

Art education in the elementary schools can be one of the most rewarding and inspirational school subjects for students. I believe that with the best instruction and content in art, students can learn to appreciate and become very competent critics and creators of art.

The most important piece of teaching art is a good balance of art history and creativity. Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) is an art teaching method that combines those two aspects of art with aesthetics and production. It is my personal philosophy, however, to focus primarily on history and creativity. When a child is allowed to draw from historical experience to push his or her creativity in art production, great art will be made. Also, according to constructivist theory, children learn by *doing* or *creating*. Art education provides great opportunities for children to create, so they will be learning throughout every artistic experience.

I also agree with the concept of interdisciplinary studies, which says that teachers should incorporate many different subject areas into each lesson or unit of study. Art can easily be incorporated into a unit because of its historical value and ease of applicability. Whether math, science, language arts, or history, art can and should be incorporated often.

Lastly, it is clear that I recognize art's importance in education, but I also realize that art can be a great release for a person. Because art can be a soothing and relaxing activity, it is healthy for people to partake in. With the growing number of stressors in the 21st Century student's life, it is important for them to learn different strategies to manage their hectic lives. Art, along with music and physical activity, is a great way to ease one's mind and allow for a release from the pressures of the day.

Art is an important piece of the education of today's student. It needs to be utilized in the classrooms often for both its educational and social benefits for students.