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Inclusiveness in the classroom through Art-integrated learning

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Abstract

As our culture and civilization expand and flourish, the world of education is always changing. Our teaching methods are being replicated to reach the minds of tomorrow in a meaningful way. The use of the arts as a prism through which students can observe and explain alternative disciplines is known as arts integration. Art Integrated Learning is an innovative approach to teaching and learning that ensures productive and enjoyable classroom interactions to keep students' attention, encourage learners, support active participation in the classroom process, and allow them to develop their thinking abilities while taking into account individual differences and preferences. Howard Gardner's Diverse Intelligence Theory (1983) was a good way to encapsulate an Arts Integration strategy that might develop a student's autonomy by focusing on multiple learning styles and talents/abilities. The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has also produced extensive rules and a framework for integrating art into pedagogy to make an environment i.e "experiential and joyful" in lecture halls. This article looks at the benefits of Art Integrated Learning in terms of fostering inclusion in the classroom. The purpose of this study is to look at 'Arts' as a pedagogical tool and its impact on a child's overall learning and development. The importance of an Art Integrated Learning method is that it promotes inclusivity in the classroom while also serving as a facilitator/educator in developing inclusivity.

Learners use a variety of art genres to develop their creativity while making connections between seemingly disparate themes. Drawing and painting, clay modeling, pottery, paper crafts, mask and puppet making, heritage crafts, and other visual and performing arts activities (music, dance, theatre, puppetry, etc.).

Keywords: inclusivity, classroom, art integrated learning, individual differences, cheerful, facilitator

Introduction

Exposure to the arts has previously been proved to benefit students in academics. When the Arts are included in the curriculum, student achievement rises, engagement rises, behavior difficulties decrease, and students' attitudes toward the school and themselves improve. When the arts are incorporated into fundamental subjects in the classroom, critical thinking abilities are encouraged.

Integrated lessons give students a wide range of learning options, allowing them to play to their strengths while also demonstrating information in a variety of ways. Drawing, music, technology, and theatre may all be used to make teaching more relevant, connected, and contextual in any discipline. For educators, Arts Integration will give lessons and assessments a new lease on life by allowing students to creatively explore topics and ideas while also allowing them to use their skills to specialize their learning and knowledge in a variety of ways. There are a variety of simple and enjoyable ways to introduce pupils to the arts and to create transdisciplinary lessons. Students become critical thinkers and well-rounded human beings when the arts are included in core subject classrooms. Arts (visual, performing, and literary arts) become an intrinsic element of teachinglearning processes when they are integrated with various subjects. It entails implementing an Art-Integrated curriculum in which art is used to teach in the classroom. Cindra L. Ross (2008) [28].

Arts at the center of the syllabus help in understanding the concepts and ideas. The art-integrated syllabus will give means that to bridge the content of various subjects in logical, learner-centric, and substantive ways. Art is used to

correlating, link, concretize, and learn all subjects, including arithmetic, sciences, social sciences, and languages, as well as their abstract notions. Learning becomes holistic, enjoyable, and experiential when used in this manner. This module demonstrates how arts can be incorporated with many subjects through examples. It also identifies the stages at which the facilitator can apply his or her CCE skills and tools to improve learning. The training design provided, however, is adaptable, and the facilitator can change it to meet the learning objectives and achieve the desired learning results. (NISHTHA, 2020)

'ARTS' as Pedagogical tool of learning

Art Integrated Learning (AIL) is a teaching-learning methodology that emphasizes learning "through" and "with" the arts. It's a method in which art is used as a medium for teaching and learning, and it's a key to grasping concepts in any subject. Learners engage in creative exploration while making connections between seemingly disparate ideas through a variety of art media. Visual (drawing and painting, clay modeling, pottery, paper crafts, mask and puppet creation, heritage crafts, and so on) and performing arts (music, dance, theatre, puppetry, etc.) art experiences lead to a better understanding and construction of information or knowledge about various topics. The arts have the flexibility to give age-appropriate possibilities for students who want to explore at their speed. This is in line with the approach to experiential learning. The arts can be used to teach students at all levels of education. Art integrated learning is a hands-on approach that encourages pupils to use their imagination and emotional skills.

Students' needs will differ depending on their age, social settings, talent, and skills.

Postaukset (2018) stated that the principles of creative and integrative arts as a pedagogic tool in education comprised of:

A holistic view of learning — Aesthetic experiences — Possibility to move between nonverbal and verbal communication — Ability to see common and divergent issues between different arts — Reinforcement of the arts in integration — Empowering learners through integrative learning.

