

Ten Lessons the Arts Teach

- **The arts teach children to make good judgments about qualitative relationships.** Unlike much of the curriculum in which correct answers and rules prevail, in the arts, it is judgment rather than rules that prevail.
- **The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution** and that questions can have more than one answer.
- **The arts celebrate multiple perspectives.** One of their large lessons is that there are many ways to see and interpret the world.
- **The arts teach children that in complex forms of problem solving** purposes are seldom fixed, but change with circumstance and opportunity. Learning in the arts requires the ability and a willingness to surrender to the unanticipated possibilities of the work as it unfolds.
- **The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor number exhaust** what we can know. The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition.
- **The arts teach students that small differences can have large effects.** The arts traffic in subtleties.
- **The arts teach students to think through and within a material.** All art forms employ some means through which images become real.
- **The arts help children learn to say what cannot be said.** When children are invited to disclose what a work of art helps them feel, they must reach into their poetic capacities to find the words that will do the job.
- **The arts enable us to have experience we can have from no other source** and through such experience to discover the range and variety of what we are capable of feeling.
- **The arts' position in the school curriculum symbolizes to the young** what adults believe is important.



Elliott Eisner, in Beyond Creating: The Place for Art in America's Schools Getty Center for Education in the Arts. 1985 p. 69