

# 10 lessons that arts teach...

- 1. 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.
- 2. The arts teach children that problems can have more than one solution** and that questions can have more than one answer.
- 3. The arts celebrate multiple perspectives.** One of their large lessons is that there are many ways to see and interpret the world.
- 4. 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.
- 5. The arts make vivid the fact that neither words in their literal form nor numbers exhaust what we can know.** The limits of our language do not define the limits of our cognition.
- 6. The arts teach students that small differences can have large effects.** The arts traffic in subtleties.
- 7. The arts teach students to think through and within a material.** All art forms employ some means through which images become real.
- 8. 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.
- 9. 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.
- 10. The arts' position in the school curriculum symbolizes to the young what adults believe is important.**

SOURCE: Eisner, E. (2002). *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, In Chapter 4, What the Arts Teach and How It Shows. (pp. 70-92). Yale University Press. Available from NAEA Publications. NAEA grants reprint permission for this excerpt from Ten Lessons with proper acknowledgment of its source and NAEA.