

Art and Academic Achievement

Shirley Brice Heath is a nationally known linguistic anthropologist and professor at Stanford University. She has written extensively and directed the ArtShow, a documentary that explores four youth-based arts organizations in New York, Boston and in the rural communities of Kentucky and northern California.

She says that her research has shown that “Young people who participate in the arts for at least 3 hours for 3 days each week through at least one full year are four times more likely to be recognized for academic achievement and [as they grow-up] three times more likely to be elected to class office within their schools.” She goes to say that “Primarily, the arts hold the opportunity for kids to play around with ideas in their head and then carry it out with degrees of success and failure, or something in between. The second thing that's really important in the creative process is that kids can talk out loud about what's going on in their work.”

Daniel Pink, author of *A Whole New Mind*, states,

“... a strong arts education provides students with the best preparation for success in their future careers.” He additionally warns that as a society we can no longer view art and creative thinking as ornamental to the educational process but must begin to view it as fundamental if children are to be prepared for their future.

He also states,

“Infuse arts education throughout the curriculum. Stop thinking about arts education as ornamental; start thinking of it as fundamental.”

“... a strong arts education provides students with the best preparation for success in their future careers.” He says the future workers will require a whole-mind way of thinking. They will rely more on design, empathy, inventiveness and big-picture thinking. “And the best way to surface and sharpen those abilities is by studying the arts.”