

Key Features of the Kennedy Center's Changing Education Through the Arts (CETA) Program

The key features of the CETA program are:

- Flexible Program Design
- Triple Content Focus
- Raise Level Of Confidence and Comfort
- Model Classroom Practice
- Teachers Reflect on their Teaching
- Carefully Planned and Specifically Focused Instruction
- Instructor's Beliefs and Attitudes
- Teacher Recognition
- Ongoing Formative Assessment

Flexible Program Design

As adult learners, teachers have differing needs, interests, and time available for study. Flexible program design is attractive to teachers because it allows them to organize their study in ways that will be most beneficial to them. The CETA program designs sessions as individual workshops (three hours each) or multiple session courses (up to 30 hours). Teachers create their own personally-tailored program by selecting and linking classes and courses. Attendance records show a full range of participation, from single-session to intensive study.

Triple Content Focus

The program has a triple content focus in arts education: 1) arts integration as an approach to teaching; 2) teaching in and about the arts; and 3) helping teachers become discerning arts audiences.

1) Arts Integration as an Approach to Teaching

Arts integration workshops and courses help teachers learn ways to help students construct and demonstrate their understanding through arts modalities. By engaging students in the creative process that connects an art form with another subject area, teachers help students meet in-depth objectives in both. These sessions provide exemplary mutually-reinforcing connections between the arts and other curriculum areas.

2) Teaching In and About the Arts

These professional development experiences hone teachers' abilities to teach arts content and processes. Sessions demonstrate strategies for effectively teaching such things as role play, choral conducting techniques, or dance improvisation.

3) Becoming Discerning Arts Audience

These events draw on the history of the arts and criticism and help teachers develop their own abilities to critically observe and assess arts experiences. Sessions focus on such things as identifying styles of jazz or distinguishing the elements of dance in ballet and modern dance. Sessions often include discussions with performing artists or designers and attendance at performances and art exhibitions.

Raise Levels of Confidence and Comfort

The arts may be a new and perhaps frightening endeavor for teachers who have minimal knowledge of the arts or who think of themselves as lacking in creativity. A key objective is to provide a supportive environment for adult learners that promotes risk-taking. Workshops and courses not only build content knowledge but are designed to build teachers' confidence and comfort in leading participatory and creative work in the classroom.

Model Classroom Practice; Involve Teachers Actively

The professional learning opportunities focus on both theory and practice and provide a participatory learning experience. Instruction models classroom practice—teachers take on the role of students and participate in learning activities. In this way teachers learn both how instruction is led and how it feels to participate as learners.

Teachers Reflect on their Teaching

Although instructors model effective classroom practice, the deepest learning comes when teachers reflect on the content and process in which they participated. Through discussion, teachers reflect on such things as the steps and sequence of the instruction, how the instruction was facilitated, connections to standards, and appropriate adaptations.

Carefully Planned and Specifically Focused Instruction

Teachers are busy and often overworked. When they give their time to professional learning opportunities they expect that time to be well spent. Teachers expect instructors to be prepared and well informed, and to offer ideas appropriate to teachers' grade level and curriculum needs. To ensure quality, the program director meets with instructors to review their plans. Through discussion, topics are refined and specifically focused to ensure depth and applicability to teachers' needs. Based on feedback, the plan for instruction is refined. The program director also observes the presentation of the instruction and provides feedback for further fine-tuning. This careful, collaborative development process yields the highest quality instruction.

Instructor's Beliefs and Attitudes

Effective professional learning for teachers is led by individuals who demonstrate respect for teachers as professional colleagues as well as enthusiasm for and commitment to the role teachers can play in bringing the arts to students.

Teacher Recognition

Teachers who continue their education in the arts are recognized by the Kennedy Center. Teachers earn CETA Certificates of Study for successfully completing each 30 hours of study and assignments. Certificates are presented at an awards ceremony each spring.

Ongoing Formative Assessment

Ongoing formative assessment is a critical part of the development process for all workshops and courses. The assessment draws on the instructor's, participants', and program director's perspectives. Staff members compile statistics and anecdotal information about the quality of all the courses/workshops. The information is analyzed and reviewed with the instructor to guide revisions and planning for future offerings.