

Arts
Education
Partnership

ARTS EDUCATION RESEARCH
A Primer on Findings, Methodologies, and
Advocacy

Rebecca Borden, PhD

6/2/06

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Arts Education Partnership

Forums | Research | Advocacy | Best Practices

	Education	Arts
Federal	U.S. Department of Education	National Endowment for the Arts
50 States	Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO)	National Assembly of State Arts Agencies (NASAA)



www.aep-arts.org

AEP Goals and Activities

- Influence policies and systems that control resources and access
- Identify and promote promising practices in arts education
- Build a national infrastructure of support for arts education through partnerships
- Deepen the knowledge of the nature and effects of learning the arts

Status of Arts Education in America circa 2006

- **“Golden Era”** of arts education in USA?
- Gaining ground or losing ground?
 - NAEP 1997 and 2008?
 - FRSS?
 - State-wide assessments: IL, NJ, RI, WA
- Anecdotal

Understanding the Unknown

X



Y

RESEARCH (noun):

- Scholarly or scientific investigation or inquiry.
- Close, careful study.

Understanding the Inquiry Spectrum

Rational

[scientific]



Natural

[intuitive]

decrease bias

statistically significant

exists (somewhere)

new knowledge

Objectivity

Nature of Proof

Truth

Purpose of Research

unattainable

based on experience

perception is reality

better understanding

Question Assumptions

Characteristics of “good” research

- **Builds upon existing knowledge base**
 - Exploratory → Correlation → Causation
- **Context and Variables understood well**
 - Unit of analysis
 - Random and representative
 - Rigor - controls
- **Transferable and Reliable**
- **Purpose and Audience selected wisely**
 - Utility and fittingness

AEP's Approach to Research

- **Collect and disseminate**
 - promote the best work
- **Focus on the impact of arts on teaching and learning**
 - understand what initiates change
- **Use findings to build effective advocacy**
 - relevant, responsive and readable

What is “learning”?

What would learning look like if you saw it?

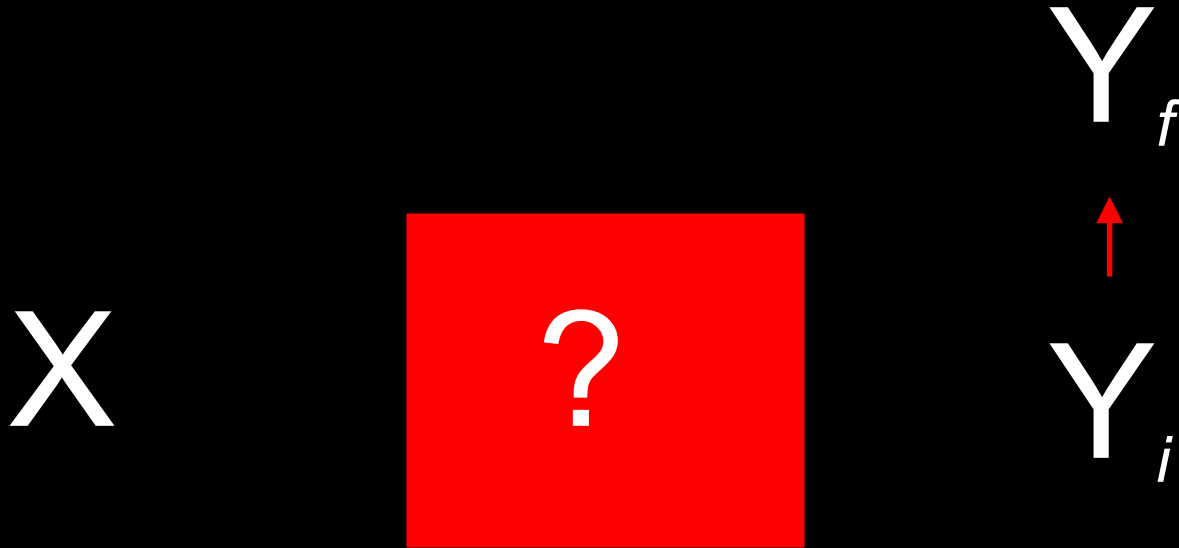
Who should be interested in learning what you learned about learning?

What does the next slide show about learning?

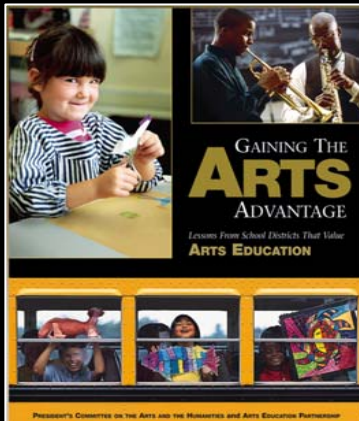


LEARNING & TRANSFER

Preparation for future learning



What has AEP learned about learning?



