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**The Arts – Leading the Way to Academic Improvement**

Madcap Logic, LLC

**1) The current state of educational affairs in the U.S.**

* NCLB’s focus on improving math and reading test scores is squeezing the arts our of many schools’ curricula.
* One of NCLB’s primary goals is to bridge the achievement gap between students of disadvantaged and privileged economic backgrounds. The arts can help heal the causes of academic under-achievement, by developing the attitudes and motivations necessary to succeed in learning.

**2) The arts are a very important part of the core curriculum because they bring deep insight to the study of the human experience.**

* They provide insight as to how humans have been living and experiencing life since our very early history.
* They help us probe and understand current events and sociological trends.

3**) The Creativity Express program enhances the insight arts learning brings to the human experience:**

* By exploring how art influences and is influenced by human history and culture.
* By empowering students to express their own experiences through art.

**4) The arts are essential to academic improvement.**

A. Because they enhance cognition.

* + The arts allow us to explore any concept, impression, or feeling in a multi-sensory way that enhances cognition by stimulating multiple areas of the brain.
  + The arts bring personal interest and self-investment to learning, by involving the emotions.
  + The arts nurture higher-order cognitive aptitudes, as well as the attitudes necessary for developing them – attitudes and dispositions that are fundamental to becoming high achievers and lifelong learners.
  + The arts focus on enjoyment of the process, not only the product, and this helps develop self-directed, creative thinking.

B. Because they foster personal and social development.

* + The arts develop emotional intelligence through empowering self-expression.
  + Because they provide a non-traditional, multi-sensory approach to learning, the arts build self-confidence in students who otherwise would not be reached, and whose success in the arts is a bridge to success in other subjects.

C. Because the arts help develop essential 21st-century work skills.

* + They develop visual literacy, an essential skill in a dominantly visual world.
  + They cultivate creative and flexible thinking skills necessary to the workforce of the 21st-century, ideas-based economy.
  + They help build the collaborative skills and respect for multiple perspectives necessary to the successful functioning of a global team.

**5) The Creativity Express program makes the most of the arts’ contribution to academic improvement.**

1. Through developing its curriculum from innovative learning models.

- Drawing inspiration from the Contextual Learning Model, the program presents new concepts contextually, making them relevant to the real world and to students’ lives.

- The program enhances emotion cognition through humor and well-developed, animated art guides; fun interactivities; and exciting incentives and rewards. The program also arouses emotions through providing many opportunities for students to express emotion through art.

1. Encouraging personal growth.

- Giving students tools they need for effective self-expression, and bolstering self-confidence by consistently encouraging students through positive reinforcement.

1. The Creativity Express program helps students transfer arts learning to other subjects through discussing the arts in cross-curricular contexts, as well as other subjects in arts contexts.
2. The program fosters critical thinking by encouraging discussion and skillful inquiry, through empowering knowledge-based observation and interpretation and evaluation.
3. The Creativity Express program develops creative thinking skills through fostering open-ended, skill-based inquiry into artworks’ effectiveness, as well as into some very basic philosophy of art. It also provides many opportunities for creative problem solving through art creation.

**6) A great arts program, as defined by the National Standards for the Arts, is in-depth and comprehensive.**

The National Standards hold up high academic standards for the arts that reinforce the rightful place of the arts as a rigorous, core academic subject.

**7) The Creativity Express program is an innovative, standards-based, in-depth and comprehensive visual arts curriculum**.

In addition, its web-based format fosters the development of technological skills essential to the 21st-century workforce.