Art Education:
Helping the Children of Today
Not Miss Out on a Greater Tomorrow

Written By:
Lauren Bailey
Elementary Art Education
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Educating a child is the most important task that needs to occur in the world because if a child is not educated the child will not have the knowledge to be able to make a significant contribution to the world. Educating a child is also the hardest task to take on because it is analyzed over and over again. Lately in education, many schools have had to make the unfortunate decision to cut their art program because of budget constraints or time constraints. Unfortunately, because the schools that are cutting their art education program, they are also cutting a vitally important part of a child’s education that they need in order to grow into a well-rounded adult. Through different journal articles we will examine just how important art can be in a child’s life.

Several researchers have studied the impact of art on the lives of students throughout the country. There are several convincing reports that show how much students benefit from art education. The first convincing report, from the College Entrance Examination Board, shows students benefit from art education because they score “59 points higher on the verbal SAT exam and 44 points higher on the math portion than students with no course work or experience in the arts” (Fox, B4). By studying art education, students can broaden their horizons and obtain new skills. In art education students can increase their “perception of relationships, attention to detail, critical analysis, and decision-making skills” (Fox, B4). These qualities help them not only achieve higher scores on their SAT exams, but they also are qualities employers are looking for in people they want to hire. Charolette Fox, a journalist for Anchorage Daily News, reports that the “work force requirements in the 21st century include
creative thinking, problem solving, and appreciation for diversity” (Fox, B4). All of these skills are brought out of students within art education programs. One special group of students that art helps is at-risk children. Many times because of different circumstances at-risk children are hard to reach in the classroom, but researches have found “compelling evidence that the arts are an effective tool for reaching children (who are) at risk” (Fox, B4). Art has made a difference in their lives, as well as the lives of many other students.

Because of the budget constraints and time constraints schools systems across the United States are being forced to cut their art education programs. Karen MacPherson, a reporter for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette, reports, “school officials say now (after the No Child Left Behind reform) they need to focus most of their attention and money on reading and math, the subjects in which students are tested annually under this law” (MacPherson, B2). Unfortunately the ways math and reading are taught do not always make sense to many learners. Charolette Fox explains that when students participate in art “they are using their hands, feet, bodies, and minds in ways that they cannot in math or science class” (Fox, B4). Art is reaching them at a new level and impacting their future not only in school, not only in the workplace, but in their lives as well. Rena Upitis, a reporter for Canadian Business and Current Affairs, reports that by teaching students art they learn to “make socially significant experiences memorable and pleasurable and to make otherwise unbearable experiences bearable” (Upitis, 12). In art class students learn more than just how to draw with crayons and paper. Rena Upitis also explains that art students are able to learn how to
“savoir ambiguity, tolerate difference(s), learn that nuance matters…make judgments in absence of rules, (and) that human purposes and goals are best held with flexibility” (Uptis, 12). It is great to be able to know the quadratic formula inside and out, but students can get through life without having to use it. However, flexibility, tolerance, ambiguity, unbearable experiences, and nuances are things people deal with every day and if students do not have art a chance to experience art, life will be harder for them.

Every day a new education reform comes along. Today, it is the No Child Left Behind reform. Sadly, some educators and state officials believe the No Child Left Behind reform is the end all of end alls and officials are worried that if students do not pass the tests there will be major repercussions. It is sad to see vital education programs, like art education, cut. Hopefully some day everyone will see how vital art education is and make art education a mainstay in the lives of students. But until then, it is up to the rest of the educators to help supplement the education the children in their classroom are receiving today. Hopefully, all educators will look at what is being cut within their school system, whether it is art or music or physical education, and try to add that back into their daily classrooms activities, so the children of today will not miss out on a greater tomorrow. If we all work together, we can conquer this education hurdle and change the world one step at a time.
Works Cited

