

What is Arts Integration?

By Richelle Putnam – MAC Arts Integration Specialist

Overview

Arts integration uses the arts as a central vehicle for teaching academic subjects. In an arts-integrated classroom, students learn content through creative processes, and they develop deeper understanding, stronger connections, and more engagement.

Philosophy

I believe every learner has a voice. By weaving rhythm, storytelling, and creative expression into core subjects, we open pathways for students to explore content in ways that connect with their unique minds. As a MAC Arts Integration Specialist, my mission is to design residencies, workshops, and community projects that make learning deeply meaningful and joyfully creative.

What It Looks Like in Practice

- **Songwriting & Storytelling in History:** Students compose poems or songs about historical events, anchoring facts in emotional narrative.
- **Syllable & Rhythm in Literacy:** Clapping, tapping, or beat-mapping helps students internalize phonics, fluency, and pacing. We also use a metronome.
- **Movement & Expression in Science:** Embodying cycles, life stages, or processes through dramatization or gesture.
- **Cross-Disciplinary Projects:** For example, combining a visual arts project, written narrative, and musical response to explore social studies themes.

Why It Matters

Arts integration supports:

- **Literacy & academic growth** — by engaging multiple modalities of learning
- **Critical thinking & creativity** — through open-ended expression
- **Social-emotional development** — through narrative, empathy, and voice
- **Equity & inclusion** — through culturally responsive, multimodal learning
- **Engagement & retention** — because students move, speak, and feel their learning

Together We Can Spark Change

If you're an educator, administrator, parent, or community leader, arts integration offers a pathway to transform classrooms and communities. Let's partner to bring creativity, connection, and deeper meaning into every lesson.