thinking demands of changing work arenas, and the difficult trials ahead in complex personal lives.

## Ready Reference 1.6

### What Common Core and Arts Standards Have in Common\*

**Note:** All new Reading Anchor Standards can be met by studying works of art, if the concept of "text" is extended to include all print and non-print works and media forms that carry meaning. (College Board, 2012b)

**CC Reading Standards:** 220 total, 50 with arts references

- 26 relate to reading—drama work the most common.
- 17 reference relationships between illustrations and written text.
- 12 cite comparing works in different media (e.g., compare/contrast written work with media-based).
- 1 mention for songs.

**CC Writing Standards:** 110 total, 8 arts-based recommendations

- Most relate to visual arts, especially drawing and media arts, with the former recommended for communication more often in primary grades and digital media in later grades. In all cases, art forms are recommended to enhance written expression.
- In contrast to the reading standards, writing standards endorse *creation* of new works.

**Speaking/Listening Standards:** 66 total, 16 arts references

- Most relate to Standard 5: *Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and*

*enhance understanding of presentations.* Similar to writing standards, arts references emphasize select arts in different grades: K–2 use of drawing as a communication tool; in later grades more use of digital media.

**Language Standards:** 66 total, 1 art reference

- Recommends varieties of English be experienced in literature, drama, and poetry.

### Overall Findings and Conclusions

Substantial numbers of arts connections are associated with analysis of and response to artworks, especially ones linked to written text. A number of standards do recommend art creation, but with limited focus on visual arts and multimedia, usually created to supplement written or spoken products.

There are significant connections between the Math and ELA Anchor Standards and (1) viewing the arts as communication tools and (2) creative practices of the arts.

In the two documents, alignment was found between the seven abilities associated with college readiness: demonstrating independence; strong content knowledge; ability to respond to changing audience, task, purpose, and discipline; comprehension as well as critique; value for evidence; strategic and capable use of technology and digital media; and understanding other perspectives and cultures.

**Points of Rub.** Common Core is an argument for common educational standards that require students to study similar curricula, take comparable tests, and have achievement monitored and interpreted using standardized performance levels that sort students. These parallel structures are supposed to reduce variation in achievement—in essence to standardize kids. Arts integration, on the other hand, seeks the enhancement of individual differences, envisioning education of the whole child, not just its head. Mental, emotional, and physical dimensions of learning are engaged as the language arts and arts are used to explore difficult questions, seek unknown solutions, and address befuddling challenges. Were the Japanese Internment camps wrong, given the historical context? The many answers to this question, along with millions of others, requires more than reasoning. Students need to collect facts, examine connections from different viewpoints, and draw defensible conclusions. This requires creative inquiry—a problem-solving process set within moral parameters and open to multimodal ways to communicate conclusions to varying audiences. Outside of school, the arts take center stage in these kinds of endeavors, and they should in our schools.

**Instruction for the Core.** When it comes to standards, Common Core is the new kid on the block. And while there are obstacles to implementation of any standards, everyone hopes this effort will pay off better than the last.

**Don't Doesn't Work.** Good teaching, the primary factor in meeting standards, requires changing how students learn and think. Unfortunately, ineffective outdated educational views and instructional practices are entrenched, especially in schools serving low-income students. As Rabkin and Redmond (2005) warn, “Students will not learn to think for themselves if their school expects them to stay in line and keep quiet” (2005, April 13, p. 46). Presently, students achieving in areas of reading at grade 3 may stop reading entirely by grade 8. Disillusionment and boredom lead to academic failure, often followed by “prompt calls for more testing and discipline” (p. 46). Turned off by sit down and shut up pedagogy, it seems that “the longer American children stay in school, the worse they perform” (McKinsey and Company, 2009). Negatives on top of negatives don't produce positives in education. Don't talk, don't move, don't touch, don't laugh, don't color outside the lines, and don't work together virtually crushes creative thinking (Grumet, 2004). Authoritarian classrooms are not contexts for preparing students to live in a participatory democracy.

Furthermore, schools that serve a bland diet of isolated skill teaching (i.e., no arts and scant social studies and science—areas where the bulk of nonfiction content is found) will not grow great thinkers. During the era of NCLB, such curriculum constriction was rampant and billions were wasted (Whitehurst, 2008). Teaching low-level literacy elements did not add up to students acquiring problem-solving skills needed to *understand* texts. Comprehension should have been first, but it wasn't, so it came in last (Cornett, 2010).

In the past, threatening legislative mandates with punitive measures for low scores have not motivated schools to create the kinds of innovative curriculum and instruction needed to close achievement gaps. History portends the sad possibility of more precious learning time lost to oppressive testing. And life may be further squeezed from the curriculum by individuals oblivious to the myriad alignments between arts learning and the vision of Common Core (College Board, 2011, 2012b).

**Creative Teachers.** Hope is out there. First, we have to realize that the printed curriculum represents a fraction of what students learn at school. There is a hidden, implicit curriculum—all the information, values (good and bad), attitudes, interests, and processes learned at school that never show up in written documents. The curriculum that lies beneath, including the influence of peers, can be harnessed for positive purposes. Second, teachers are people and individuals can't be standardized to produce cookie cutter instruction. Given identical standards, next-door third-grade teachers are bound to teach in dramatically different ways and with varying degrees of effectiveness. Thirdly, we can't standardize students. Two kids in the same third grade, instructed by the same teacher or using the same computer, will routinely acquire different amounts and kinds of knowledge and skill. While one gets it quickly, the other struggles. As one soars, the other sinks. And this can happen in different subject areas, even with capable teachers. No state or national policy is going to affect such differences. Given such facts, hope lies in the creative potential of each teacher, giving him or her every freedom to make “how to get there” decisions and providing professional development to inform decision making. That's what AI does.

Sprinkled throughout a sometimes-gray educational landscape are bright images of success, such as that of at-risk populations involved in arts-based learning in both urban and rural districts (Deasy, 2008). Research Update 1.4 samples some results. As Richard Riley, former U.S. secretary of education, put it, “The arts teach young people how to learn by giving them the first step: the desire to learn.” From there, the arts contribute to self-esteem and development of creative inquiry processes

that build independence. Indeed, AI schools are DO places: contexts for creative problem solving and teamwork—which require movement and discussion, room to experiment, support for failure, and celebration of small steps. AI teachers don't bore students with interest-crushing strategies, devoid of opportunities for inquiry (e.g., teachers telling rather than asking and assigning versus challenging).

**Coordinating Standards.** Standards documents now drive curriculum development, instruction, and assessment in American classrooms. Common Core governs standards for English language arts and mathematics. Standards for science and social studies have also been revised and are available as follows:

*Next generation science standards for today's students and tomorrow's workforce* were written through a collaborative, state-led process managed by Achieve. The new K–12 science standards seek to provide all students with an internationally benchmarked science education. On the Internet, search “next generation science standards.”

*National curriculum standards for social studies: A framework for teaching, learning, and assessment:* These revised standards, like the earlier social studies standards, are structured around ten themes. See the website.

**National Core Arts Standards.** Charged by legislation in the 1990s, educators rushed to create standards for all disciplines. First-generation arts standards were published in 1994 and outline what students should know and be able to do in each of the arts by graduation. The importance of arts interdisciplinary learning is addressed as well. But, two decades hence, American educational needs have changed. In response, close on the heels of Common Core State Standards came revision of arts standards.

New voluntary P–12 National Core Arts Standards (NCAS) are oriented toward student achievement in school, career, and life. The framework (2013) defines artistic literacy and places at the forefront artistic practices first articulated in the National Assessment of Educational Progress (for the arts): *creating, performing, and responding*. NCAS adds *connecting*. (Note: The next NAEP Arts Assessment is scheduled to occur in 2016.) Enduring understandings and essential questions are specified for five arts: music, visual art, theatre/drama, dance, and (new) media arts. Sample cornerstone assessments, aligned to processes, are embedded in the new arts standards, which reflect a paradigm shift with focus directed toward students showing understanding by applying learning in a new situation (NCAS, 2013, p. 2). The NCAS will be available in a web-based platform so teachers can sort and organize standards in a variety of ways and link student work samples that are based on cornerstone assessments. Follow the development of NCAS online.

