

# **Learning Through the Arts:** *Enhancing Teaching and Learning* **Workshop**

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**Opening Activity** – Story “House of Light” adapted and delivered by Abegael Fisher-Lang. A mother offers to give her house to whichever of her children can fill the entire house, one attempts with a horse, one with straw, and the successful child, with candlelight. We believe that with Learning Through the Arts the light will fill all corners.

**Learning Through the Arts partners professional artists with classroom teachers to deliver core curriculum using the arts as the tools for teaching.**

- **Teachers** want resources, easier teaching methods, a little magic to really reach the students. As a teacher, you want your students to remember what you are teaching and you want them to succeed – LTTA meets all of these needs.
- **Students** who work in the LTTA program develop creativity, problem-solving and teamwork skills.
- For **principals**, LTTA provides a proven program to enhance instructional leadership and the development of invigorated learning communities within schools.

As both Howard Gardner and Eliot Eisner have documented, we all learn in many different ways, the joy of Learning Through the Arts comes in the hands on approach such as learning Science through dance.

## **1. Hands-on Activity – Energy In Our Lives**

- Potential (stored) and Kinetic (working) energy explored through the contrast of large physical movement and complete stillness.
- Find three shapes you can use to demonstrate potential energy. Learn movement combination and discover connection to renewable (sun,

- wind, water, geothermal, biomass) and non-renewable (oil, coal, natural gas, nuclear) sources of energy.
- Discuss parts of a flashlight and then divide into groups of 6 to build a “human flashlight” where each person becomes one essential part connected to another (bulb, metal rod, battery #1, battery #2, switch, coil/spring). Ask each group to use movement to demonstrate the direction of the flow of energy.
  - Put the first 3 “Potential Energy” shapes and the latest combination together in a dance – perform with flashlights to clearly demonstrate the use of energy. (For a copy of the complete grade 6 unit please contact Tracy Houser at [dancetraces@shaw.ca](mailto:dancetraces@shaw.ca) )

## 2. Program Philosophy

- a) Curricular Connections – All units are developed from specific curricular objectives/learning outcomes chosen by teachers.
- b) Partnership - Artists and teachers work together to reach the students, one bringing extensive knowledge of the curriculum and the other bringing expertise in their art form. The beauty of this program is that neither the artist nor the teacher are doing it alone. There are many ways for this partnership to develop and flourish:
  1. Introducing new vocabulary or concepts prior to the artist visits such as *Potential* and *Kinetic* Energy.
  2. Preparing materials and space for artist visit.
  3. Assisting to group students when partners and small groups are needed to complete activities.
  4. Documenting the experience through photos or video.
  5. Evaluating student progress.
  6. Physically participating in any activity.
  7. Verbalizing the science links throughout the artist visit to reinforce the concepts being taught through the art form.
  8. Writing key vocabulary/concepts on the board or flip chart while the artist is demonstrating.
  9. Completing follow-up activities such as dismantling a flashlight with the class to label all of the working parts.
- c) Professional Development – Success for the students will happen when the artist and teacher are truly partners in the LTTA program and that is why

professional development is another cornerstone of the program. We offer this in a variety of ways:

- On Site Workshops: orientation, apprenticeships, mentor artists (2-3 times each year), senior administrators, best- practices, and job-embedded training.

-International Conference (Vancouver April 2004)

-Summer Institutes (certificates in Holistic Teaching available)

-E-Learning workshops

-Teacher Workshops (Part of Board of Education initiatives)

### **3. Program History**

- Toronto – Began over 9 years ago through the Royal Conservatory of Music in several schools in the Greater Toronto area.
- National Expansion – In 1999 with the assistance of the Millennium Bureau of Canada and other sponsors, the program was expanded to six sites across Canada.
- International Expansion – we have completed workshops and programming in Sweden, Italy and Singapore.
- Current Status – We are now in more than 200 schools across Canada and worldwide.
- E-Learning – a series of LTTA lessons are now available on line at [www.ltta.ca](http://www.ltta.ca)

### **4. Research**

A national study done by researchers at Queen's University (Upitis, R. and Smithrim, K.) found that students in the LTTA program scored as much as 11% higher on their maths! (for complete results please see [www.ltta.ca](http://www.ltta.ca) )

### **5. Program Summary (one page handout)**