



# Bo-Tree

WISDOM • PEOPLE • COMMUNITY • REFLECTIONS

## Arts in Education

*Arts education not only enhances students' understanding of the world around them, but it also broadens their perspective on traditional academics.*

*The arts give us the creativity to express ourselves, while challenging our intellect.*

*-Dr. Terry Bergeson*

### INTRODUCTION:

The foundations of the present education system were laid at the end of the nineteenth century. However, we are at the dawn of a new century. The challenges we face now are of the same magnitude, but they are of a different character. The new world order calls for valuing and integrating creativity in teaching and learning, in curriculum, in management and leadership and linking this to promoting knowledge and understanding of cultural diversity.

### OVERVIEW:

The purpose of infusing arts in education is the holistic development of a child by making learning fun, increasing retention, helping children think on their own and exposing the child to a variety of experiences.

Research has proved that giving different art experiences which includes art activities,

music and theater to all the age group children shows high academic achievements.

- Musical activities and poetry lead to increased language expression
- Drama activities provide children with increased facility in English as a second language
- Reading programmes integrated with music help children to build their vocabulary and increase retention
- Role play and story writing activities lead to increased vocabulary and reading comprehension
- Music and movement help develop eye-hand coordination, stimulate the neural coordination and enhance physical development
- Talking about art work in art appreciation activities and analyzing paintings improves children's thinking skills, reasoning and abstraction.

*"The world speaks to me in colours, my soul answers in music."*

*-Rabindranath Tagore*

THE VISUAL ARTS

Students respond positively when they have opportunities to learn through the visual arts. Using arts, visuals and drawings increases abstract reasoning skills and develops spatial intelligence. Children tend to remember more of a visual picture than the written word or an audible lesson.

MUSIC

Rhythm improves memory and aesthetic skills. Learning to play an instrument or compose music requires intense concentration, practice and discipline and the ability to persevere and see processes through from beginning to end. Making music together develops collaborative skills and team work that can be used throughout life.

DANCE

Movement is the key to learning. Dance creates strong, coordinated, well-disciplined bodies that can move with grace and individual style. Preparing to give a dance performance by memorizing the choreography, rehearsing, and collaborating with other dancers exercises and develops critical thinking skills along with persistence and perseverance.

DRAMA

The goal of creative drama is to build the dramatic imagination in a social context and to develop the ability of children to connect imagination to action. Creative drama helps understand different cultural contexts, improves confidence and communication abilities and enhances the understanding of human behavior.

### SKILLS LEARNT THROUGH THE ARTS:

**Interpersonal Skills:** working on teams, teaching others, leading, negotiating, and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds.

**Thinking Skills:** thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, seeing things in the mind's eye, knowing how to learn, and reasoning.

**Socio-cultural Skills:** higher cultural awareness, sensitivity towards other cultures, builds a sense of identity.

**Personal Qualities:** individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management and integrity.

References for further reading:

- 'Road map for arts in education' - a UNESCO report available online: <http://www.culture-school.net/doc/UNESCO%20Road%20Map.pdf>,
- Art Projects at Harvard Project Zero: <http://www.pz.harvard.edu/research/ResearchArts.htm>