



FEATURED *resource*

AFTERSCHOOL TRAINING TOOLKIT FOR THE ARTS

www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/art/index.html

This free online staff development resource includes video clips, resources, and lesson plans on promising practices in the arts.

AFTERSCHOOL *news*



Making Arts Matter in Afterschool

"Doing art made a change in me, opened something that I never knew was there . . . and just changed me." This is the way a third-grade student named Devin describes his experience in an afterschool arts program. You can see Devin in a video called "Tunnel Books" in the arts section of the Afterschool Training Toolkit, a free, online staff development resource created by the National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning. (To watch the video, go to www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/art/pr_building_skills.html and click on "view video" at the top right part of the page.)

If you watch the video, you will see several characteristics of high-quality afterschool arts instruction in action. It is age appropriate, engages students, and is led by someone with training in the arts. Plus, it develops skills and vocabulary; utilizes a process of creating, presenting, and reflecting; and makes connections to other subjects. Devin and his classmates create "tunnel books," so named for the three-dimensional scenes that resemble their namesake when they are stretched out. An artist leads students through the activity and holds their interest with a topic that most third graders love: bugs. While creating books that show a bug's view of the world, students learn artistic media like printmaking and become familiar with terms like foreground, middle ground, and background. They articulate their enthusiasm and interest in "gallery walks" where they present and reflect on their work. One student comments that she has learned more about an insect's habitat, indicating that she has made some connections to science during the project.

"The arts play an important role in giving students opportunities to learn and think in different ways," says Suzanne Stiegelbauer, who developed the arts component of the Afterschool Training Toolkit. Participating in an arts program can allow students to be successful in ways that they might not be in a traditional academic setting. Any instructor who has observed students enjoying a creative outlet has seen the sheer pleasure they express in these activities. Research shows that these students are developing skills and self-confidence that they can apply to other areas of learning, thereby boosting overall academic achievement.



"The arts play an important role in giving students opportunities to learn and think in different ways."

SUZANNE STIEGELBAUER
arts educator

The National Partnership for Quality Afterschool Learning helps state education agencies and local practitioners develop high-quality programs for academic enrichment as well as youth development activities.



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TINA LAPADULA
program director

Arts Corps

SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

Arts Corps is a nonprofit organization that offers free arts education to youth ages 3 through 19, particularly in underserved, low- to middle-income neighborhoods. The organization hires professional artists to work with both regular day schools and afterschool programs. As Arts Corps program director Tina LaPadula notes, many Washington elementary schools report offering little or no arts instruction, and students from low-income families have fewer opportunities for extracurricular activities.

Arts Corps classes include theater, poetry, ballet, ceramics, and hip-hop and breakdancing. (To watch an Arts Corps breakdancing class, go to www.sedl.org/afterschool/toolkits/art/pr_expressing.html and click "view video.") The arts skills that students learn are self-evident, but LaPadula points out other talents. "Students consistently practice important creative habits of mind such as persistence and discipline, courage and risk taking, imagining possibilities, critical thinking, and reflection," she says. To bring arts to afterschool, LaPadula encourages afterschool leaders to be as resourceful as their students. "There are teaching artists of every stripe in every neighborhood: quilters and musicians, dancers and writers. . . . Get a local business to adopt your school or facility," she says. "If the local laundromat will put its name on baseball jerseys, how about sponsoring a dance troupe or visual art show?"

IN YOUR *words*

What kinds of arts activities does your afterschool program offer? (Select all that apply.)

- Drawing and painting
- Photography
- Music
- Drama
- Other
- None

To participate in this survey and view results, submit your vote at www.sedl.org/afterschool/afterwords/survey200709.html.

TRAINING *tip*

Try It Before You Teach It

A little planning can prevent creativity from turning into chaos. If you're beginning a new art activity like making papier-mâché piñatas or tie-dyeing t-shirts in your afterschool program, you might want to practice with the materials first. You'll have an easier time explaining the project to the students and will be aware of any potential pitfalls like having papier-mâché paste drying mid-project or tie-dye colors running together.

Do you have a training tip you would like to share? E-mail us at afterwords@sedl.org with "training tip" in the subject line.

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NATIONAL PARTNERSHIP FOR QUALITY AFTERSCHOOL LEARNING

at the Southwest Educational Development Laboratory



EVENTS *calendar*

- Oct. 18 Lights on Afterschool!
NATIONWIDE
- Oct. 20 The Arizona Center for Afterschool Excellence
2007 Afterschool Conference
MESA, AZ
- Oct. 22-23 The Bridge from School to Afterschool and
Back: Northwest Regional Training Event
VANCOUVER, WA

For more events, visit our calendar at www.sedl.org/afterschool/training/calendar.html.