

Motivating, Engaging and Connecting: An Integrated Approach to Arts & Literacy Education

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Arts-based integrated teaching and learning provides powerful opportunities to engage students in literacy in ways that are accessible, motivating, and inclusive as shown by the research of Chapman et al. (2019), Ewing et al. (2025) and Gray and Pascoe (2025). Arts integrated learning has also been found to empower and enable student agency and personal voice (Macintyre et al, 2017). Drawing on the combined experiences of two primary-trained educators and academics with over 30 years of classroom teaching, this one-hour workshop explores how Arts-based approaches can be meaningfully embedded within literacy teaching to support diverse learners, including students who may lack motivation, are neurodiverse, have special educational needs (SEN), or are English as an Additional Language or Dialect (EALD). In a time where students are struggling with cognitive overloads, Arts approaches can light the way and provide meaningful Literacy engagement.

The workshop foregrounds real-world classroom examples that align with both SCSA's English curriculum and the Arts Curriculum areas of Drama and Visual Arts. Participants will be guided through multimodal, evidence-based, practical strategies that demonstrate how the Arts can enhance literacy learning by supporting engagement, comprehension, expression, and confidence.

During the workshop, participants will actively map curriculum and explore possible Arts integrations, whilst reflecting on their own teaching contexts. Through this task, scaffolded approaches will be developed that can be adapted to different year levels and embrace diverse learning needs. Participants will have access to a range of resources and activities that can be implemented into their unique contexts. The workshop emphasises that while contexts differ, the possibilities for Arts-based literacy learning are expansive and transformative for all students.