Art integration ensures experiential learning and construction of own knowledge with the help of different Art forms.

The Theory of Multiple Intelligences, developed by Howard Gardner, has ramifications in art instruction; though not for the reasons you might think. According to Gardner's view, one can have multiple types of intelligence, including linguistic, logical-mathematical, musical, spatial, bodilykinesthetic, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist intelligence. According to Gardner, because each student has different talents and weaknesses, educators should "present content in ways that leverage on as much different intelligence as possible and help students understand their strengths and weaknesses."He additionally expressed that when students are taught classroom content while addressing their learning form, the content is more simply acquired by the student. The Art Integrated Learning approach utilizes several learning styles noted in Gardener's MI theory.

David A. Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984) rests on the concept that every individual includes a specific type of learning tendencies and they are so dominant in certain stages of experiential learning. Some learners, for example, will excel in tangible learning and reflective observation, while others will excel at abstract conceptualization and active experimentation.

The four learning types are:

Diverging (feeling and watching): The diverging learning type is filled with learners who examine things with a novel perspective. They need to observe rather than do, and that they even have a powerful capability to imagine. These learners typically favor adding teams; have broad interests in cultures and other individuals. E.g. practical exercises, making a presentation, debates, team games, discussions on a particular topic, etc.

Assimilating (watching and thinking): This learning type involves learners obtaining clear knowledge. These learners will like ideas and abstracts to people and explore analytic models. Within the experiential learning type, these students focus on abstract conceptualization and reflective observation. For e.g. presentations and models.

Convergence (thinking and doing): Converging learners find solutions to problems. They apply what they've learned to sensible problems, and like technical tasks. They are conjointly proverbial to experiment with new ideas, and their learning focuses on abstract conceptualization and active experimentation. E.g. ask for observation, short report/notes on a particular topic, log and diaries writing, etc Accommodating (doing and feeling): These learners will like usefulness. They get pleasure from new challenges and use intuition to help to solve problems. These learners utilize concrete learning and active experimentation once they learn. E.g. role play, case studies, quiet thinking time, etc.

Here, Art Integrated Learning will satisfy this stuff by the desegregation of the subject with a particular type of art wherever students will have hands-on experience and a higher understanding of ideas.

Classroom activity

Name of the activity-Fun with magnets

Diverging: Showing live objects in the classroom i.e. showing bar magnets in the class where poles attract/repel each other. Reflecting upon what and why does it happen? Tabulating the information with combinations.

Assimilating: Experiment on Bar Magnets: Hanging bar magnet to a pole. The magnet always points to the north-south direction identifying the four directions using a magnet.

Converging: Making a compass. Using simple materials like a needle, bar magnet, bottle cork, small jar, paper, clay, pencil.

Accommodating: Testing objects from the classroom using a bar magnet from the science lab and checking what gets attracted and what doesn't.

As suggested by NCERT and Central Board of Secondary Education in Art Integrated Learning Guidelines (2019), Training Package for Art Integration for Primary Teachers, NCERT, 2015 there are some steps to be followed while Integrating Arts with the subject concerned.

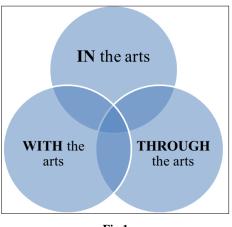
Ice-breaking stage: This is the first step in the teachinglearning process. The main focus here is on enhancing student attention and promoting interactivity between students and educators. The educator will strive to promote classroom involvement by incorporating art forms depending on the students' prior experiences and knowledge. While introducing the day's lesson, the educator will display or present any art form relating to the subject at hand, and then engage learners in creating or performing any art form. For example, use question-and-answer, flashcards, real items, and inquire about hobbies and interests.

Art Integration with the topic: Educators will provide everyone the chance to exhibit their creative side? When employing art forms as a pedagogic tool, the educator will rely on real-life examples and references. Educators will also give opportunities for students to learn by collaborating and cooperating. The educator will select two or more art forms and relate them to the subject that will be given in class. The teacher will divide the students into groups and give exercises to each group based on the art forms connected to the lesson. The educator will give instructions first and then according to the given instructions teacher will also scaffold students to meet the need for art-integrated learning. E.g. Music integrated activity, rhyming scheme, visual arts, video clips, rapping, playing, clay activity, etc.

