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The 2022 issue of *Journal of Learning through the Arts* offers several observations across grade levels and teacher preparation. The *JLTA* reprints Karen D'Souza's eye-opening article on reading and literacy from EdSource, reminding us of the ongoing awareness educators must have for addressing student success. Arts integration, as explored in the authors' articles, provides insights to help educators realize that goal. In the Arts and Sciences section, Liane Brouillette highlights the potential for kindergartners when their learning environment includes both arts and nature in their early experiences. Carlos Saito exposes the benefits of film with a bio-environmental theme to help university students engage their emotional interests as they embark on scientific studies. In the Language Arts section, educators at three different universities— Ashley Dallacqua, Sara Kersten-Parrish, and Mindi Rhoades—challenge their preservice and in-service teachers' perspectives on literacy with unconventional texts and activities. Rosalind Flynn documents the use of drama and script-writing in U.S. schools in a literature review starting with the early 1900s. Kimberly Traue and Roger Stewart share a study about 2nd graders who transmediate visual strategies and the writing process over several lessons. In the section on Teaching and Learning through the Arts, Christopher Nokes explores how high school IB can immerse themselves in arts content that permits them to reach authentic and meaningful learning about self, history, and the present. Kate Wheeler inquires into the challenging situation of how arts-integration may not yield expected benefits when fidelity to a program may not be in place. In the Opinion article, Lisa LaJevic articulates the difficult position that arts-specialist teachers may be in as she shares her lived experiences and the influence of research on her teaching. These pieces continue to provide us with important information about why arts and learning are so vital to understand and work on improving for teachers and learners across the educational system.

Arts and Sciences

Expanding Equity in the Early Grades through Art and Nature Study by Liane Brouillette

Examining kindergarten curriculum, researcher Brouillette discusses the unique learning environment for these young students and the ways that attention to aesthetic education with a focus on nature study can strengthen their emotions and curiosity. Noting the historic trends that have led to increased academic emphases for kindergartners, Brouillette highlights the affordances of exposing learners to arts and the natural world to stimulate imagination and encourage the potential student-driven pursuit of learning.

Winter, Her Dolphin Tale, and the Rise of Environmental Education by Carlos Hiroo Saito

Saito explores the impacts of a film about Winter, a dolphin with a prosthetic tail, on both undergraduate and graduate university students in environmental education classes. The film dramatized the multiple scientific and social efforts to address the dolphin's plight and became a tool of instruction for the beginning of courses to engage student dialogues about environmental concepts, problem awareness, and ethical concerns. Surveys revealed students' perceptions of and feelings about the human impact on biodiversity that would assist them in their studies.

Language Arts

"Beyond the 'ordinariness'": Arts-based Teacher Education by Ashley Dallacqua, Sara Kersten-Parrish, and Mindi Rhoades

The three educators working at different universities with preservice and in-service teachers address the tensions of employing arts-based approaches in literacy practices to prepare future educators for their future students. With picture books, graphic novels, multi-modal texts, and art-making activities, the authors study their preservice and in-service teachers responses to the experiences with the resources, noting the features of surprise, uncertainty, and flexibility as shifting perceptions of literacy and complexity resulted for both the researchers and the teachers. The researchers express that the challenges of negotiations in the process of teacher education can help future teachers meet the demands and constraints that they may encounter in their careers.

A Movement Rises to Change the Teaching of Reading: Low Test Scores Fuel Demands for Change by Karen D'Souza

D'Souza's article from [EdSource](#) is reprinted here. Acknowledging the "wars" involved in teaching reading as educational pendulums swing, the author looks at both California's students' struggles with reading and the nation's, tracing several concerns with phonics-based approaches and brain research as well as other approaches, like whole-language, in teaching of readings. D'Souza highlights the alarming impact of reading struggles on fluency and learning success, and the need for instructional practices to improve, sometimes with the influence of legislation, tying the urgency to equity, access, and social justice issues. The clashes of scientists and educators are mentioned as factors creating casualties amongst students when teachers do not fully understand the science of reading and brain development.

Scripting the Curriculum: A History of Students Dramatizing Content Information by Rosalind M. Flynn

Flynn examines educational literature from 1903-2018 for the term "arts integration" in relation to drama and script writing in K-12 disciplines like science, social studies, and literature courses. Several authors and educators are quoted as they share their classroom practices and students' experiences over the decades as drama/scripts enhance student learning and help them realize learning goals. Time factors for incorporating drama and script writing in the classroom are acknowledged throughout the literature as are the positive results.

Arts Infused Literacy: Scaffolding the Writing Process with Visual Strategies by Kimberly L. Traue and Roger A. Stewart

The authors explore the features of using visual strategies to parallel writing process skills for 2nd grade students. Visual Thinking Skills (VTS) encouraged students to make connections to their writing while working with The Six Writing Traits. Details from some of the lessons are shared to show student progress through their compositions and artistic efforts as well as the presentations of their projects to younger students. Attention to language is a highlight in the study.

Teaching and Learning through the Arts

Effective Learning in the Modern Classroom by Christopher Nokes

Author Nokes delves into the roles of problem-solving, shared human experience, environmental awareness, and constructive learning in effective motivational and intellectual learning through arts for students to explore and value their passions and independence. Several examples, mostly visual, of content that high school students experience in his courses reveal the concepts of holism, authenticity,

ecosystem, intersectionality, and artistic movements/styles that can help students navigate intellectual and life skills to develop interconnectedness.

A Mixed Methods Critical Review of A+ Schools in NC: Making a Case for Fidelity in Frameworks by Kate Wheeler

Wheeler discusses data for arts-integrated schools and analyzes selected interviews with an administrator, arts director, and principal to explore downward trends in End of Grade scores in North Carolina and implementation of arts integration in North Carolina schools. Some factors of successful implementation that influence scores are explored such as preparation, collaboration, and professional development, which the researcher finds may be missing from the schools and suggest that fidelity to frameworks and funding needs to be strengthened.

Opinion

Arts Infusion: My Lived Experiences as an Elementary Visual Arts Teacher by Lisa LaJevic

LaJevic reflects on two decades of experience starting with her beginning assignment as an arts educator at two schools in a Pennsylvania school district and ongoing research in arts-infused programs that informed her teaching. Scheduling, different disciplines, themes, lessons, participation, misunderstandings, and support are discussed for the challenges and achievements that she encountered. The benefits of professional development emerge as one of the stand out suggestions that she recognizes as vital to the success of infusing art into curriculum.