

### **Arts and Crafts Develop Thinking Skills** (*Cognitive Development*)

- Problem solving skills are exercised in experimenting with art supplies and observing cause and effect.
- Decision making is constant and continuous in assembling and decorating art and craft projects.
- Spatial relations and visual thinking skills are engaged and strengthened.



### **Arts and Crafts Develop Feeling Skills** (*Emotional Development*)

- Open-ended art helps children communicate their real feelings and potentially have others understand them better.
- Art materials provide sensory stimulation that can be fun and provide pleasure and satisfaction.
- In the event of a crisis in your community, open-ended art provides an outlet to reduce the stress of a trauma.

### **Arts and Crafts Develop Relating Skills** (*Social Development*)

- Art materials are shared in an environment that facilitates social interaction.
- The non-competitive, cooperative environment of the artroom helps children practice social skills.
- Shy or less verbal children often participate more comfortably with others in this cooperative arena.

### **Arts and Crafts Develop Coordinating Skills** (*Sensorimotor Development*)

- Fine motor skills are developed using a wide range of materials, craft accessories and artroom tools.
- Eye-hand coordination prepares children for real-life tasks at school and home.
- Self-esteem is enhanced when a child identifies himself as being “coordinated.”

## **4) Know that crafts and art develop different skills.**

Arts and crafts develop different developmental skills. Art activities develop feeling skills and promote self-expression. Craft activities develop thinking, relating and coordinating skills. These skill arenas overlap, but it is valuable to separate them and understand the difference when you work with children in an art group. This way, as you look in your cabinet and wonder, “What art or craft activity will I provide today?” you can ask yourself what skill you need to focus on: Is it relationship building, self-expression, cognitive skills, coordination? Once you establish this, you can decide whether to select an art activity or a craft activity.

## **5) Know about the left and right sides of the brain.**

Participating in arts and crafts activities activates both the linear, left hemisphere of the brain and the creative, non-sequential right hemisphere of the brain, helping children develop their full potential. Generally, here is how the two sides of our brain process information:

### **Left Hemisphere: Logical, Sequential**

Activated by reading, math or linear problem solving

### **Right Hemisphere: Creative, Intuitive**

Activated by art, music, dance, drama

## **6) Know the theory of learning by doing.**

Arts and crafts offer children endless opportunities to learn by doing. And they are likely to remember what they learn! Brain researchers tell us that children retain much better when hands-on activities go along with that learning. Children learn:

10% of what they READ	50% of what they HEAR and READ
20% of what they HEAR	70% of what they SAY and
30% of what they SEE	90% of what they DO!

## **7) Know at least one definition of creativity.**

Here are two definitions to start you off. Ask the children to come up with their own definitions, as well.

**Creativity:** The act of making something new.

**Creativity:** The art of combining things in a new way.

The potential for creativity—the act of making something new—lives in each of us. Most of us act less and less upon this potential with every passing year. Our own creativity becomes a memory—something we outgrew or lost along the way. If a child grows up believing he is creative, he will have a better chance of finding constructive outlets for creative energy in later years. The child’s creativity will not be just a memory; it will be a valuable personal resource to use every day.

