



Division of Educational Services
Instructional Services

The Arts

ARTS PLUS+

ART LESSONS BASED ON CHILDREN'S LITERATURE

Engaging and fun integration of social studies, cultural relevancy, art history, social and emotional learning, science, and literature through art!



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Welcome and Directions	3
Frida	4
Extra Yarn	5
Henry's Freedom Box	6
Henri Matisse: Drawing With Scissors	7
We Are Water Protectors	8
Yayoi Kusama: From Here to Infinity	9
The Hundred Dresses	10
The Thing About Bees: A Love Letter	11
Authors' Note	12

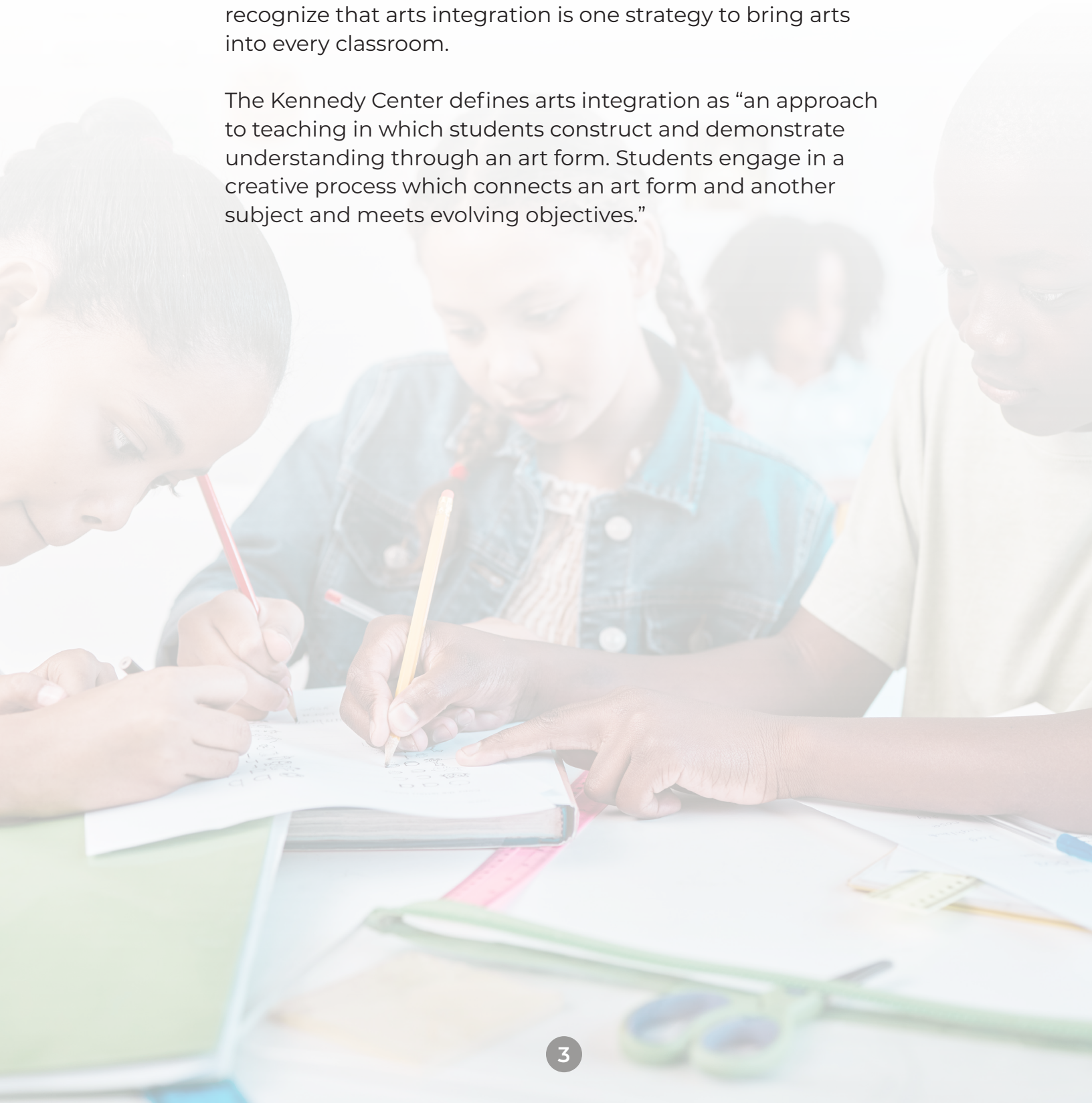


A WORD ABOUT INTEGRATION

Thank you for checking out our new booklet, Arts Plus+, with six integrated arts lessons.

As we embark on a new era in arts education for students, we recognize that arts integration is one strategy to bring arts into every classroom.

The Kennedy Center defines arts integration as “an approach to teaching in which students construct and demonstrate understanding through an art form. Students engage in a creative process which connects an art form and another subject and meets evolving objectives.”



FRIDA

Written by Jonah Winter, Illustrated by Ana Juan

Integration Themes:

Art, Literature, Cultural Relevancy, and Art History

Summary:

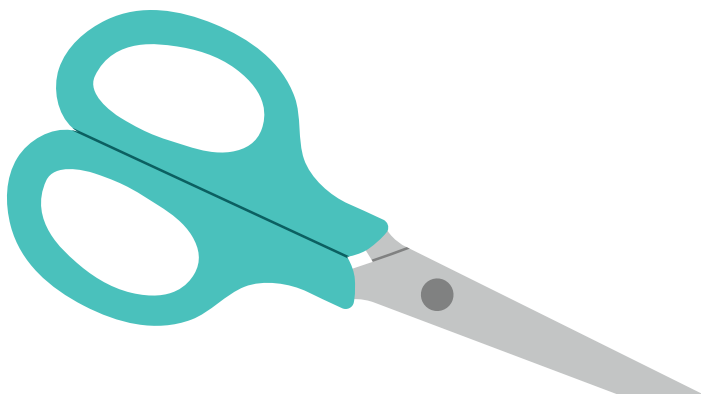
Frida Kahlo was born in Mexico in 1907. This book tells how she learned to paint, how painting saved her life, and why her paintings are unique.

Materials:

Plastic spoon, fabric scraps, lace, ribbon or yarn scraps, glue, scissors, Frida Kahlo image(s), safety pins or paper clips (optional).

Directions:

1. Select an image of Frida's face and glue it onto a spoon. Let dry.