First generation K–8 arts standards are shown in Ready References in the even-numbered chapters of this book, beginning with Chapter 4. Recommended teaching strategies meet one or more of the standards when developed and implemented appropriately.

**Guidance Beyond Standards.** Even highly regarded standards fall far short of specifying all that students should know and do. And standards rarely speak to what students should *be*. Personal dispositions such as persistence, self-discipline, creativity, responsibility, and resilience come from a long list of desirable qualities that many teachers and parents place ahead of intellectual standards. To deal with this shortcoming, teachers involved in AI and other whole child approaches consider standards as *one* source for curriculum development; they go further to plan *how* students can reach important goals not specified in standards documents. As always, it is teachers who give life to planning documents, and teachers should have the final say in materials choices and instructional methods. Only teachers have the on-site background to accommodate for particular student needs, and they need to be supported in their efforts to creatively address challenges.

Since AI usually occurs in the contexts of content units, teachers and artists need to be mindful of publications that articulate content and performance standards in all curricular areas, including the arts disciplines. Nearly every state department of education website includes downloadable standards and links for subject areas. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) also has a fully developed library of standards for each subject in public school curricula that includes a CD-ROM, charts, and a handbook, available through its website.

**Standards for Teachers.** Recently, standards used by colleges engaged in teacher preparation have undergone extensive revision. The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education and the Teacher Education Accreditation Council formed the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP), which released standards effective January 2014. CAEP standards were constructed using multiple resources, including the Interstate Teacher

Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Model Core Teaching Standards. The latter was reviewed to ensure compatibility with the Common Core State Standards, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards core principles, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education accreditation standards, the National Staff Development Council (now Learning Forward) professional standards, and the Interstate School Leader Licensure Consortium.

In addition, classroom teachers are urged to examine the *Model Standards for Licensing Classroom Teachers and Specialists in the Arts: A Resource for State Dialogue* (2002), available by request from InTASC.

**National Assessment.** With standards comes assessment, the process of collecting evidence used to inform educational decisions. Student performance data is used for many purposes, including the allocation of educational resources based on the extent to which standards are met. Schools currently use many state and local assessments, but up until now there was only one national assessment.

For more than 20 years, the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), or the Nation's Report Card, has been the barometer for American student achievement in reading, writing, math, and science. Conducted biannually by the National Center for Education Statistics, the first arts NAEP assessment occurred in 2008. Samples of students in grades 4, 8, and 12 tested with lackluster results. Just as with reading and math, gaps showed up among the following groups:

- White and Asian students scored higher, on average, than African American and Hispanic students, in both music and visual arts.
- Girls outscored boys.
- Private schools outperformed public (<http://nces.ed.gov/nationsreportcard/arts/>).

Arts-phobic skeptics shrug off the unimpressive results, suggesting that studying higher-level math and science should trump arts study. But when was the last time most of us used high school chemistry or calculus? In contrast, we regularly enjoy magazines (graphic design), listen to music, watch films (theatre/drama), and attend plays. We obviously have a pressing need for creative thinking that generates innovation—our economy's engine. Arts education provides the context, content, and thinking processes to meet the need.

In the past, states have conducted their own assessments, somewhat aligned, but not always, with their individual state standards. With Common Core, that has changed. States chose between two multistate consortia, both awarded funding from the U.S. Department of Education to develop assessments aligned to Common Core State Standards (CCSS).

The *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers* (PARCC) is an alliance of 22 states, plus the Virgin Islands, that serve nearly 24 million students. Partners include over 700 higher education institutions and systems representing hundreds of school campuses. PARCC is led by its member states and managed by Achieve, a nonprofit group with a 17-year track record of working with states to improve student achievement by aligning K–12 education policies with the expectations of employers and the postsecondary community. PARCC's ultimate goal is to make sure all students graduate from high school college- and career-ready.

The *Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium* (Smarter Balanced) is a state-led consortium of 19 member states working to develop next-generation assessments that accurately measure student progress toward college- and career-readiness. At its website, teachers can find curriculum resources aligned to the CCSS, as well as professional development strategies—an on-demand digital resource to help teachers address learning challenges and differentiate instruction.

**Issues.** Assessment can feel threatening to students and teachers. But progress toward destinations, with clearly marked mileposts, improves chances of success for the learning journey. And assessment today is much more varied with more emphasis on formative, ongoing, informal tools versus summative, standardized, and formal ones. Of course, any test, no matter how reliable or valid, is a mere sample of what a student can do. Furthermore, one test has limited capability to predict what a person might become.

Appropriately, there is a firestorm over what constitutes appropriate assessment of important real-life skill sets such as cross-disciplinary problem solving and higher thinking. Paper and pencil and computer-platform tests can't capture *how* a person thinks—although CT brain scans are coming close. But more than ever, *how* students think is as important as *what* they know. What's more, traits such as doggedness, responsibility, initiative, and resilience often trump the *what*, producing unlikely success stories. Consider Ringo Star, barely able to read and write when he dropped out of school at age 15, but he had persevered at learning something that proved very valuable. He became the drummer in the iconic band, the Beatles. Personal habits, values, attitudes, and character

indicators have always been key players in a successful life, but they are nearly impossible to assess, especially using standardized measures.

## Integration and the Arts

“. . . more than ever, the ability to integrate art, science, music and literature with the hard sciences is what produces movements like the iPod revolution or Google. This means educators need to go beyond the ‘frog-march’ of kids from math to science to English . . . education should focus on ‘mashing’ subjects together, something kids do naturally.” He who mashes best will mash most and be wealthiest. Thomas Friedman (interview with Daniel Pink, 2008)

Integration is not a 21st-century notion. Efforts to combine the arts and education for the sake of learning date back to the 16th century, when Johann Comenius argued that school life should change from being like a prison. His vision was for school to be a *schola ludus* (play site), where “curiosity is aroused and satisfied” (Barzun, 2001, p. 181). He urged teachers to reduce rote learning and “engage the child’s interest through music and games and through handling objects, through posing problems (project learning) and stirring imagination by dramatic accounts of the big world.” Hundreds of years later in the United States, the “Committee of Ten” (1892) recommended, “one hour per week be given over to nature study . . . conducted without the aid of a textbook. In addition, every attempt should be made to correlate the science observations with work in language, drawing, and literature.” Then in 1935, the influential National Council of Teachers of English defined *integration* as the unification of all subjects and experiences.

Today, the Common Core standards, as well as the separate standards for science, social studies, and the arts, support integration designs. And mixing the arts and traditional academic disciplines seems to hold potential as a strategy for 21st-century challenges that demand exactly the kind of thinking and working that the arts nurture. Educational partnership possibilities are just beginning to be tapped that bring the capacity and expertise of the arts community to bear on academic achievement problems. Promising examples have emerged in schools from Cleveland to Los Angeles with well over a thousand, “arts-based” schools popping up in every state as well as in Canada, Australia, Finland, and the United Kingdom.

Arts integration offers an innovative approach to meet the needs of a student population increasing in diversity. At AI schools, Comenius’s ideas are made into reality, and then some. Teachers collaborate with artists to plan inquiry-based lessons in which the arts are central to literacy, math, science, and social studies lessons. Comenius’s great ideas have been rediscovered, reworked, and now boast an evidence base that goes much beyond the narrow gauge of standardized tests. AI is part of a broad-based revival of interest in whole child learning, which translates into long-term differences in children’s personal, emotional, and cognitive growth (Ruppert, 2006).

### Integration Definition

The word *integration* is derived from the Latin word *integrare*, which means, “to make whole” (Grumet, 2004). Throughout its history, the concept has operated under many labels: interdisciplinary instruction, unit teaching, project approach, inquiry method, and whole language. But by any name, integration involves combining diverse elements into harmonious wholes with a synergistic result. Synergisms are valued because, while individual elements maintain their integrity, the “sum is more than all the parts.” What is a buckle without its belt or a sleeve without a shirt? The part is not usable, nor understandable, without the whole. In art terms, integration puts figures against a background and gives particulars a context. In life terms, integration is how we function in the real world.