1999

Gaining the Arts Advantage



2000

Champions of Change



2002

Critical Links
www.criticallinks.org



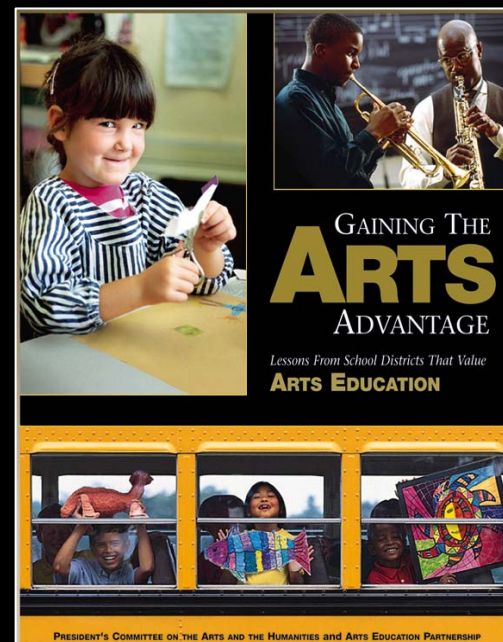
2005

***Third Space:
When Learning Matters***

www.aep-arts.org

Gaining the Arts Advantage (1999)

- The purpose of this study is to identify the conditions and practices that **create and sustain** district-wide commitment to arts education for all students.
- More than 500 school districts were nominated and invited to submit documentation for further review.
 - Some 300 districts responded.
- **91** intensively examined and interviewed by phone
- **8 case studies**: team of superintendent(s) and researcher



Gaining the Arts Advantage (1999)

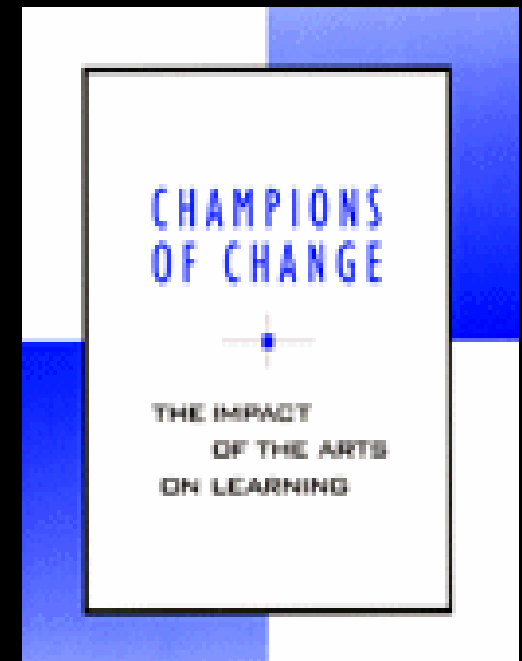
13 “critical success factors”

- ❖ Engaged community in arts policy
- ❖ Supportive school board for the arts
- ❖ A superintendent with an arts vision
- ❖ A cadre of principals allies
- ❖ Teachers who practice their art
- ❖ District arts coordinator(s)
- ❖ Parent/public relations
- ❖ National, state and other policies
- ❖ Elementary foundation
- ❖ Opps for higher levels of student participation
- ❖ Continuous improvement
- ❖ Comprehensive planning
- ❖ Continuity in leadership

Partnership is the answer

Champions of Change (2000)

- GE Fund, MacArthur Foundation, President's Committee on Arts and Humanities
- Sponsored **7 rigorous studies** from leading researchers to understand how the arts impact young people.
 - James Catterall, Shirley Brice Heath, Rob Horowitz, Steve Seidel, Dennie Palmer Wolf



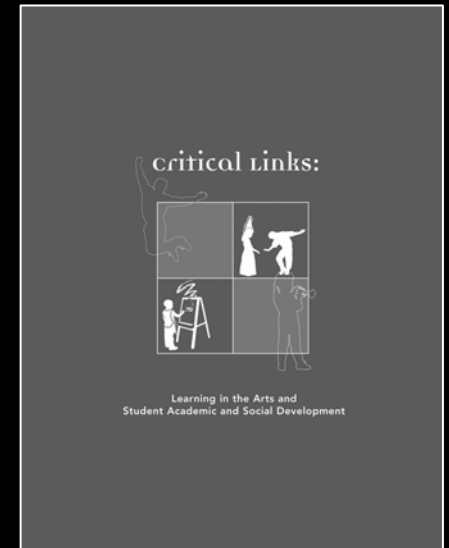
Why the arts change learning environments

- The arts reach students who are not otherwise being reached.
- The arts reach students in ways that they are not otherwise being reached.
- The arts connect students to themselves and each other.
- The arts connect learning experiences to the world of real work.
- The arts transform the environment for learning.

