

## ABSTRACT

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The Effects Of Instruction Utilizing The Arts On The Academic Achievement  
Of Fourth-Grade Students

(Major Professor: David Gullatt)

In this day of accountability, members of state government agencies are looking for ways to increase student achievement, especially in the area of high stakes testing. Louisiana's accountability program has yielded state curriculum standards which identify the content that should be taught by specific grade levels. Teachers are now charged with the responsibility of finding methods to teach these standards. With all of the attention to these academic standards, what is the role of the arts? The Louisiana Institute for Education in the Arts (LAIEA) suggests that the arts are the tools with which to teach these academic standards. This institute, based on the philosophy of Comprehensive Arts Education, provides teachers with a six-day training designed to immerse them in how to teach both through the arts and in the arts.

The purpose of this research was to examine the role of the arts used as entry points into the academic curriculum and the academic success of students in settings where the arts were infused into the curriculum. An ex-post facto research design was used to compare fourth grade Louisiana Educational Assessment Program for the Twenty-first Century (LEAP 21) scores from 74 schools. Thirty-seven of these schools had teachers who had been trained in the Louisiana Institute for Education in the Arts. The remaining 37 were matched schools based on the location of the school and the population of fourth grade students taking the LEAP 21. The students in the schools with LAIEA trained teachers scored significantly higher ( $p < .05$ ) than the comparison group in the mathematics, language arts, and science sections of the LEAP 21. No significant difference existed in the scores of the social studies section.