### The Case for Integration

A practical argument for integration is that there is just too much to know and teach; the Internet testifies to the immense store of information on millions of websites. Instead of continuing to cram in and cover more, integration connects big ideas found and created through inquiry into cross-disciplinary similarities. Focus on isolated facts and outdated information is dropped from the curriculum as priorities are reset and time better allocated to teaching inquiry to make sense of content relevant to our profoundly integrated world.

Common Core acknowledges that the real world demands integration. From small personal problems to big ones in our economy, subject area delineations are disregarded as creative thinkers draw upon background knowledge and apply diverse perspectives to solve problems. Of particular value is using knowledge in new ways—in the manner in which creative thinkers melted shower curtains together to create the now ubiquitous bubble wrap.

Integrated instruction creates an economy of time and materials. More is achieved with what is at hand. Time blocks for English language arts are linked to science and social studies units. Informational science and social studies texts are used to teach reading as readily as narrative fiction. Teachers and arts specialists collaboratively plan integrated units, which involves rooting out redundant goals and standards that can be addressed in the same lesson. Indeed, a school day organized around isolated skill teaching and fragmented into subjects is poorly matched with life.

Integration is about using—not just knowing—information. Meaning-making skills are used to solve important and interesting problems, which adds purpose and relevancy to learning. In arts integration, this means application of creative inquiry throughout the curriculum with students constantly seeking connections and relationships among ideas. It's not surprising that students in integrated programs consistently outperform those in traditional classrooms on national and state tests (Hartzler, 2000). Curricular segmentation is outdated. It just doesn't work given the information explosion and current living and working conditions that demand multitasking and group problem solving.

## Holistic Learning

Gestalt psychologists explain that humans are predisposed to bring pieces and parts together into comprehensible wholes. The integration process results in a satisfying sense of completeness as disconnected ideas are meaningfully linked. In AI schools, units are created around significant life questions and major themes—important “truths” and essential questions that pull together disparate facts. Meaningful connections are sought, not superficial ones like counting beans in *Jack and the Beanstalk* and calling that integration of math and literature.

Of course, students of any age and stage need to attend to parts, details, and facts as they study subjects and learn skills. In reading, students must notice differences among similar letters like *b* and *d*. But key to motivation is seeing purpose. Isolated concepts and skills are hard to perceive as worthy. Letters are pretty meaningless until they are ordered in patterns to make whole words. Words have minimal meaning until they are placed or integrated into the context of a phrase, sentence, paragraph, or story. What does *run* mean? Is it a verb, as in “to run away,” or is it a noun, as in “a run in my hose”? I could have a “run of bad luck” or “run into” another car or have a “dog run” in my backyard.

## Wholes and Parts

Even adults who are novices at a task tend to proceed from whole to part, from the gross to the particular, dwelling first on the most obvious, such as large shapes and intuited feelings. Remember first using computer-drawing tools and having a compulsion to play around with the mouse? Psychologist Daniel Goleman (2005) explains the evolutionary significance of reacting first to the holistic experience and then to details by describing a jogger who spies a long, slender, dark-curved something coming along his path. “Snake!” screams the ancient emotional impulse and the jogger stops dead in his tracks. Saved from a poisonous bite by primitive instincts, he now uses newer (in evolutionary time) powers of logic to see the details of the something—this time it's merely a stick. But, imagine the consequences (just in terms of time) if we habitually stopped to analyze pieces before responding to the whole.

The arts play an important role in integrating wholes and parts. Literature, visual art, drama, dance, and music can interact with science, social studies, math, and literacy to multiply learning about life skills, key concepts, themes, and big ideas. Traditional lines among curricular areas become muddled. “Is it art or science as a child mixes colors and discovers that blue and yellow make green?” (Stinson, 1988, p. 95). Is it dance or language arts when children create letter shapes with their bodies and move the shapes through space? Is it drama or social studies when students create tableau based on a biography of a man imprisoned in the Japanese internment camps? Artificial boundaries impede authentic learning and simply do not reflect life.

Outdated pigeonholing of disciplines clearly impedes understanding. The public, parents, and certainly professional educators are tired of temporary, piecemeal, and simplistic school fixes.

Children are whole, integrated persons when they arrive at school and should be fully engaged in experiences planned with connectedness in mind, which makes transfer of learning more likely.

**Integral Connections: Arts and Academics.** Rodney Van Valkenburg, director of Arts Education, Allied Arts of Greater Chattanooga, believes the arts impact learning because “the skills necessary to be a good artist are the same skills that are needed to be a good student: self-control of your body, voice, and mind” (2005). Furthermore, the arts engage the same kinds of cognitive processes used in reading, writing, and math, creating the potential for the arts to leverage basic skills learning. Structural analogies between arts and other disciplines can also be exploited to activate transfer. For example, the composition process in visual art parallels that of the writing process. Discovery of such overlaps is highly valuable, allowing teachers to squeeze more into limited instruction time and emphasize transfer across subjects. For example, young children comfortably make art before they learn to write. Art making involves students in creative inquiry—a close cousin to the writing process—and art provides content (i.e., ideas to write about). In “art first” lessons, students write more and produce higher quality writing (Olshansky, 2008b). As the arts are integrated, subject area boundaries blur and learning more closely resembles real life (i.e., it is interdisciplinary). Art making causes students to attune to details, discern patterns, and discover connections—important skills central to all disciplines.

Common Core has renewed interest in interdisciplinary study, a means of addressing multiple standards through unit teaching. Units bring siloed academic areas together as teachers challenge students to investigate questions in social studies, math, and science, using works of art and artistic processes. These lines of inquiry reveal that, “art, like life, is lived in a complex world not easily defined in discrete subjects” (J. Paul Getty Trust, 1993, p. 2). Ready Reference 1.7 gives more examples of connections.

## Robust Arts Integration: Principles and Practices

*The arts are not an educational option.* John Goodlad (1984)

Booth (2003) traces the role of arts in American schools to a beginning in “arts for art’s sake,” moving to “arts for the sake of the workplace,” and on to the current emphasis on “arts for learning sake.” He predicts the third focus will dominate the 21st century. Arts for learning is embodied in the arts integration visitors see at Ashley River Creative Arts and hundreds of other schools nationwide, including large-scale projects in urban schools in cities from New York to Minneapolis to Washington, DC and Chicago. Schools choose AI because of the theoretical, philosophical, and research support for the learning engagement the arts make possible. AI has earned a reputation for succeeding with low performing students, especially those who are economically disadvantaged and/or from minority groups (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005). Ready Reference 1.9, later in this chapter, lists example AI projects.

Nearly two decades ago, the National Endowment for the Arts took the position that it is impossible to make schools more effective without the arts (Welch, 1995). From Charleston, South Carolina, to Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, schools got the message. The arts are considered essential teaching tools—not in the occasional art class or interdisciplinary unit either, but as pedagogical pillars. These schools share a common belief: Literature, visual art, drama, dance, and music have the power to energize and humanize the curriculum. Integrated arts schools are acting on research that confirms how arts experiences help “level the educational playing field” for disadvantaged students and “close the achievement gap” (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005; Fiske, 1999; Rabkin & Redmond, 2005, January 8). The arts are no longer on the curricular fringe of public education. They are an acknowledged part of national strategies to transform schools (Catterall, 2009; College Board, 2011, 2012b; Duncan, 2012).

### Not an “Activity”

Arts integration is an instructional approach that reflects our fast changing world and evolving educational landscape. The contention that the arts are worthy teaching tools—and critical forms of literacy with communication goals paralleling those of the language arts—is gaining momentum. Of course, educators zero in on any approach with demonstrated potential to increase test

## Ready Reference 1.7 Integral Connections: Reading, Writing, Math, and the Arts

The following are examples from countless overlapping relationships among reading, writing, mathematics, and the arts. When teachers make these kinds of connections explicit, students gain an understanding of how integrally related things are in the web of learning and life.

