



ESTABLISHING AN ARTS RICH, COURAGEOUS COMMUNITY

We believe in creating a high performing, courageous community for everyone - no matter their differences.

We believe in providing an intentionally arts-rich environment.

Garner Fine Arts Academy Arts Integration Framework



Arts Integration Defined

At Garner Fine Arts Academy, we utilize the Kennedy Center definition of Arts Integration. Arts Integration is an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject area and meets evolving objectives in both.

Arts Rich

What is an arts rich environment?

An arts rich environment is student centered and objective driven. It includes quality, intentional teaching with rigor and engagement to cultivate content mastery across the foundation and fine arts subjects. Our students experience the most success when all four fine arts disciplines (dance, music, theatre, and the visual arts) are connected with the foundation classroom. Each of the four disciplines provide unique opportunities to explore other content in a way that is only limited by the teacher's creativity and their access to complimentary fine arts expertise.

Why use arts integration?

Arts Integration is an approach to teaching that can be used by any educator in their field of expertise and is not limited to a certain grade level or subject. When educators establish a fully integrated classroom, they create a dynamic and engaging learning environment that fuels new discoveries and an ever-growing awareness of the connections between subjects while generating opportunities for students to create and express themselves. Using the arts builds connections and inspires students.

Additional benefits include:

- A safe and supportive classroom environment that encourages creative risk taking
- Engaging activities that promote language acquisition
- Natural development of Social and Emotional Learning competencies
- Developing trust by establishing peer-to-peer relationships between students and teachers as each party shares artistic ideas and includes the other in their creative process within a safe space
- Opportunities for formative and summative assessment
- Improved teacher career satisfaction and retention

What does the Arts Rich environment look like?

Arts integration is most effective when students engage in authentic arts experiences in multiple ways.

The fine arts specialist will:

- Use foundation skills to build connections between art and life
- Collaborate with foundation teachers to build arts integrated lessons
- Provide current topics of instruction to foundation teachers
- Use our educational best practices

The foundation teacher will:

- View lessons through a lens of an art form
- Frequently and consistently provide arts experiences throughout the school day. Arts integration will be seen in a wide range of activities small to large, and ever-increasing in the daily and weekly school routines to establish a fully integrated classroom.
- Collaborate with fine arts specialists
- Use our educational best practices

The student will:

- Create – Students express themselves or demonstrate learning through creating in the fine arts, drawing upon the learning from both their fine arts and foundation classes
- Investigate – Students research and examine the art forms, artists, and specific works to understand them and their cultural and historical context
- Experience – Students have opportunities to engage directly with professional level works of art in performance or display and are given space to draw connections between everything they learn in school and the world around them
- Participate – Students are provided and expected to participate in group and individual performance opportunities

What are the educational best practices?

High-quality arts-integration approach to teaching aligns with the planning, instruction and learning environment aligned to the Texas Teacher Evaluation Support System.

Planning:

- All activities are relevant to students
- All activities and materials are appropriate for diverse learners
- Consistent feedback is provided to students
- Lessons connect to students' experiences
- Questions promotes higher level thinking

Instruction:

- Set expectations that challenge all students
- Provide students opportunities to take initiative for their own learning
- Provide students opportunities to use different types of thinking (allow students to demonstrate their knowledge)
- Establishes classroom practices that provide opportunities for most students to communicate effectively with the teacher and their peers
- Provide students the opportunity to master the lessons through differentiated instructional methods
- Adjusts instruction and activities to maintain student engagement

Learning Environment:

- Establishes and uses effective routines to support student learning and engagement
- Most students know, understand and consistently respect behavior standards
- Engages all students in relevant and meaningful learning
- Students collaborate positively and encourage each other's efforts and achievements

What does ongoing development look like?

Students will experience sustained and intentional deepening of learning through the foundation and fine arts classroom. Our arts rich culture creates a dynamic learning environment that leads to a well rounded, engaging education. As a part of the Garner Fine Arts community we set goals and intentionally engage in ongoing development.

- Teachers, students, and families engage in authentic arts experiences
- Time is allowed during the school day for collaborative arts integration planning
- Ongoing staff professional development is implemented
- Goal setting for foundation and fine arts mastery

Courageous

What does it mean to be courageous?

Students and teachers who are in a safe and supportive classroom are willing to explore and take creative risks, thereby excelling and helping cultivate a culture of courage, leading to well-rounded individuals.

In a courageous environment:

- Teachers model life-long learning by being willing to grow and take risks
- Teachers and students participate in art making
- Creative risk taking is safe and encouraged
- Foundation teachers seek support from the art integration specialist and fine arts specialists
- All teachers are open minded and willing to collaborate
- Trust and positive peer to peer relationships are developed

The arts naturally lead to development of social and emotional competencies and English language acquisition. Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) along with Character building are key components to creating the courageous environment.

- Strategies for SEL and Character building will be used:
 - A social contract is developed and followed
 - SEL lessons in morning meetings (binder of lessons/Sanford-Harmony cards)
 - Speakers/performers with character development lessons
 - Recognition of students/staff

Community

What makes up our community?

At GFAA we have several layers of community. The classroom family, the whole school, and our local area. Equity, service, and communication are important elements within each community.

- GFAA will continue to hold itself accountable to increasing diversity and being inclusive of each member of the GFAA community. We stand for equity and justice and are committed to find ways to celebrate differences.
- We believe our students are the heart of the school and our goal is to prepare them to become the heartbeats of our community. Therefore, participation in service and performance opportunities is expected.
- Intentional communication to families is frequent and consistent in order to stay connected to the needs of our community.

Misconceptions

Arts Integration as a simple term may lead to misunderstandings and differing interpretation. The following statements intend to clarify some of these misconceptions.

- Each teacher, foundation or specialist, is an expert in their own field and should not be held accountable for the learning objectives outside of their area of expertise.
- A well-rounded education includes equal instruction in foundation concepts and fine arts concepts. IF a fine arts class becomes simply an extension of a foundation class in the name of arts integration, this well-roundedness is lost.
- Conversely, fine arts instruction solely conducted through the foundation classroom loses the depth and breadth of experiences that are offered by fine arts specialists.
- Quality arts integration is not a synonym for quality arts instruction and any effort to make foundation teachers responsible for fine arts TEKS should be avoided.
- Arts enhancement and arts integration are not the same. While neither is wrong, to achieve our goal of arts integration, TEKS from both a foundation classroom and a fine arts classroom must be taught with equal weight.

Vocabulary

Arts Enhancement - using an art form while teaching foundation content without teaching content from the fine arts discipline. Examples are writing a poem and then decorating the paper, singing a song about a foundation topic.

Arts Integration - an educational approach that equally teaches foundation and fine arts content together. It is often described as teaching foundation content through a fine arts lens.

Fine Arts Specialist - teacher with certification and specialized education in one of the four fine arts disciplines (art, dance, music, or theatre)

Foundation Teacher - math, science, ELA, and social studies teachers, often certified as a “generalist” at the elementary level