

Art is one of the many lenses or perspectives through which one can learn about the world within and around them. It is a great tool to see into the subconscious mind of the artist and learn about their particular perspective of reality. Art is also a tool that allows for personal expression. Art can be extremely cathartic to someone of any age. Art is especially important in the current educational system. Education is far too focused on the logistics and standards associated with scores and tests. Art is a subject that allows for such intimate personal expression that grading cannot be focused solely on content, but also on the context, process, effort, and ability of the student. Subjects within the arts are excellent facilitators of personal expression and allow for a variety of teaching methods.

Art Education facilitates creativity and expression. When the creative process is invoked we are able to access something greater inside all of us. The creative process is a fantastic way to connect with another student. When students are allowed untethered expression they are able to release emotions, frustrations, and express themselves. Self-expression is important not only to understand oneself but to understand others. What can be characterized by style, mood, technique, or ability all relate to the ability of self-expression. Equally as important is the ability to be creative. Creativity allows for interesting solutions to problems; on the canvas, in and out of the classroom.

Students who thrive in being creative can also see a benefit in their creative thinking skills. Creative thinking and problem-solving can be of great benefit when creating art or finding solutions and answers within other subjects.

Another purpose of art is to experience a universal language spoken by all people. Art is one of the few means of communication that transcends language and is only limited by the potential of

the human mind to form associations. Being a universal language has the positive aspect of being able to transcend linguistic boundaries however this is limited by the sheer biased of interpretation. As a result of life experience and my own personal biases, I can interpret a painting completely differently than someone who may have the same artistic knowledge and skill as myself. Setting aside interpretation Art is one of the few ways people can communicate effectively without much disagreement as to the overall goal, message, or subject of the work.

In a way, we are all artists using art as a language for communication. We are experiencing reality every day and using our mind's eye, previous associations, and sight to make inferences about what the world around us looks like. Teaching Art is far more than a subject to break up the mundane routine of the school day. Art is the ultimate form of communication because we see all that we experience. Specifically the visual spectrum of light, emotions, color, tactile, and auditory sensations. We are living in the midst of a beautiful tapestry of many dimensions, in which all the fibers are the various vibratory spectrums. Art is one way to decode this beautiful tapestry and try to make sense of something that doesn't have to make any.

Art is one of the great tools we have been left with to promote harmony, unity, and understanding; something so greatly needed in our current society. Understanding art goes far beyond the classroom and teaching art extends far beyond color, line, and shape. Art is a universal language that tackles the big ideas, questions and allows for untethered self-expression. Art is a tool to bridge the conversation that is the learning process. A student is able to express themselves with minimal restrictions on the canvas. I strongly believe the best kind of teacher does not simply use traditional teaching methods such as standing in front of a classroom and

acting as the sole source of information. The best kind of teacher is more progressive in their approach. They are able to see their students as intellectually creative equals. Teachers can best promote the learning of every student in their classroom by first putting themselves in the shoes of the individual student and trying to understand the unique perspective that each student holds. Students are Artists within their own right.

Therefore, I believe someone of any age or ability can inspire a new perspective, a new idea, or a new thought that wouldn't have been realized without the novelty of limited experience. I have seen this firsthand during my fieldwork and teaching experience. This aspect of learning is invaluable to me, the truth that everyone's interpretation and opinion should be valued and understood. As an Art Educator, I seek to improve the artistic ability of all my view the world.