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Introduction to Teaching and Learning through the Arts

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The three articles in the Teaching and Learning through the Arts section provide distinctive insights on arts integration. Shimson-Santo uses in-depth participant observation, logic modeling, and quantitative evaluation to look at the impact of an ArtsBridge program that sent advanced arts students from the University of California, Los Angeles into K-12 classrooms to provide arts instruction. She makes a powerful argument for the important role that higher education partnerships can play in restoring the arts to under-resourced K-12 schools.

Sosin, Bekkala, and Pepper-Sanello examine an introductory high school visual arts curriculum that included artworks pertinent to labor studies and investigate its impact on students' understanding of the power of art as social commentary. The urban students in their study looked at social realism as an historical artistic movement and considered the value of collective activism, while learning modes of artistic expression that met state standards in the visual arts. The authors suggest that incorporating labor studies into the visual art curriculum has value as a way of promoting social justice awareness among students.

Taking a quite different approach, Chou and Shih explore the idea that storytelling can serve as a link between learning in museums and learning in theatre. By using role playing as a way to breathe life into historical scenarios, they explore how dramatic forms of storytelling, such as a group improvisational performance, may affect students' thought processes regarding a series of images and/or objects in a museum exhibit.