2. Arrange fabric scraps around the spoon handle and secure them on the backside with glue or pins.
3. Decorate the front with trims, yarn, and lace to resemble a Frida frock.



EXTRA YARN

Written by Mac Barnett, Illustrated by Jon Klassen

Integration Themes:

Art, Literature, Social and Emotional Learning, and Cultural Relevancy

Summary:

This is the story of Annabelle, who found a box of yarn filled with every color. The art and the adventure ensue as she begins to knit, and her yarn never seems to run out.

Materials:

2 sticks or popsicle sticks, yarn in different colors, scissors.

Directions:

1. With sticks in a cross shape, start wrapping yarn around the sticks, going in the same order (clockwise). You can number the sticks to make it easier.
2. Wrap the yarn once around 1, once around 2, once around 3, once around 4, repeat.
3. Keep wrapping until you are ready to switch to another color. Snip the first color of yarn and tie on a second color. Repeat to switch colors.
4. To finish, wrap your yarn around a stick one last time. Cut the yarn. Leave a nice long tail for hanging. Slip that tail underneath the last wrap or two and tie off.



HENRY'S FREEDOM BOX

Written by Ellen Levine, Illustrated by Kadir Nelson

Integration Themes:

Art, Literature, Social Studies, and Cultural Relevancy

Summary:

This is the poignant and true story of Henry Brown, an African American slave who escaped slavery by mailing himself to freedom. Henry traveled 350 miles in a large box, sometimes upside down and always cramped, from Richmond, Virginia to Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

Materials:

Cardboard box, any size brown paper or paper bag, Henry Box Brown graphics, scrap paper for birds, black marker, wire or pipe cleaners (optional), scissors, and glue.

