

Using creative art allows students to learn through experience. For example, in a 6th grade classroom we were educating students about the history of Amelia Earhart by using the technique of creating comic strips. This is an introduction to the genre of graphic novels. When students make comic strips to represent the events in Amelia Earhart's journey, they not only gained knowledge about the history of Amelia Earhart but they also learned the art practice of comic strips. John Dewey, the father of progressive education, explains that learning by experience encourages students to have a process of inquiry and find meaning behind their experiences and learning. Students who enjoy the lessons and activities will make a meaningful connection where there is a higher chance of comprehension and retention of the intended learning goals.

In an 8th grade lesson, we are teaching improve. to the students and they are now writing fiction narratives that they will have other groups act out. It was great to see how engaged they were in the experience. Some students who seemed to dread the writing portion became very interested in it. Almost all of the students were engaged in the activity because the attention was put on them and they got to get out of their chairs. Through the creation of art, students are stimulated by their senses; they will see, hear, and touch in a way contrastive to simply seeing a picture of something and reading about it in a book. Art integrated lessons allow creativity and critical thinking, which comes from a place or part of a student that is uniquely theirs. Integrating art into a lesson plan is a successful strategy that will engage students, stimulate their minds, give them hands on experiences, and facilitate critical, abstract, and divergent thinking skills.