Champions of Change (2000)

Critical Links (2003)

- ❖ Funded by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Endowment for the Arts
- ❖ Reviews 62 studies of dance, music, theatre, visual arts and multi-arts
 - 7 Dance, 19 Drama, 15 Music, 17 Multi-arts, 4 Visual Arts
- ❖ Studies selected by teams of researchers from Harvard and UCLA
- ❖ Most studies are experimental or quasi-experimental



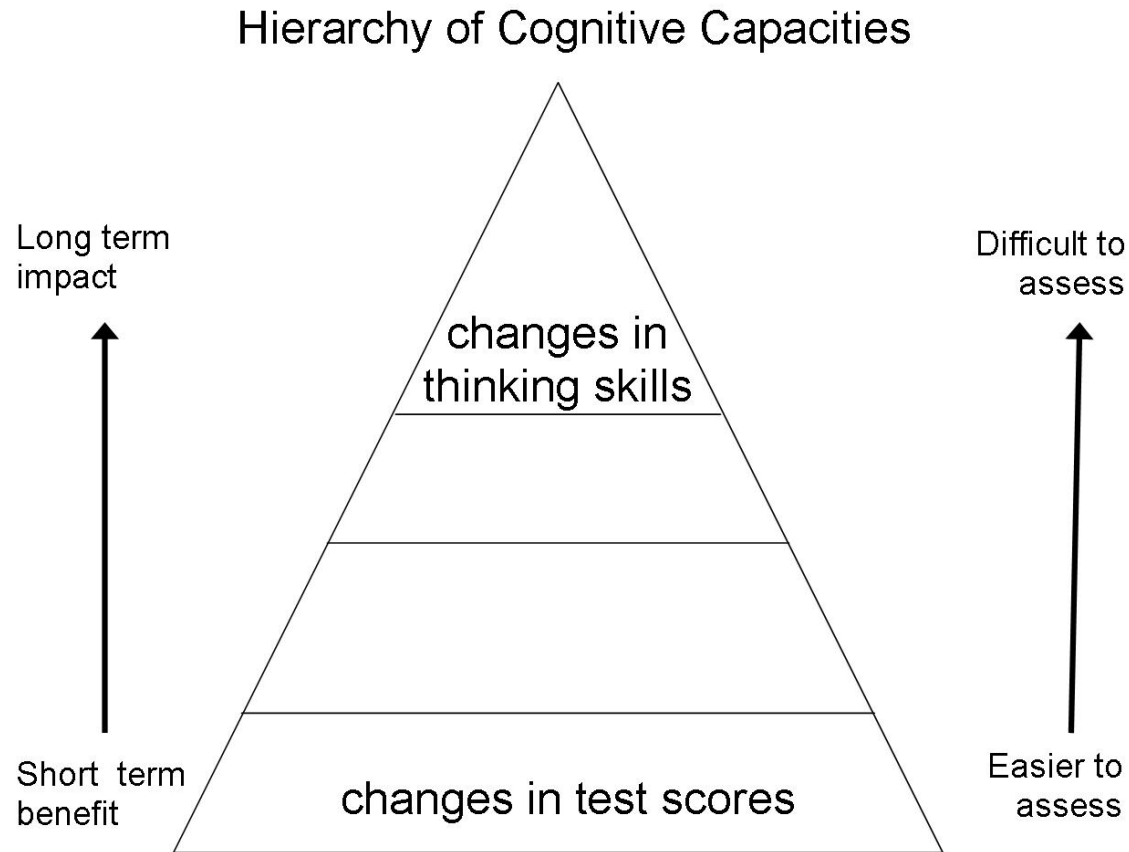
Learning in the arts and student academic and social development

- Spatial reasoning
 - Organizing and sequencing ideas, concepts
- Conditional reasoning
 - Developing and testing theories
- Symbolic interpretation
 - “decoding” multiple modes of representation
- Imagination
 - Visualizing new possibilities for thought and action
- Persistence & Resilience
 - Overcoming failure
- Self Identity/Self Efficacy
- Social Tolerance
- Empathy