Reflection stage: At this stage, each group will present or perform their assigned activity in front of the entire class. After that, each student from each group will name the exact art form that the group has chosen, and then explain what that art form entails. The learners will next engage in an open debate in which they will share their perspectives, ideas, and understanding. The subject will also be explained

to the art forms by the students. Finally, the educator will systematically describe all of the activities and learning linked with it to help pupils understand better. Debates, conversations, presentations, small group week, quotes, reflective essays, quote songs, and so on are examples of activities.

Assessment: After all of the previous processes have been completed, the educator will assess the student's performance or achievement by creating rubrics or administering achievement tests. Once the day's lesson is over, the educator can assign projects or other assignments to measure the students' understanding and development. Examples include a one-sentence overview, a minute paper, tasks, feedback forms, and an open-ended question.





Benefits of Art Integration Learning on Children's Development

Art-integrated learning could be a very important component of any child's development as a result it teaches cooperation, analytic, and creative skills. Traditional curricula that stress technical abilities, such as math and physics, to prepare students for undergraduate degrees, master's degrees, and even research scholars in a highly valued field of study sometimes leave these talents out. This limits children's freedom of expression and their ability to work on personal growth and attention.

- 1. **Creativity:** You can't envision a child who isn't creative because they don't know how to draw. Although art may appear to be a dull pastime, it is unsurpassed when it comes to developing creativity. More than other topics, such as physics and math, this branch of study aids pupils in expressing themselves. Art is seen to be an excellent way for children of all ages to improve their thinking and creativity. As a result, one of the main reasons why arts education should be prioritized in schools is to foster creativity. (May 2020, Sandra Larson)
- 2. Attention to Detail: Arts integration in the classroom is also beneficial since it aids in the development of attention to detail in children. While drawing something on paper, they concentrate on every step. Acting, singing, and drawing are all good ways to enhance focus. They begin paying attention at a young age, which is critical for a successful pedagogic profession. This is an important talent that will help children achieve in school, in their personal life, and their careers.

- 3. **Making Decisions:** Children who are interested in the arts develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills. You can envision a student selecting to channel their emotions through a specific character. While painting and performing the dance on stage, they learn a lot about decision-making. Arts have been proven to play an important influence in strengthening decision-making processes in studies. It is easier for pupils to choose the best option from a list of options. This is why arts integration in schools is so important.
- 4. **Manual Dexterity:** The development of fine motor skills is a key benefit of arts education. Instruments are a huge hit with kids. That's why they enjoy scribbling with crayons and wielding a paintbrush. Many pupils cannot complete a task flawlessly due to a lack of motor skills. Painting, coloring, cutting, beading, sketching, writing, erasing, and tracing are all productive motor skills exercises. Small muscle movements of the hand, fingers, and wrist are required for these skills. These skills assist children in performing tasks such as buttoning, writing, and zippering.
- 5. Self-confidence: Students of all levels gain confidence by participating in artistic activities. According to studies, students who participate in various art activities are more confident than those who do not. Onstage singing and acting performances help children gain confidence in front of an audience. Appreciation from mentors and bystanders also helps to boost confidence.
- 6. Academic Achievement: Art is not only beneficial for developing creative skills, but it also aids your child in achieving a variety of academic goals. He starts to excel in all of his classes and extracurricular activities. Nowadays, children are more interested in technical devices such as smart phones, tablets, and computers. They rarely engage in physical activity. Arts pave the path for higher performance in school-related activities.
- 7. **Visual Learning:** For young children, painting, sculpting, and drawing are regarded to be excellent ways to enhance visual learning. The impact of the arts has been underlined by researchers. As a result, youngsters should not be limited to just text and numbers. Painting and drawing on paper allow kids to learn a lot about the world and helps them remember it for longer.
- 8. **Teamwork:** During art courses in school, children sit together and collaborate on drawing projects. It allows them to work together, share resources, and create stunning artwork. Children begin to understand the concept of responsibility and begin to work cooperatively with their classmates to attain common goals.
- 9. **Challenges:** While making art, you may encounter a variety of difficult scenarios. Young children learn how to deal with problems like these and find solutions to solve them. Trials and hardships abound in life. Arts play an important role in preparing pupils for future problems.
- 10. **Persistence:** If you are determined and consistent, you can achieve anything in life. Art has a unique power to develop tenacity in students of all levels, despite the fact that many other topics have a role in this regard.
- 11. **Cultural awareness:** Art is universal, which means that every culture has its art style or way of seeing the world. In an increasingly diverse culture, children can

become more culturally conscious.

