



Art & Early Literacy

Art activities are one of the best ways to promote literacy and brain development in early childhood. Early childhood is an especially important time for hands-on, self-directed learning. Art engages children's senses in open-ended play and develops Cognitive, Social-Emotional & Multi-Sensory skills. Meaningful art experiences provide children with authentic self expression—the freedom of choice, thought and feeling.

The Synergy between Art and Literacy

Spatial Relations/Visual Literacy: Art promotes print awareness and the ability to differentiate scribbles, markings and shapes—as well as directionality and position

Eye/Hand/Brain Coordination: Art promotes the ability to interpret visual information, alter that information, and respond to a continuous flow of new information being sent from hand to eye to brain

Verbal Creativity: Combining literacy and art activities allows children to expand their oral communication skills and learn a wide range of sensory-rich vocabulary words

Visual Creativity: Combining literacy and art experiences allows children to represent their ideas and feelings visually, and enhances imagination, visual language, and spatial relations skills

Aesthetics: Combining literacy and art allows children to have daily opportunities for aesthetic expression

Self Esteem: Self-esteem is enhanced when children's emerging literacy skills and art explorations are valued and respected.

Developmental Goals of Art

Physical Development

1. Fine-motor development
2. Visual perceptual development
3. Eye-hand-brain coordination
4. Spatial awareness

Cognitive Development

1. Decision-making skills
2. Problem-solving skills
3. Cause and effect understanding
4. Non-verbal communication

Social Development

1. Social and oral language skills
2. Sharing materials and taking turns
3. Respect for own and other's work
4. Multi-cultural awareness

Emotional Development

1. Independence in making choices
2. Creative self-expression
3. Sensory pleasure & satisfaction
4. Self esteem



Practical Ideas for Your Classroom

- Create a rich literacy environment by putting books, print materials, and writing materials in all areas
- Organize field trips to libraries and post offices, so children can experience real-world literacy concepts
- Organize field trips to local artists' studios and expose children to real artists at work in their community
- Provide visual stimulation with pictures, photos, art posters, and children's art throughout the classroom

- Combine art and language activities to create books, posters, charts, and dramatic play/storytelling props
- Introduce a wide variety of art materials such as: Construction, Collage, Drawing, BioColor®, Easel, Fingerpainting, Modeling, Outdoor Art, Group Mural Painting, Watercolor, Printmaking, Stitchery, Clay.



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