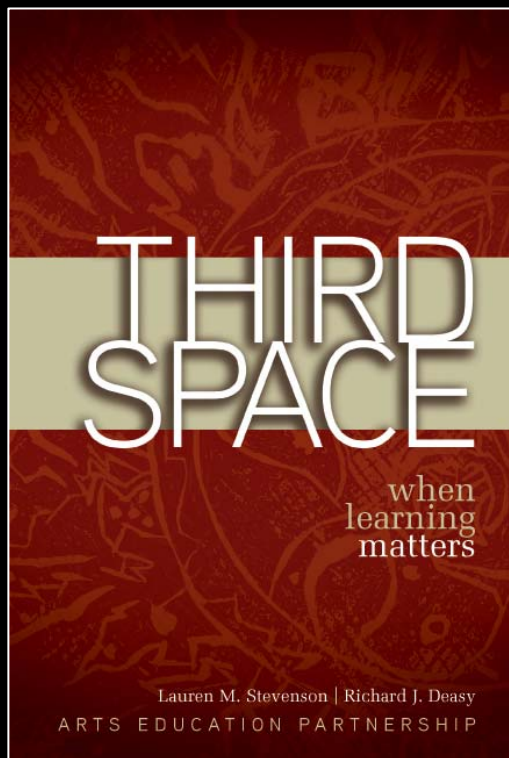
Critical Links: Findings Summary

- The arts involve and develop ***fundamental cognitive capacities and habits of mind***
 - dispositions to learn
- The arts engage and promote ***personal and social development***
- Learners from disadvantaged backgrounds have the greatest gains.
 - The presence of the arts in the curriculum is a matter of equity.

Why changes in cognition matters most



Third Space: When Learning Matters



- *How do the arts contribute to the improvement of schools that serve economically disadvantaged communities?*
 - Three-year study
 - Comparative analysis of 10 “high poverty” schools
 - Discrete and integrated arts instruction
 - With at least 50% of students enrolled in free or reduced-price lunch programs.



- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 Central Falls High School
Grades 9-12
Central Falls, RI | 6 Peter Howell Elementary School
Grades K-5
Tucson, AZ |
| 2 Clarkton School of Discovery
Grades 6-8
Clarkton, NC | 7 Newton D. Baker School of Arts
Grades K-5
Cleveland, OH |
| 3 Dyett Academic Center High School
Grades 7-12
Chicago, IL | 8 Pierce Street Elementary
Grades K-3
Tupelo, MS |
| 4 Grizzly Hill School
Grades K-8
San Juan Ridge, CA | 9 P.S. 130
Grades PK-5
Brooklyn, NY |
| 5 Hand Middle School
Grades 6-8
Columbia, SC | 10 Sheridan Global Arts
and Communications School
Grades K-8
Minneapolis, MN |

“third space” metaphor

Entering a space where new sets of relationships emerge through creating, performing or responding to art

Student as artist; teacher as learner

Authenticity and agency

“Mattering” and efficacy

“adaptive experts”



Learning Matters

- The arts link school and “lived worlds” of students
- It’s about them
- Become “agents of their own learning”
- Motivated to learn
- The arts are “hard fun”



Key Findings

- Students are the “*epicenter*” of school transformation and develop the habits of mind and dispositions predicted by *Critical Links*.
- Teachers success and satisfaction increases
- Parents become actively involved
- A sense of community develops within the school and with the community

Translating research into advocacy

- If the arts are the answer, what is the question that needs to be asked?
 - How can we help students THRIVE in school and life?
 - What does it mean to be an educated person in the 21st Century?
 - How can we create a system of public education that best serves the needs of the public?

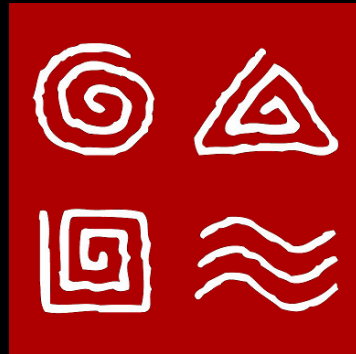
Transfer & Learning at “Common Ground”

CRITICAL LINKS (theory)

- Spatial reasoning
 - Organizing and sequencing
- Conditional reasoning
 - Developing and testing theories
- Symbolic interpretation
 - “decoding” multiple modes of representation
- Imagination
 - Visualizing new possibilities for thought and action
- Persistence & Resilience
 - Overcoming failure
- Self Identity/Self Efficacy
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- Empathy

CRITICAL LINKS (applied)

- **Spatial reasoning**
 - **Appreciating evolutionary nature of effective research & practice**
- **Conditional reasoning**
 - **Valuing the iterative research process**
- **Symbolic interpretation**
 - **Messaging is agenda development**
- **Imagination**
 - **Seeing the possibilities**
- **Persistence & Resilience**
 - **Identifying assets and needs**
- **Self Identity/Self Efficacy**
 - **Partner in learning**
- **Social Tolerance**
 - **Respecting aims of NCLB**
- **Empathy**
 - **Understanding NCLB demands**



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Rebecca Borden, PhD

rebeccab@ccsso.org

Partnering with Higher Education:

Profiling What's Possible

June 23+24, Chicago IL