**Reading.** Decoding symbols (letter shapes and patterns), combining concepts (words) to make connections in order to comprehend a text (print and non-print).

**Visual arts.** Artwork is “read” similarly to word-based text. The viewer first perceives the work as a whole and then progressively examines details and parts to discover important emphases. Next comes experimentation with connections, which leads to conclusions. Making sense of visual art texts from paintings to sculptures requires coordinated use of creative thinking skills, in a comparable way and for the same purpose inquiry is used to understand print texts.

**Drama/Theatre arts.** Comprehension of dramatic texts parallels the inquiry process used to understand any written work. On the other side of the coin is creating a performance, which is largely about interpretation of words using creative inquiry; actors do a first read to derive big ideas in a script, which entails visualizing details and drawing conclusions about characters and setting. They zero in on literary elements to create meaning, especially the conflict or problem, which sets the plot in motion (rising and falling action, crisis, and climax). Actors reread to analyze characters’ motives and relationships to other characters and the plot.

**Dance.** Viewing a dance involves nearly the same comprehension strategies as those used in reading traditional texts, that is, coordinated creative inquiry. And dance compositions are created about the same themes, conclusions/big ideas as are at the core of the literary arts, again using creative thinking to make sense.

**Music.** Reading a piece of music is virtually identical to reading print text, including decoding symbols for the purpose of making sense. Reading music notation also requires reading ahead, determining phrases and the overall structure, locating accents, interpreting symbols and verbal indicators, and discriminating between the main and subordinate ideas. Listening to music (receptive communication) requires thinking, albeit aesthetic-oriented thought to comprehend or understand.

**Writing.** Encoding thoughts and feelings (conclusions) using symbols.

**Visual arts.** The composition process used to create a piece of art is virtually the same as that for creating written compositions; for example, imagining possibilities (e.g., visualizing), collecting ideas, experimenting with connections, expressing conclusions/themes, revising, and so on.

**Drama/Theatre arts.** The process used to write scripts and plays involves the same thinking as creating any

other form of writing. The difference is the writing form (e.g., script). The process includes prewriting (identifying purpose/audience, collection and connection of ideas), drafting, critique/revision, and communicating the product (i.e., publishing).

**Dance.** Choreography uses the same thinking and processes as writing, such as collection of ideas through brainstorming and tapping other sources, experimenting with connections (improvising), connecting (selecting and organizing), rehearsal/critique (revision), and publishing/performance.

**Music.** Writing music phrases, sections, and compositions using notation symbols involves many of the same processes used in the English language arts (e.g., translating emotions or ideas onto paper using symbols).

**Mathematics.** Using concepts and symbols for numbers, quantity, and space to solve problems.

**Visual arts.** The geometric shapes, proportions, and relationships used in visual art are used in math. During the art-making process to create painting or sculpture, spatial relationships are explored including proportion, shapes, patterns, measurement, estimation of space and distance, making plane and solid figures, and description and creation of three-dimensional objects using different perspectives.

**Drama/Theatre arts.** Mathematics principles used to stage and to design and construct scenery are parallel to those used in geometry, algebra, and physics. For example, design and construction of a simple flat requires measurement and measurement tools used to add/subtract, multiply/divide, and create angles. Also used are geometric principles and tools, writing numbers to communicate, proportion, and mathematical problem-solving skills.

**Dance.** In the creation and execution of dance, a variety of math concepts are used including sequencing, symmetrical and asymmetrical shapes, geometric forms and designs, relationships between metered time and fractions, organizing skills, patterns (rhythm, movement, and body shape), and measurement (e.g., movements and space).

**Music.** Composing and performing music involves mathematical concepts such as proportion (e.g., fractions) and skills such as counting. Like, unlike, and empty sets in mathematics are the same as those in music measures, with similar or dissimilar rhythm or melody patterns or measures with no notes in them. Greater than, less than, or equal to correlates with comparing music intervals, dynamics, and rhythm values (e.g., fractions: rhythm and meter). Proportions in mathematics equate to relationships between music intervals and rhythm values. Reciprocals in mathematics relate directly to inversions of music intervals (perfect fourth to perfect fifth, major third to minor sixth, etc.).

scores, but AI has a unique capacity to do even more—to develop desirable personal habits and attitudes that include persistence, initiative, and cooperation. These are learning-related traits that often elude didactic teaching methods (e.g., lecture) and conventional summative assessments (i.e., standardized tests). But systematic observation and teacher/student reflection leave no doubt that AI can grow their presence.

In this era of challenging new standards and assessments, teachers feel overwhelmed. But arts-based thinking can pump energetic creative ideas into the transition to demanding goals. And AI has a “we are in it together” advantage. Generated by collaborative planning among classroom teachers and arts specialists, arts integration draws upon a broad-based community of expertise. With the support of diverse thinking colleagues, teachers transform plodding detail-oriented instruction into artistic acts, alive with students making (not simply getting) meaning during interdisciplinary units created to address multiple standards.

AI holds a compelling motivational force waiting to be unleashed—the force of creativity. Just as human creativity gave birth to the planet’s arts treasury, teacher creativity can be the impetus for students to create a personal learning treasury. The first step is learning how to invite learners into inquiry.

## Quality Signifiers

The earlier Classroom Snapshot of Judy Trotter’s lesson was an example of high quality arts integration. Planning Page 1.8 lists more visible signs of meaningful AI.

At Ashley River Creative Arts, teachers draw upon the arts as they are used outside of school, as forms of literacy to understand, respond to, and express ideas and emotions. Instead of reducing content to fit the world of the classroom, classrooms become laboratories to “make sense of the content of the world” (Grumet, 2004, p. 54). Teachers explicitly teach how to understand and express their thoughts and feelings using the language arts, with the arts featured as communication tools as well. How does a school get to the point where the arts are routinely used to engage learning in most lessons on a daily basis? That’s the story of the following Spotlight.

### Planning Page 1.8

#### Arts Integration Toolbox: Strategies Preview

- *Planning.* Grade-level teams use standards and other curricular resources to integrate the arts with English language arts, math, science, and social studies—most often in the form of interdisciplinary units.
- *Collaboration.* Arts specialists regularly meet with individual teachers and teams about arts strategies and to ensure arts standards are given equity with other academic areas.
- *Assessment.* Teachers use multiple forms, including observation checklists and rubrics, to track student progress in traditional academic areas *and* in the arts. Informal assessment is used to determine knowledge about specific arts concepts and tools and instruction is based on findings.
- *Challenge to engage.* Teachers routinely pose problems and present challenges, plus teach students *how* to use a full set of creative thinking strategies to show understanding using art forms. Open-ended questioning is front and center.
- *Piggybacking.* Art making isn’t simply assigned; it is taught with classroom teachers building on learning in specialist-led arts classes. For example, after students learn about collage in visual art, their classroom teacher might show how to make variations using torn paper, which will then be an option to show comprehension of plant parts.
- *Accessing artworks.* Mini-lessons on how to “read” art texts, such as picture book illustrations, are embedded, especially in literature-based instruction long present throughout curricular areas.
- *Arts first.* Arts experiences often start lessons. For example, drawing is prominent in teaching writing, with students creating art compositions *before* writing, thus using the art composition to inform written composition. Both quality and quantity of writing increase (Olshansky, 2008a, 2008b).
- *Arts products.* Students are taught *how* to create arts texts (e.g., write songs and different types of poetry) as a means to summarize their conclusions.
- *Background music.* Music is routinely used to set the mood, but teachers go further by coaching students to think about the composer’s messages and musical tools used to send those messages.
- *Drama response.* History and science are brought to life, making people and content vivid and real through use of specific tools, such as pantomime and tableau.
- *Dance basics.* Teachers focus on movement breaks and movement warm ups to let students experience the joy of movement, and to ease them into acquiring dance know-how so they will be able to create dances that show learning.
- *Arts-based read-alouds.* Arts strategies are used before, during, and after read-alouds.

