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THE IMPORTANCE OF ART AT SCHOOL

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Annotation: The way art is taught means that interaction with other students and with the teacher is different in art and design classes. Students comment on the bonds they form with classmates because of their shared interests and ideas. The art teacher is someone they can bounce ideas off rather than telling them what to do.

Key words: academic pursuits, self-discipline, civic engagement, social tolerance, aesthetic experiences.

Studying art and design provides the opportunity to acquire new skills. As well as knowledge of different art forms, media and techniques you can also gain specialist skills in areas such as photography and digital technologies. Art may not be your favourite subject, but studying the arts alongside other subjects significantly boosts student achievement. Schools that integrate arts into their curriculum show improved student performance in Maths, English, critical thinking and verbal skills. Arts education can also help with developing skills and ways of working that will benefit you in the future in whatever career you choose. The leading people in any field are those who can think creatively and innovatively. These are skills that employers value alongside qualifications. Making and participating in the arts aids the development of these skills. When you study art you learn to work both independently and collaboratively, you also gain experience in time management – skillsets valued by employers. Studying the arts teaches determination and resilience – qualities useful to any career. It teaches us that it is okay to fail, to not get things totally right the first time and to have the courage to start again. As a drama student at King Ethelbert's School, Kent commented: "Like with every yes, there is like 10 nos… It has taught me that if I work on it, I will get there eventually. It is determination and commitment. It has definitely helped". Arts and cultural learning is more important than ever for the health of our communities and our society. Creativity is essential in a global economy that needs a workforce that is knowledgeable, imaginative and innovative. Studying arts subjects also increases social mobility – encouraging and motivating students from low-income families to go into higher education. Studying the arts can also help with understanding, interpreting and negotiating the complexities and diversity of society. Students from low-income families who take part in arts activities at school are three times more likely to take a degree. By making art a part of the national curriculum, we give the next generation of artists, designers, engineers, creators and cultural leaders the opportunity to develop the imagination and skills that are vital to our future. Engagement with the arts helps young people develop a sense of their own identity and value. This in turn develops personal responsibility within their school and wider community. Arts and cultural learning encourages awareness, empathy and appreciation of difference and diversity and the views of others. Art teachers must be ready to advocate for committing the necessary resources to prioritize the value of creativity in the classroom. You may have to explain the importance of art education in a school's curriculum and present the research to back up those claims. We can become powerful advocates for the power of art and improved student outcomes by investigating the many benefits that come out of integrating more creativity into the school day and improving our classroom strategies.

Anyone who's passionate about the arts recalls formative moments of experiencing a work of art pushing through a creative challenge. When we're exposed to remarkable artworks or have opportunities to create, we find that art is crucial to individual growth and development and can even

impact our health. A literature review from Frontiers in Psychology outlined several studies linking aesthetic strategies with broad improvements in subjects' emotional states that promote physical and psychological well-being. Giving learners the time, space, and materials for creative expression can lower stress, improve memory, and make them feel more socially connected. Instructors can build their careers on bringing those experiences to students in a variety of settings, like galleries, museums, or events organized by nonprofit and community organizations. Appreciation for art also makes a significant difference in people's lives on a macro level. Entire societies may stand to gain from an investment in the arts. Drawing on data from the General Social Survey, researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago's Department of Public Administration linked participation as either an audience member or creatorto higher levels of civic engagement and social tolerance. This work suggests that children learning how to draw, paint, sing, or just appreciate the works made by others can help us become not just happier and healthier, but also better people. For kids in low-income neighborhoods, where residents may have less access to art and cultural resources that can improve quality of life, school arts programs are especially important. An analysis from one art organization showing data from four longitudinal studies, found that students with high levels of arts involvement had more positive outcomes in a variety of areas, from high school graduation rates to civic participation. Just like after-school sports programs allow students to learn skills not necessarily taught in the classroom, like teamwork and self-discipline, Farrington says the arts provide students with broad opportunities for growth outside of strictly academic pursuits. "One of the things that's really critical to young people of all ages ... is the opportunity to explore a wide variety of different kinds of activities," Farrington says. "Some of them are going to gravitate to one thing, and some are going to gravitate to another thing, but they can't gravitate to them if they've never experienced them."

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