12. Accountability and commitment: Children learn accountability by making decisions while creating art. They also learn that hard work and practice result in polished output that they may be proud of.

Arts education helps to reduce stress among the economically disadvantaged: A study of 310 pre-schoolers from low-income families found that include music, dance, and visual arts lessons in their curriculum helped to reduce stress (Society for Research in Child Development, 2016). Given that poverty causes stress, which in turn causes poor health, the benefits of arts education may be greatest for those who are economically disadvantaged.

Helps children to appreciate numeracy: While children work with simple collage materials and beads, number concepts and classification can be presented. "Art is about patterns and problem solving, not just emotion, color, or aesthetics" (Reyner, 2008) ^[22]. This aids in the comprehension of numeracy concepts by children.

Significance of Art Integrated Learning in Nurturing Inclusivity in Classroom

Gardner (1990) [9] stated, "Individuals do not develop simply by existing, or growing older, or turning into larger; they must undergo certain pivotal experiences that lead to periodic reorganizations of their knowledge and understanding" (p. 3). This includes students with disabilities. Instead of lecturing educators on why inclusive practices are necessary for all students, creating a schoolwide project that incorporates the arts is a more effective way of demonstrating how to promote inclusive education and allow students to benefit from the rich learning experience achieved via participation in arts-related activities. The arts are fun, engaging, educational, and naturally inclusive. According to Gardner (1990)^[9]:

...when students are themselves engaged in rich and engaging projects, which call upon a variety of modes of representation; when they have the opportunity to interact and communicate with individuals these are the settings that allow for proper alignment of the various kinds of information by those who demonstrate complimentary types of learning. (p. 31-32)

Gardner (1994) ^[10] also wrote, "Because the arts give a natural means for men to act and to speak, they can reveal important and elusive knowledge regarding the experiences and subjective life of others" (p. 349). Additionally, there is no right or wrong path to participate in the arts, and because of this, every individual is equally able to contribute to the production of the arts. For example, when integrated into the syllabus, dance and movement permit students to use their minds and bodies, and change them to creatively communicate their thoughts, ideas, and contributions to a lesson; the visual arts help to engage students' problemsolving and critical thinking skills, aid in fine motor development, and, along with dance, can help promote prosocial behaviors when working cooperatively; and music is a way to help students maintain a calm and relaxed state, become engrossed and focused on the task at hand, and create an enjoyable atmosphere. The arts enable all students to participate in and contribute to a lesson, promote creative skills and abilities, and allow educators to see how every student can contribute to the activity. Furthermore, the arts support learning in numerous ways. Gardner (1994) ^[10]

described how the arts provide "pure pleasure" (p. 21) for children through their "therapeutic qualities" (p. 346).

Valentino (2016) ^[28] also stated that including visual and performing arts into lessons is successful in ensuring that all students have an equal opportunity to enjoy, participate in, and benefit from the inclusive classroom environment and the arts. Supporting different pupils in a general education classroom necessitates knowledge of how the brain functions. Different types of art can also help to foster inclusiveness in the classroom.

Arts enables all students to participate in and contribute to a lesson, while also promoting creative abilities and talents and allowing educators to assess how each student can contribute to the activity.

Movement, Dance, and Performance

Dance in a classroom setting will "provide opportunities for major social contacts," "result in an exceptionally profound sense of belonging," and "may connect individuals and develop a greater sense of community," according to the researchers (Kaufmann, 2006, p. 29) ^[14]. According to Kaufmann (2006) ^[14], cooperating through dance "assists kids in developing a respect for diversity." Dance's social benefits are especially important for those with disabilities, who frequently face social isolation and loneliness. The dance will boost their socialization opportunities" (p. 30).

Music

Music is a great way to boost positive sentiments, efficiency, and general enjoyment in the classroom, thus the educational benefits are vast. Music, on the other hand, offers therapeutic elements that can help youngsters and persons with impairments.

Doidge $(2015)^{[6]}$ claims that:

Because many brain illnesses are caused by the brain losing its rhythm and firing in an offbeat or "dysrhythmic" fashion, music therapy holds a lot of promise in treating these conditions. Music medicine's rhythms can help the brain "get back on the beat" in a noninvasive method. (See p. 347).

