



26 JAN 2018

Joni Starr: Arts Integration, Part 1

[arts education](#), [arts integration](#), [communication](#), [creative process](#), [creative thinking](#), [critical thinking](#), [Joni Starr](#), [social intelligence](#), [transferable knowledge](#)

Arts education benefits students because it affords them creative capacity and this allows students to be a part of making their own education instead of just receiving it. The creative process asks students to be inspired and to be imaginative. To pay attention to the world around them and envision something that isn't there, but could be. It sparks big and small "what if" question in individuals and these inquiries often lead to meaningful and impactful outcomes in all sectors of society.

The creative process also demands a skill from students. Often times this is in the form of artistic expression, from the more formal disciplines of music, dance, theatre and visual art to architecture, engineering and gastronomy. These skills are the foundation for creating, for putting something in the world that wasn't there before.

The creative process requires students to relate to each other. The work is not accomplished in a vacuum. Making observations, discussing options and recognizing differences all feed the imagination. Choosing of materials, assessing value and editing choices hone the skills. In connecting with others, students are building a community of trust and confidence that provides a platform for success.

This approach to education, this integrating of the arts into teaching and learning, this practice of creative capacity, is a strong reflection of the needs of the world. Students of today are leaders of tomorrow who will be called upon to recognize how to solve problems, how to improve living conditions, and how to connect more authentically with others.

Arts education plays a central role in our world and should also in our schools.

Joni Starr is an Arts Integration Specialist and Theatre Educator. She served as a MAEIA Founding Contributor.