Directions:

1. Wrap box with brown paper bag.
2. Cut graphics and glue to two sides of the box. On one side write THIS SIDE UP WITH CARE.
3. Cut and glue birds onto box or attach to wire and glue.



HENRI MATISSE: DRAWING WITH SCISSORS

Written by Keesia Johnson and Jane O'Connor, Illustrated by Jessie Harland

Integration Themes:

Art, Literature, Social and Emotional Learning, and Art History

Summary:

Keesia picks Henri Matisse for her artist report. She finds out that over his long career, Matisse made paintings, sculptures, books, costumes, and cut-outs, or what Matisse called “drawing with scissors.” As she studies Matisse, she finds out why he is considered one of the greatest artists of the twentieth century.

Materials:

Paper (any size, any color), scissors, glue or glue stick, and cardstock or cardboard for background.

Directions:

1. Select a cardstock or piece of cardboard for the background of the piece.
2. Choose an assortment of colored papers to work with.
3. Using your scissors or your hands, cut or tear shapes of various sizes and designs.
4. Lay out the different shapes on the backing board until you have an arrangement you like.
5. Glue the shapes into place.



WE ARE WATER PROTECTORS

Written by Carole Lindstrom, Illustrated by Michaela Goade

Integration Themes:

Art, Literature, Science, and Cultural Relevancy

Summary:

When a black snake (an oil pipeline) threatens to destroy the earth and threaten her people's water supply, one young indigenous girl takes a stand to defend Earth's most sacred resource.

Materials:

Various materials (such as paper, cloth, photos, drawings, etc.) that are cut, clipped, torn, or shredded, backing cardboard or other hard surface, scissors, and glue.

Directions:

1. Select a cardstock or piece of cardboard for the background of the piece.
2. Choose an assortment of color papers to work with.
3. Using your scissors or your hands, cut or tear shapes of various sizes and designs.
4. Lay out the different shapes on the backing board until you have an arrangement you like.
5. Glue the shapes into place.



YAYOI KUSAMA: FROM HERE TO INFINITY

Written by Sarah Suzuki, Illustrated by Ellen Weinstein

Integration Themes:

Art, Literature, Social and Emotional Learning, and Art History

Summary:

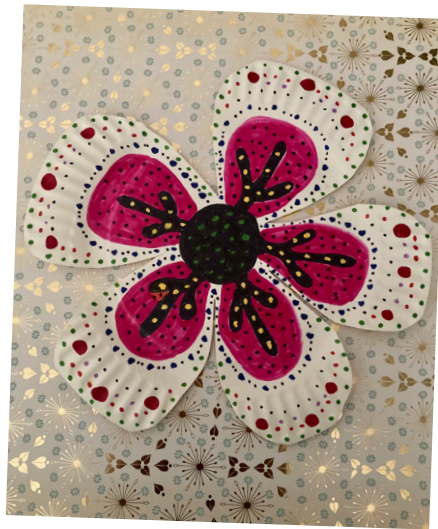
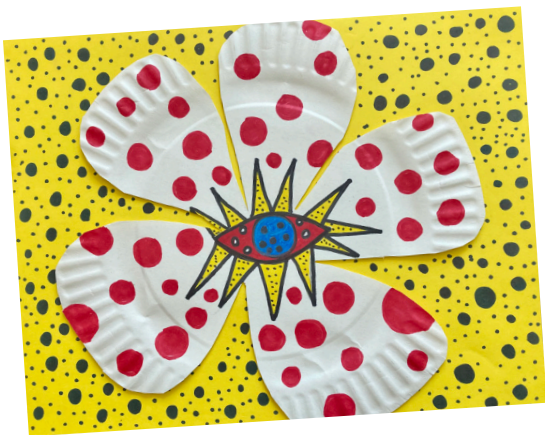
Yayoi Kusama dreamed of becoming an artist. One day, she had a vision in which the world and everything in it were covered in polka dots. She began to cover her paintings, drawings, sculptures, and even her body with dots. As she grew up, she traveled all around the world and brought her dots with her.

