

## ARTS INTEGRATION

In the old days, not so very long ago, we thought it was enough to take the kids on a few field trips and maybe let them hear an artist talk about life in the arts world: a little symphony, a little opera, a little ballet.

Now we're seeing that children (and adults!) learn better through the arts. They are more interested in what they're learning, they stay more engaged, and the things they learn don't just evaporate from their short-term memory, but remain firmly established in long term memory.

We still want children to learn about the arts for the arts sake. Heaven knows we need dancers, musicians, painters, sculptors, actors, directors, lighting designers and writers of all sorts. But we're also learning that every person has an artist inside of her or him. Not just one artist, but artists in all the fields of the arts. We can develop these talents in our children at the same time that we're increasing their engagement in long division, Latin, push-ups and the Peloponnesian Wars. Just through integrating the arts.

The good news is that it doesn't take more time in the classroom to teach through the arts. Oh sure, it requires some more planning time, and it's great to plan with colleagues in different subject areas. And of course, we as teachers, parents and administrators will want to spend some time brainstorming and filling in all the ways we can integrate the arts throughout the curriculum, but it's worth the effort to see students getting excited about school, and even doing better on standardized tests.

For some great examples, see all the Notable North Carolina Arts in Education projects on this web site as well as the national models.