## Ready Reference 1.9 Examples of Arts Integration Projects

In addition to the following projects, there are more than 500 arts-based magnet schools and scores of charter schools now affiliated with arts networks and organizations (Fineberg, 2002).

### A+ Schools

This North Carolina effort involves more than 35 participating schools. Douglas A+ Creative Elementary Arts and Science Magnet School in Raleigh is considered a model school. The A+ network is nationally recognized as a top education reform effort and has spread to Oklahoma, South Dakota, and Arkansas (A+ Schools, n.d.).

### Alabama Institute for Education in the Arts

Comprehensive AI professional development is provided to schools throughout the state including a weeklong summer institute (Alabama Institute, n.d.).

### The Annenberg Challenge for Arts Education

In New York City, schools are partnered with colleges, community organizations, and cultural institutions such as museums and arts groups. *Promising Practices: The Arts and School Improvement* (Marrapodi, 2000) profiles 9 of the 81 public schools whose students frequently work with artists. Arts organizations conduct family days and workshops facilitate co-planning with teachers (Center for Arts, n.d.).

### Arts in the Basic Curriculum Project (ABC)

This statewide initiative by the South Carolina DOE, the South Carolina Arts Commission, and Winthrop University has a grants program to support arts-based education. ABC schools have high levels of support for arts immersion, including classes provided weekly in all four arts disciplines. Arts teachers plan regularly with classroom teachers, some using arts specialist “push in” models. Over the past 25 years, 50-give schools/districts have been coached through AI planning and implementation. Contact director Christine Fisher for essential AI elements and rubric (Winthrop, n.d.).

### Arts for Academic Achievement

The Minneapolis Annenberg Challenge for Arts Education is a partnership between the Minneapolis Public Schools and the Minnesota Center for Arts Education. Schools are categorized at three levels of integration: (1) minimal arts with one arts specialist, (2) actively working toward arts integration with two or more arts specialists, and (3) more than two arts specialists and long-term partnerships with local arts organizations (Annenberg, n.d.).

### ArtsBridge

This California University collaboration involves 22 programs in 13 states and one in Northern Ireland. College students and fine art faculty are partnered with host schools. ArtsBridge programs claim to create learning environments that promote creative thinking and significant interdisciplinary connections. *The Journal for Learning Through the Arts: A Research Journal on Arts Integration in Schools and Communities* is an online repository that documents the project (ArtsBridge, n.d.).

### ArtsConnection

Over 120 New York City public schools are involved in this AI project that features teaching artists who instruct students and plan with classroom teachers (Arts Connection, n.d.).

### ArtsSmart

This is a collaborative partnership between the Texarkana Regional Arts and Humanities Council and 34 schools. Based on their level of commitment, schools partner with ArtsSmart for professional development, AI planning, artist residencies, and community arts projects (Texarkana Regional, n.d.).

### Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA)

The Kennedy Center partners with schools and districts in the Washington, DC, metropolitan area (includes Virginia and Maryland) to effect arts-based school reform through professional development. Despite high populations of English learners, CETA schools report an upward trend in test scores. A coaching component involves artists in co-planning, conducting class demonstrations, and co-teaching with teachers. Teachers and principals must make a multiyear commitment (Duma, 2005; Kennedy Center, n.d.).

### Chicago Arts Partnerships in Education (CAPE)

There are 19 partnerships in 30 Chicago public schools matched with artists and artistic resources to integrate the arts. Curricula are developed and delivered through collaboratively planned instruction. Research is available in *Champions of Change: The Impact of Arts on Learning* (Fiske, 1999).

### Dallas ArtsPartners

This is a collaborative partnership between the Dallas Independent School District and 62 arts organizations (Dallas, n.d.).

### Empire State Partnerships (ESP)

Sponsored by the New York State Council on the Arts, this statewide project involves 113 schools and is founded on the belief that the arts are ways to differentiate instruction for diverse learners and provide “redundancy” that enhances learning. Teaching artists further engage students in learning (Empire, n.d.).

### Transforming Education Through the Arts Challenge

Supported by the J. Paul Getty Trust and the Annenberg Challenge for Arts Education, 35 schools in 8 states were involved in a five-year period. Teachers developed integrated units with the arts at the core with the goal of increasing student achievement (Hutchens & Pankratz, 2000).

### Value Plus Schools

Tennessee schools participate in this program directed by the Tennessee Arts Commission. Initially supported by a grant from the U.S. DOE, Value Plus emphasizes learning through the arts by integrating traditional art forms into non-arts subjects. Dance, visual art, theatre, and music are also taught as stand-alone subjects (Value Plus, n.d.).

### Whole Schools Initiative (WSI)

The Mississippi Arts Commission (MAC) has funded schools since 1991 to embed the arts into regular classroom instruction. The WSI label underlined the intention that the arts should be more than a set of add-on activities. According to the state’s accountability program, 88 percent of the WSI school sites were “successful” or better (Whole Schools, n.d.).

## School Spotlight

### Arts Integration in Action

*The kids love to be here. They can't wait to start each day.* (Jayne Ellicott, principal, Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary, Charleston, South Carolina)

Teachers at Ashley River Creative Arts Elementary (ARCA) integrate the arts throughout the curriculum all day, every day. In the three decades since its inception, this small K–5 school has become one of the most well-known integrated arts schools in the country, recognized as a National Blue Ribbon School and honored by the Kennedy Center with a “Creative Ticket School of Excellence” award. Befitting the mission of the school, its mascot is a unicorn, a fanciful creature associated with hope and creativity.

Unlike large-scale AI projects in Minneapolis and Chicago, Ashley River Creative Arts is a small-scale effort started at the grass roots level. The story of ARCA’s informative and inspirational journey is a stirring example of the importance of strong leadership and community involvement in educational reform, particularly with arts integration.

### Philosophy of AI: Mission and Vision

No successful endeavor gets off the ground without a mission (clear goals) and a vision (actions that bring the goals to life). ARCA had both.

“This is a school born of the imagination of the first principal,” explains Jayne Ellicott, principal since 1994. She should know. Ellicott was Rose Maree Myers’s assistant when the school opened in 1984. “Rose Maree was a visual art teacher with a theatre background. She had a very musical son who was not academically inclined. Her vision was to use the power of the arts to give all children a love of learning.”

Ms. Ellicott witnessed the transformation of a condemned building, with broken windows and weeds above the roof, into what began as a magnet school. At first, half the students were “zoned in,” and the other half were chosen by lottery. But by the third year, all students were chosen from a waiting list. Currently, all students are chosen by lottery each January.

According to Ms. Ellicott, Ashley River started with a distinct advantage: no one tried to force an arts-based program on an existing school. The first faculty was handpicked for a commitment to using the arts as core instructional methods. From the get-go, teachers knew they were hired to *create* an integrated arts school. Ms. Ellicott remembers, “It was hard to gel that personality force, but Rose Maree inspired the faculty to trust her, and she was very goal centered.”

### Growing Teachers’ Arts Literacy

Thirty years ago, the combination of excitement and focus motivated school administrators and teachers to give up evenings and Saturdays for professional development. Smiling broadly, Jayne

Ellicott reminisces about weekly meetings during which Rose Maree demonstrated integrated arts lessons. As with most teachers new to arts integration, some felt especially intimidated by dance and movement, others by the prospect of using visual arts strategies to deliver social studies, math, or science content. A few teachers found music to be the greatest challenge. Jayne laughs. “We didn’t have any special supplies. We didn’t even have ceiling tiles and very few electric plugs that first year.” But those limitations served as a catalyst, forcing the faculty to bond together to address the challenge using all their creative thinking resources.



Jayne Ellicott, Principal, Ashley River Creative Arts

### Collaboration

Ms. Ellicott is quick to point out how realizing the mission and vision of AI requires hard work. In many ways, it is a sea change for

(continued)

teachers. Collaboration is essential. Teachers within grade levels must work together, planning with standards in mind and sharing resources. But most notably, classroom teachers need regular planning time with arts specialists. Planning can be achieved in many ways, including scheduled monthly meetings among specialists and classroom teachers, generally by grade level. The focus is on academic basics (i.e., standards), but similar to reading and writing across the curriculum, in arts integration the arts are the “delivery path.” In addition to scheduled sessions, ongoing informal interactions among specialists and teachers happen at lunch, in the halls, and after school—through emails, phone calls, and texts.