Materials:

Paper plate, 8.5 x 11 colored paper, scissors, and markers.

Directions:

1. Draw the flower shape on the paper plate and cut it out.
2. Decorate the flower with a variety of different colored and sizes of dots.
3. Do the same treatment on the background paper, with dots.
4. Glue the flower to the background.



THE HUNDRED DRESSES

Written by Eleanor Estes, Illustrated by Louis Slobodkin

Integration Themes:

Art, Literature, Social and Emotional Learning, and Cultural Relevancy

Summary:

Wanda Petronski, in the hopes of fitting in with the other girls of her class, claims to have one hundred dresses at home, though she wears the same tired old dress to school every day. Some of the girls begin to tease Wanda about her claim until Wanda turns in a hundred drawings of various beautiful dresses. Maddie, one of the girls in the class, feels guilty because she never defended Wanda and that guilt is amplified when she learns Wanda has moved away because of how she was treated.

Materials:

Paper (any size, any color), fabric swatches, assorted ribbon, stickers, sequins, buttons, or other decorative elements, scissors, glue or glue stick, and cardstock or cardboard for background.

Directions:

1. Select a cardstock or piece of cardboard for the background of the piece.
2. Sketch out a rough outline in the shape of a dress.
3. Choose an assortment of color papers to work with, cut/trim them to fit the dress outline you've created, then glue them down.
4. Using your scissors, cut various decorative elements to add to the dress and glue them on.



THE THING ABOUT BEES: A LOVE LETTER

Written and Illustrated by Shabazz Larkin

Integration Themes:

Art, Literature, Science, and Social and Emotional Learning

Summary:

Bees are busy or bee-zy. Bees, through pollination, nourish our planet by helping plants reproduce the foods we need to live. One in three bites of food we eat is pollinated by the insect population.

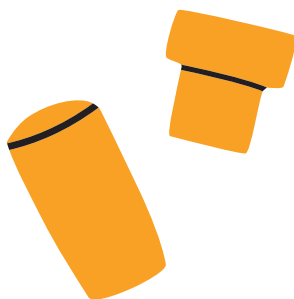
This sweet and funny read aloud is a love letter to bees and filled with important lessons about the interconnectedness of all living things.

Materials:

Corks, half of a pipe cleaner/chenille stem, small sticks or wire for antennae, yarn, string, or thread plastic wrapping, cellophane, scrap paper or packaging snippets, googly eyes, sequins, or beads, glue, scissors.

Directions:

1. Measure approximately 24 inches of yarn, string, thread, or a combination of materials.
2. Dot one cork with glue and wrap yarn around the perimeter, stopping just before the center.
3. Cut a piece of the plastic about 3 inches, pinch it in the middle, and hold it on top of the cork. Crisscross yarn over the "wings" onto the cork and then wrap yarn around the rest of the cork. Add more glue to secure the wings.
4. Choose which flat end of the cork will be the face, glue on eyes, or use markers to draw them on. Pro tip - bees have five eyes!
5. Use a piece of wire, stick, or a very short pipe cleaner folded in a V shape for the bee's antennae. If using yarn or sticks, glue to the top portion of the cork. If using a pipe cleaner scrap, simply twist around the cork and shape it to resemble antennae.





AUTHORS' NOTE

Louisa Higgins, Arts Administrator for Riverside County Office of Education, and Karen Riley, Founder and Executive Director of the S.C.R.A.P. Gallery, are long-time artists, friends, and collaborators. During the pandemic, they began creating integrated arts lessons based on wonderful children's literature. Their focus was on having engaging artists like Matisse, Kusama, and Kahlo, as well as diverse cultural representation. They also made a practice of weaving together multiple pedagogies and subject matter in the lessons. We hope you enjoy these lessons, and feel free to send us images of the student artwork you create in your classrooms!

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