Visual Art

According to Holdren (2012) ^[13], art affects "students to note and manipulate detail" (p. 693); interact in "metaphoric connections" (p. 696), "manipulation of detail" (p. 697), and "problem-solving" (p. 697) tactics; and "enjoy higher levels of engagement" (p. 697) techniques (p. 700). Working together on visual art projects "can give an option that accommodates a variety of working methods and engages students in critical thinking skills," according to the authors (p. 692). Furthermore, art is a versatile medium that allows "students with a wide range of working styles" to "fit their preferences and...Adapt the creating process" (p. 700);

The phrase "students with a diversity of working styles...adapt well to generating art" means "students with a variety of working styles...adapt well to creating art" (p. 702). When students engage in art projects, Holdren (2012) ^[13] explains that there are "clear benefits of collaboration, problem-solving, synthesis, and detail evaluation," as well as "increased emotional engagement and differentiation of working styles," which make learning "both rigorous and enjoyable for students." Because of the advantages of art, "powerful learning" can take place for all kids (p. 703).

When employed in a group context, the arts not only

encourage inclusive education, but also provide students with a basic grasp of dealing with a diverse population, promote cooperation with others, and demonstrate everyone's contributions. Using a school-wide art project to promote inclusive education is an effective technique to explain how inclusion is implemented and to advocate its use without pressuring educators to accept a new teaching strategy they are not yet comfortable with. This type of activity allows everyone to have a good time while learning, while also encouraging social engagement, inclusive practices, and instructional equality.

As a result of the foregoing discussion, it can be stated that arts integration is a significant tool for achieving numerous learning designs across the curriculum and is associated with improved academic outcomes as well as better social and emotional development in children. On a larger scale, integrating art into regular classroom subjects will cater to individual needs while also cultivating inclusivity in the classroom by providing ample opportunities for classroom engagement and artistic expression while maintaining a holistic approach to the teaching-learning process.

Role of Facilitator/Educator in Nurturing Inclusivity in Classroom through Art Integrated Learning Approach

According to Stainback and Stainback (1996) ^[25], Vandercook and York (1990) ^[29], Thousand and Villa (2000) ^[30], Weiner (2002) ^[31] The involvement of students, educators, specialists, administrators, parents, and community members, all working together in a team, is a significant key to the success of inclusion.

A booming Art Integrated classroom is dependent on the educator's efforts to integrate arts with the other subjects. In an Art Integrated classroom, the educator is predicted to play the role of a mentor; guide, and facilitator of students who helps facilitate the learning process by desegregation different types of art relating to the subject topic. However, most of the educators have to lack correct knowledge of how to integrate various art forms with the topic by emphasizing inclusion and learning outcomes at a time.

There are some important considerations to keep in mind while applying the Art Integrated Learning approach in the classroom to foster inclusivity:

- 1. A comprehensive approach to learning
- 2. Aesthetic encounters
- 3. Ability to switch back and forth between nonverbal and verbal communication
- 4. The ability to see the similarities and differences between different arts.
- 5. Artistic reinforcement in integration
- 6. Using integrated learning to empower students
- 7. Encouraging others to think about things differently.
- 8. Creating an environment in which all opinions are welcomed
- 9. Providing youngsters with decision-making opportunities
- 10. Identifying each child's unique strength
- 11. Encouraging children to collaborate and work together while simultaneously working independently
- 12. Every day of learning should be filled with fun, laughter, and new experiments and experiences.
- 13. Provide opportunities for students to role-play.
- 14. Allow kids to sketch and name their thoughts, ideas, and feelings to express themselves.
- 15. Encourage the use of art-related vocabulary.

- 16. Educate parents on the importance of being prepared and having a clear understanding of the subject.
- 17. Allow students to be flexible and encourage them to engage in AIL's capacity building.

Conclusion

An inclusive classroom, according to DeWilde (2019)^[5], is created when a teacher considers all students' needs. The focus on the whole child is sometimes lost in an educational atmosphere of high-stakes testing and expectations. Teachers must take a step back and observe the students in their classes. Children have a variety of learning styles, interests, and talents, and they all need to be taught and assessed in ways that allow them to use and develop their interests and skills. Years of research and study have consistently demonstrated that arts exposure, combined with integrated courses and evaluations, enhances student success, cognitive capacity, self-esteem, attitudes, and conduct. The arts provide context and relevance to learning across a wide range of subjects. Students can better process and retain information by engaging in creative exploration of ideas and concepts. Time, training, and money constraints are constantly present, preventing effective practices from being adopted in schools. Art integration is simple to implement in any classroom by making minor adjustments to current teachings and assessments and simply providing students with creative options.

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