## Assessment

All of Ashley River’s students do well on PASS (South Carolina’s state academic test), but Ms. Ellicott points to what she considers more important indicators of the school’s success. “Our students show they know and understand in many ways—not just through reading and writing and traditional tests. They know what to do with free time, and they all think they can become ‘expert’ at something—painting, dancing, playing an instrument.”

Ms. Ellicott credits ARCA’s arts-based approach with dramatic changes in students’ academic, social, and emotional growth, contrasting learners who enter as kindergartners and remain versus latecomers. “Late arrivals have trouble because our students all learn early on to cooperate, communicate, and process information on a higher scale. They quickly learn to plan and work together when they are engaged in the arts. They learn to achieve consensus and are more confident. For example, in drama class I’ve seen even the most shy student just bellow out!”

## Arts Partnerships

While Ms. Ellicott attributes most of the school’s success to the arts-based curriculum, she points out that parents decide to enroll their children at Ashley River. That choice makes a big difference. She further emphasizes that the school does not select academically gifted kids over other children, nor do they have more money than other schools. But like many integrated arts schools, ARCA does have more arts specialists including a drama specialist and a dance teacher. How do they pay for it? Arts specialists (four in all, including visual art and music teachers) are integral to achieving the school’s mission and are paid for by Charleston County under the magnet schools program. Parents furnish instruments for the strings program and special equipment, such as musical Orff instruments, are funded by aggressive pursuit of grants such as those from ABC (Arts in the Basic Curriculum) provided by the State Arts Commission and the South Carolina Department of Education’s Distinguished Arts Grant. “And we continue to invite private benefactors to be a part of Ashley River’s mission,” she explains.



Presenting the Brand New Ashley River Creative Arts

## Differentiated Instruction

Is Ashley River without problems? “No,” admits Ms. Ellicott. “We have all the same issues as any school.” Fourteen percent of the students are on free or reduced lunch, 14 percent have learning disabilities, and 22 percent are from a minority group. Four self-contained classes of autistic and trainable children experience the arts daily, participating in drama, dance movement, visual arts and music. According to Ms. Ellicott, “these students do beautifully in the arts.”

Parents believe that kids who couldn’t make it somewhere else can make it at ARCA, she says. “But we are able to work through our problems using artistic thinking that focuses on cooperation, persistence, more risk taking and experimentation, and respect for diverse ideas.”

Differentiation happens naturally in arts integration classrooms because teaching creative thinking is built into the mission and vision—students learn *how* to creatively process challenges in science, social studies, math, and literacy by using communication tools in the arts area. Students simply have more choices for learning and demonstrating what they have learned. Over the years Ashley River has also added many choice arts opportunities for students, such as the Drama Troupe (fourth and fifth grade), the News Show, a chorus, and several clubs: strings/violin, ballet, guitar, drums, and clay club. These have proven to be important curricular adjuncts and powerful public relations tools. For example, Ms. Ellicott recalls the reaction to a strings group performance at a local Rotary meeting. “Community leaders were shocked to see kindergartners play the violin. I saw tears in the audience.”

## What Really Counts

Jayne Ellicott sits in her office, papered with children’s art and writing, reflecting on the years past and yet to come. “There is so much about the adult world that has nothing to do with standards and measurement, so much that is more important that we don’t and can’t measure. I watch the kindergartners bowing away on the violin or the little ballet dancers (boys and girls) with their underpants hanging out. I wish that every teacher would be a believer. Not all do. You have to have the passion that the arts are making this difference. Of course, I think all it takes is walking through a classroom to see how the arts transform learning. I just happen to work with teachers who are believers.”

Postscript: In 2010, Jayne Ellicott moved her entire staff into a brand new building, a brick-and-mortar testament to Charleston County’s growing commitment to arts integration. For more information, visit Ashley River Creative Arts’ website. ✨

## Implementing Quality Arts Integration: A Preview

So far I have argued that education without a strong arts presence is thin and soulless—devoid of rich inquiry, deep understanding, and opportunity for children to communicate in diverse ways. Indeed, students who are directed to focus solely on standards and test performance, instead of understanding, can experience declines in motivation and learning (Allington, 2005; Guthrie, 2004).

Arts-integrated lessons provide forays into coordinated high level thinking, along with opportunities to acquire self-discipline and perseverance required for achievement at school, in the workplace, at college, and in personal life (Psilos, 2002). How so? Arts-based learning taps the inclination to try new ideas, pursue unique solutions, and view mistakes as opportunities. Motivation builds over time as students reap the intrinsic rewards of creating quality products (Barry, 2010).

Important to the success of AI is the provision that the arts are powerful teaching and learning tools, if used *meaningfully*. Parallel to how literacy educators fought to maintain the integrity of literature as an art in literature-based reading programs, so the arts community now rightly insists that music, visual art, drama/theatre, and dance/movement be *used*, not abused. Meaningful arts integration is not about using the arts to decorate and entertain; it is about engagement, arts literacy, and creative inquiry used to make sense.

## Arts Integration Pillars

*Arts integration makes the context more aesthetic, teaching more engaging and learning outcomes richer. Zoomie (2014)*

No one model prevails in arts integration. But shared components exist among America’s many projects—most with varying emphases. The ten AI Pillars that follow are common in AI designs, with most supported by the Consortium of National Arts Education Associations (NAEA, 2002). The Pillars rest on a foundation that includes effective teaching research and general standards for teacher preparation. Key sources include teacher standards from the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation, the five core National Board Professional Teaching Standards and Universal Design for Learning, as well as guidelines from arts professional associations, plus those from associations for English language arts, math, science, social studies, early childhood, and middle schools.

The Pillars are interlocking—pull out one and the full construction falls or is dramatically weakened. Think of them as key supports on which full integration rests. The Pillars form the skeleton of subsequent arts-specific chapters.

**1. *Philosophy of education.*** The foundation for an arts integration approach rests on strong informed beliefs about arts access and equity for all students. Professional beliefs grow out of theories, research, and the changing societal needs. In arts integration, creative inquiry takes center stage because the creative process is central to arts making and arts understanding. Furthermore,

arts integration embraces the belief that all individuals have the capacity to create meaning more fully given access to a greater range of communication/literacy tools (language arts *and* arts) and if the concept of “text” is interpreted more broadly to include all art forms from paintings to digital and multimedia-based works. A key distillation of a school’s AI philosophy is a collaboratively written mission, out of which grows a vision.

**2. Arts literacy: content and skills.** Both arts specialists and classroom teachers need to understand and present the arts as communication tools (i.e., forms of literacy, types of texts, and learning that allows us to understand and express thoughts and feelings). Also important—as expressed in the Core Arts Standards—is making prominent the role of creative process in any arts teaching. Both classroom teachers and specialists need to explicitly teach core arts concepts and processes so students have tools to inquire into learning challenges and options to demonstrate understanding.

**3. Collaborative planning.** Classroom teachers and arts specialists (including teaching artists) co-plan standards-based units and lessons that focus on important relationships among big ideas, key concepts, and skills—concentrating on those that overlap. When a meaningful fit is found, content and processes in non-arts and arts areas are combined to make optimal use of school time/resources and achieve mutually beneficial learning. Planning begins with desired learning outcomes (i.e., start with where you want to end). Standards are key—but not the only—sources. Outcomes are matched to performance-based assessments (e.g., exhibition of arts works). Classroom teachers and arts specialists then plan who will teach what, when, and how. Co-teaching is stressed as an important professional development source for classroom teachers to enlarge their arts teaching toolbox.

**4. Aesthetic environment.** The context for learning is highly influential. AI depends on a school and classroom culture that supports positive attitudes toward learning and hard work, celebrates diversity (including cultural and ethnic differences), promotes risk taking, develops respect, and stresses the joy in creative inquiry. Physical and psychological conditions need to support these beliefs. For example, furniture arrangement should be flexible, appropriate arts resources available, and dedicated arts spaces need to exist. Of course, the teacher’s personal approach and style are the most influential aspects of classroom culture.

