

## **Infusing Joyful Learning In Classrooms**

In a bid to promote active and experiential learning and to inculcate an appreciation of the vast diversity in the Indian art forms, beginning with the new academic session, CBSE has decided to integrate Art with the teaching and learning process of all academic subjects from classes I to XII and intimated all schools vide Circular No. Acad-12/2019 dated 8th March 2019.

The following passages elaborate upon the necessity and outcome of this move.

The understanding is drawn from the NCERT Position Paper (National focus group on Arts, Music, Dance and Theatre), on the subject which says that in the current situation our approach to organise the curriculum is to present knowledge as 'packaged' usually in textbooks, along with associated rituals of examinations to assess, where knowledge acquisition and marks becomes a way of judging competence in the subject area.

The watertight compartmentalization of subjects provide fragmented knowledge rather than interrelated and integrated whole. As a result, knowledge gets divided in boundaries in the school and outside. In the present system, what is already known only gets emphasised, subverting children's own ability to construct knowledge and explore novel ways of knowing. Information takes precedence over knowledge, lending itself to producing bulky textbooks, 'quizzing' and methods of mechanical retrieval rather than understanding and problem solving.

One universally accepted manner of making learning joyful and innovative is art integrated learning. Aesthetic sensibility and experience are the prime sites of the growing child's creativity. Art Integrated learning makes classroom transactions joyful and creative and also promotes the appreciation of our rich art and cultural heritage. However, it must be understood that though Art Education and Art Integrated Education may be considered as mutually exclusive, but Art Education is a necessary precursor for the adoption of Art Integrated learning.

The Board held discussions with several stakeholders, including schools, principals, teachers, NCERT, art professionals and accordingly it emerged that integration of Art with education will lead to betterment of learning in the class rooms.

### **Meaning of Art Integrated Education:**

It is a cross-curricular approach to teaching and learning or teaching of a subject with the help of Art (Visual/performing etc.). Art, in any of its forms, therefore, becomes the primary pathway to learn the subject/topic and also a way of assessment. The integration is meant not only to make the learning process joyful, but also to develop greater appreciation and understanding of the art form being utilized for this purpose.

Art Integration is not a replacement for Art education. Integration happens only after students have been directly taught the Arts. Without this background knowledge, neither the students nor the subject teachers will be able to integrate art in education. For example, the notes in Hindustani Classical Music can be aligned with the teaching of Fractions in Mathematics. However, without the knowledge of music notes, it will be impossible for the students to comprehend the link between the two.

### **Necessity of Art integration in education**

Arts integration is necessary because:

Firstly, when Art is integrated with education, it helps the child apply art-based enquiry, investigation, exploration, critical thinking and creativity for a deeper understanding of the concepts/topics. All disciplines being pursued by students at all stages require creative thinking and problem-solving abilities. For example, the routine method involving studying metallurgy in Chemistry, or mitosis and meiosis in Biology when integrated or taught through art would provoke the student to ask questions such as – If I were a metal, how would I artistically depict my journey of combination with other metals or how can I use a Nukkad Natak to depict mitosis/meiosis?

Secondly, Art Integrated learning also enhances experiential learning, as it enables the student to derive meaning and understanding, directly from the learning experience.

Thirdly, this kind of integration not only makes the teaching and learning process joyful, it also has a positive impact on the development of certain life skills, such as, communication skills, reflection and enquiry, nurturing higher confidence levels and self-esteem, appreciation for aesthetics and creativity.

Fourthly, this integration broadens the mind of the student and enables her to see the multi-disciplinary links between subjects/topics/real lives.

Therefore, it is possible to teach:

- a) The planets in the universe or forests, oceans, through Art, by each child choosing a planet/forest/ocean and making a travel brochure on it.
- b) Reactions and compounds in Chemistry by each child becoming the element/compound of his /her choice and then trying to mingle or not to mingle (attract or repulse) with other compounds in the class. Lot of humour could be the hallmark of this exercise.
- c) Learning the meaning and lines of a difficult poem by breaking each line into a dialogue spoken by Amitabh Bachchan or James Bond or set to music based on Bollywood songs.

In this backdrop, CBSE has directed all its affiliated schools to comply with the following from the 2019-20 academic session:

1. Arts education will be taught as a mandatory subject for classes 1 to 12 and facilities for the same may be provided in every school. Every school shall compulsorily reserve a minimum of two periods per week, per class, for Art education. All the four main streams covered by the term arts, such as music, dance, visual arts and theatre, should be included. Emphasis should be given to learning rather than teaching, and the approach should be participatory, interactive, and experiential rather than instructive.
2. Going a step further, the Board has recommended that in addition to the four major spheres such as music, dance, visual arts (including crafts) and theatre the students of upper primary sections, that is, classes 6 to 8, should also be introduced to culinary art by establishing multi-disciplinary links across their subjects, so that they learn the value of nutritious food, learn about the crops and spices grown in India, about how oil is extracted from various seeds, about good agricultural practices, pesticides use. An attempt has been made to enlist traditional foods of various states, with the idea that learners must also be exposed to this aspect of our culture. As far as possible, schools may introduce a few cooking classes (where girls and boys participate as equals) as a part of Art education in any one of the grades – 6, 7 or 8. Schools are free to devise

their own processes, with the two pre-conditions – one, that all safety aspects shall be well taken care of, and two, it should be a fun learning activity.

3. “All schools are also expected to make concerted efforts to integrate Art in the pedagogy and use it as a tool for imparting joyful education in all grades that is 1 to 12.
4. The forms to be taught, methodology, processes, etc. can be different at different levels, as maybe decided by different schools. However, the interventions should be planned well by the schools. Non-examination-based and process-oriented evaluation shall be done. Theory Practical, project work will be basic components of all art forms to be taught. Detailed activities have been suggested in the document which will be made available soon.