**5. Literature as a core art form.** Over many decades, high-quality literature has become the primary material to deliver literacy (reading/writing) instruction. Every genre, from poetry to science fiction, is now integrated into every academic area, with Common Core calling for more focus on nonfiction—which can be literary (e.g., biography). Because the literary arts are the most readily available arts material, and because literature is the most frequently integrated art form, literature is set off as a separate arts integration pillar.

**6. Best teaching practices.** Societal conditions, educational research, and evolving professional wisdom yield conclusions about what constitutes general best practice. Best AI practices are culled from these sources. Two threads are embedded in all practices: inquiry questions (IQs)—especially *why*, *what if*, and *how might*—and seamless blending of the creative inquiry process. Explicit teaching (what, why, how, when, and where) of creative inquiry stands side-by-side with teaching use of arts concepts and processes to show new understanding. Transfer of learning is accomplished through demonstration of how and coaching students to collect ideas and make connections that yield informed conclusions across subjects. Conclusions are subsequently made public through various art forms. Also prevalent in AI best practice is a focus on multiple examples and coaching students to create quality work.

**7. Differentiation.** Best teaching practices include differentiation, but it is set off as a pillar because of its importance. Instruction is not effective unless it is customized to learner strengths, interests, and needs, particularly for the most vulnerable students, especially those living in poverty. Differentiating is about adjusting the what (outcomes), where, and how (instruction) for unique whos. Arts integration makes the *what* richer, the *where* more aesthetic, and the *how* more engaging. And differences among the *whos* are not summarily viewed as deficiencies. Instructional options are expanded with emphasis on arts communication processes, texts and materials that include multiple intelligences interventions, multisensory methods, and multimodal/digital media—examples of texts that stretch how students learn to construct meaning and eventually “show they know.”

**8. Instructional design.** The type, frequency, and order of arts-based learning are important to AI success. The ideal is for the arts to be made integral to most learning. At the unit and lesson level, a thorough and predictable focus on meaningful integration is supported when lessons are “pronged”—they target both arts and non-art standards/outcomes and dispositional goals, such as

persistence. Furthermore, lessons display a clear introduction, development, and conclusion, an organization that leads students to assessable objectives for non-arts and arts learning.

Distinctive arts routines are built into the classroom schedule, such as opening with art discussions, songs, and interactive poem charts. Woven throughout instruction are energizers to spark creative thinking and movement breaks. Other prominent design elements include scheduled opportunities for ongoing independent research (e.g., Artists Birthday Buddies).

At the school-wide level, there may be a yearly theme (e.g., Circle of Life), and there are always ongoing arts options including clubs (drumming circle, drama troupe, photography, show choir)—some before and after school.

**9. Assessment FOR learning.** Assessment stands cheek by jowl with best teaching practices. And while assessment has many purposes, AI particularly focuses on using assessment (collecting evidence) to *motivate more learning*. Features include making learning outcomes/goals clear to students at the outset, giving continuous feedback on progress during inquiry into challenges, and student self-assessment against expectations criteria. Multiple forms of assessment are used since students can “show they know” in multiple ways, including short- and long-term projects that result in performances and exhibits. In addition, the full AI program is assessed with focus on its impact on the mission, vision, and specific goals and objectives for student achievement, motivation, discipline, attendance, and community involvement.

**10. Arts partnerships.** Work with arts specialists from within and outside the school is necessary and includes co-planning and co-teaching. Teaching artists are brought in to plan, coach teachers, and conduct residencies with students, with the classroom teachers present and engaged as learners. Partnership opportunities are vigorously pursued to involve parents, community arts agencies, and cultural organizations in ways that align with the mission/vision and are mutually beneficial. Check out Texas-based Big Thought for extended examples of partnership levels and how they form to reach common goals through shared human and financial resources.

## Center Stage: Teachers

Findings from diverse arts integration projects emphasize the prominent role of teachers and document characteristics of those who reach high levels of meaningful integration (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005; Freeman, Seashore, & Werner, 2003; Horowitz, 2004; Ingram & Seashore, 2003; Weissman, 2004). As Marron (2003) points out, active teacher involvement in developing and implementing AI is key to changing the school culture (p. 95). Of course, teachers must feel empowered to make change. As they acquire more and more arts knowledge, their instructional repertoire is enlarged, which grows confidence and enables teachers to differentiate instruction for struggling learners. As teachers observe how students respond positively to arts-based strategies, they raise their expectations for all, with more focus on identifying and teaching to strengths and needs. Here is a sampling of other positive changes correlated with arts integration:

**Changed Views of Learning and Instruction.** When struggling readers and writers become successful in arts-based contexts, teachers develop hope. As passive students transform into learners motivated to learn, teachers realize it isn’t about stamps, points, and grades. Working with arts specialists, they learn to coach and facilitate rather than lecture and assign. Most powerful is seeing students use creative inquiry to generate conclusions and show understanding through art forms. Teachers, themselves, also discover unknown interests and strengths and begin to take more leadership. For example, teachers in North Carolina A+ schools became more resilient to problems like funding cuts and loss of their principal, which sustained arts integration (Horowitz, 2004).

**Application of Research and Theory.** Teachers design heads-on, hearts-on, hands-on instruction informed by theories such as multiple intelligences, creative inquiry, and brain research. They engage students more directly with challenges and “think” questions, causing students to generate original interpretations and create novel solutions reflected in arts products.

**Reaching Diverse Learners.** Arts experiences reveal different aspects of students, causing teachers to deepen their understanding of abilities and potential. Overlooked students become significant players in the learning game as teachers learn alternative ways to assess and employ strategies that tap learner strengths.

**Culture of Excellence.** Schools and classrooms become aesthetic places as teachers make physical and psychological changes typified by safe and stimulating environments and high expectations for quality work.

**Broadened Repertoire.** Through collaborative planning and teaching with arts specialists, teachers expand their arts instruction toolkits; this provides new ways to engage students. Teachers see firsthand how students are motivated by the “power of the audience” and harness that force regularly with the classroom. Students learn to critique performances and choose to revise for quality. As competence grows, so does confidence.

**More Arts and More Transfer.** As the arts are placed on a more equal footing with other subjects, they become key teaching and learning tools. Key to the transition is accepting the arts as communication forms, literacies central to 21st-century learning. Core academic content and skills are increasingly integrated into teaching arts lessons, too. For example, units are often designed that focus on an artist such as Eric Carle or arts text (e.g., picture book or song).

**Big Ideas and Important Questions.** Grade-level integrated units and school-wide curricular themes become organizing features. Teachers and students learn how to ask important questions that lead to big idea conclusions. Creative inquiry ratchets learning toward understanding and the arts provide the way to show that new learning.

**Networking.** Teachers seek partnerships with artists, arts agencies, parents, and other community members to make arts integration work. For example, at Normal Park Museum Magnet in Chattanooga, Tennessee, teachers created family nights to involve parents in the arts; the “openings” of student exhibits draw others into the excitement of arts integration.

## Arts-Based Reform: National, Regional, and State Efforts

*Arts education remains critical to leveling the playing field of opportunity.* Arne Duncan, Secretary, U.S. Department of Education (2012).

To reiterate, a single model for arts integration doesn’t, and shouldn’t, exist. Frameworks evolve to fit individual sites, with the *quality* of implementation looming large in determining student growth (Burnaford, 2007; Corbett, Wilson, & Morse, 2005; Rabkin & Redmond, 2005a). Various national and regional models have emerged, many using startup money from private philanthropies such as the Ford Foundation and the Annenberg Foundation. Established projects include the Minneapolis Arts for Academic Achievement (AAA), Chicago Arts Partners in Education (CAPE) model, and the North Carolina A+ model.

Comprehensive research reports increasingly document how learning can be transformed through thoughtful implementation of AI principles (Arts Education Partnership, 2013; Bellisario & Donovan, 2012; Burnaford, 2007; Deasy, 2002; Deasy & Stevenson, 2005). In all 50 states and at all grade levels classes are undergoing arts-based transformation. The Southeast Center for Education in the Arts lists 50 models across the country (Southeast Center, n.d.). What’s more, Common Core has further laid a foundation that supports interdisciplinary curriculum and instructional design, which better aligns with 21st-century communication, and is interwoven with the arts and technology produced by creative thinkers.

Since 2002, the U.S. Department of Education has made grants available to develop arts-integrated curricula (<http://www.2ed.gov/programs/artsedmodel/index.html>). One highly successful music example is Tucson’s “Opening Minds Through the Arts,” a consortium of the Tucson Symphony Opera, the University of Arizona, and the Tucson Arts Connection (Deasy & Stevenson, 2005). Other recipients of grants, from up to a million dollars, include Rockford, Illinois, schools; the Mississippi Arts Commission; and Arts Connection (New York City). Of growing interest is using Title I funds to support arts-based instruction—a thoroughly legitimate use of these monies (Stevenson et al., 2012).

## Government-Affiliated Organizations

*Art engages the world. Artists make work about things, ideas, questions, relationships, emotions, problems, and solutions. Arts integration is modeled on the methods and purposes of real artists.* Nick Rabkin & Robin Redmond (2005a)

Notable organizations exist for the express purpose of transforming education using arts-based models. These include the Arts Education Partnership and the Kennedy Center's Partners in Education.

## Arts Education Partnership (AEP)

First created under Goals 2000, AEP is a national coalition of arts, education, business, philanthropic, and government organizations. The primary focus is helping states and local school districts integrate the arts into their educational improvement plans. The partnership was formed through a cooperative agreement among the National Endowment for the Arts, the U.S. Department of Education, the National Assembly of State Arts Agencies, and the Council of Chief State School Officers. AEP sponsors nationwide forums and on its website publishes newsletters, articles, and lists of resources related to research and promising practices. In 2012, AEP launched ArtsEdsSearch, an excellent searchable database of research on arts education.

## The Partners in Education of the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts

Barbara Shepherd, director of the Kennedy Center National Partnerships, puts high priority on “institutionalizing” arts in education through total education reform, including changing concepts about teaching, beginning at the pre-service level. Her greatest wish is for “every student and classroom to have access to a teacher who can integrate the arts, plus arts specialists and visiting professional artists” (2005). The nationwide partnership program, based in Washington, DC, fosters collaborations among arts agencies and schools, with teams in 43 states, Washington, DC, and Mexico; Ohio and South Carolina boast the most sites. Schools and arts institutions partner to provide professional learning for classroom teachers interested in using the arts as teaching tools. ArtsEdge, a comprehensive arts education website, grew out of the program (Kennedy Center, n.d.).

## Teacher Spotlight

### First-Year Teacher

*“I love when I see kids connect across subject areas. They might not understand in one class, but then they do when the same thing is presented through an art. That is awesome! I wish I had learned this way—where things aren't separate. It just makes so much sense!”* (Kristin Brady, teacher, 2013)

This book is for teachers, and Chapter 1 began with a spotlight on Judy Trotter, a *veteran* teacher. It is appropriate to end with a first-year teacher, also on the faculty at Ashley River Creative Arts. Fannie Petros touts arts integration's focus on “the whole picture of learning.” Since she graduated from the Chattanooga School for the Arts and Sciences, a K–12 arts-based school, she also speaks as a former student.

While an undergraduate at the College of Charleston, Fannie visited Ashley River for a practicum. “This wasn't a typical school. The doors were open, there was art everywhere and so much active participation.” She recalls a teacher showing students how to *draw* math story problems.

After she was hired, Fannie found that her fellow teachers were her most valuable arts integration resources. “Their strongest message is to use your imagination to create what you need.” She quickly adopted their concept of AI, instruction that focuses on active minds-on, hands-on learning. She explains, “Kids have to create their own meanings, and they do this through exploration.”

Fannie soon learned it took lots of time to plan for the core curriculum and simultaneously remain true to the school's arts mission. “But it is worth it. When you see how much the kids love to be here and how they really get it, you know. Even with the lowest kids it is clicking. It's why I became a teacher.”

She especially loves to dovetail the arts with literacy. Every day the kids sing and “act out” words, including high-frequency words. She emphasizes spelling patterns using musical elements like rhythm. If the word is *low*, they spell it in a low voice. “As a student I hated vocabulary. My students love it.” Like the other teachers, Fannie also connects literacy to science and social studies. During a

(continued)

recent unit, students studied Chinese culture through reading, writing, and origami and learned to perform the Chinese dragon dance. “Students learn to be in an audience and in front of an audience. It builds so much confidence when you are in the spotlight,” she explains.

According to Fannie, the arts give learning advantages. “I see that a-ha moment when kids learn through the arts—especially ones who weren’t succeeding otherwise. I tell them when they accept their Oscars, they better remember their first-grade teacher!” ✨

## Conclusion

*A child who has not pretended, doodled, danced, and hummed will not only have trouble reading and writing, he will have trouble BEING.* Zoomie (2014)

As schools shift focus to more challenging standards and the realities of the next America, the arts are more important than ever. As historical sources of creative thinking, the arts are leading the way to an educational revolution. With their inquiry-based nature, they invite us to look creatively at contemporary problems—poverty, resource shortages, and climate change—with new eyes. Grounded in “what if” thinking, the arts liberate risk taking and draw upon innate imaginative abilities to invent new and usable solutions.

Acknowledged repositories of human creative thought, the arts are also at the core of new communication technologies. Without creativity, blogs, YouTube, Pinterest, and other multimedia technologies would not exist. Artful thinking created these innovations, and the arts are central to how they function, with most relying on aspects of music, visual art, drama, storytelling, music, and dance. Think of how fast-evolving social networking is now used in formerly unimaginably creative ways—moving fluidly from empty chitchat to launching Twitter-inspired political revolutions.

Arts integration draws upon unique contributions the arts make to both life and learning. AI embraces a definition of literacy that includes receiving and expressing thoughts and emotions through the language arts and all the other arts, which gives students a communication advantage. When the “arts for learning” relationship is cultivated, a different classroom ethos is created that transforms how teachers think about students and how students learn to think. Much instruction is organized around unit designs that emphasize minds and hands-on projects investigated through creative inquiry. Students find and construct conclusions from content texts and perform and present understanding in various art forms.

To ensure that arts integration is more than a curricular veneer, educators plan *meaningful* arts integration. A framework of ten AI Pillars has emerged; these were introduced in this chapter. Drawing on research and components of diverse models, schools design an approach customized for their students, with the goal of teaching *through* the arts (i.e., using the arts as primary learning and communication vehicles).

Subsequent chapters build on ideas introduced in this chapter. In the next chapter, influential educational theories and research are described that create the philosophical foundation for arts integration.

**Pearson Video Resources** are available to accompany many chapters in this text. Go to the navigation bar in the eText and click on Video Resources for direct links to videos that advance your understanding of chapter concepts.

**Go to Pearson’s Children’s Literature Database** on the eText navigation bar. Search by book title, author, book topic, grade level, or book award to find motivating and developmentally appropriate trade books that support the integration of literature and the arts.

## Other Resources

See the Appendices, including Appendix I (websites).

### More Videos

*Arts for life.* AI rationale and examples. (Getty Center for Education in the Arts)

*Teaching in and through the arts.* (Getty Center for Education in the Arts)

*The arts: Tools for teaching.* (John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts)

*The arts and children: A success story.* (Arts Education Partnership)

College Board Advocacy and Policy Center. (Search videos)

Annenberg Learner (n.d.). (Video library on connecting with the arts)

YouTube. (Search arts integration or by arts area)

Public Broadcasting Service (PBS). (Podcasts about artists and the arts)

Brigham Young University. (Various AI resources)

Education Closet. (AI blog)

Wonder Teacher. (AI blog)

The Inspired Classroom. (AI blog)