

A vision for active, multisensory learning

The Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts (Institute) addresses two primary concerns:

- 1) The school readiness of children who live in economically disadvantaged circumstances, and
- 2) Access to effective professional development for teachers who work with these children.

Working side by side with the teachers and parents to incorporate the arts into children's daily experiences, we hope to instill an enjoyment and love for learning within each child. The Wolf Trap Institute's arts-based teaching method taps into children's innate desire for active, multisensory learning, as children literally embody concepts by singing and dancing, and engage their imagination through puppetry, story dramatization, and role play. This approach helps young children to:

- Engage in developmentally appropriate arts learning.
- Develop their emergent literacy skills and language acquisition.
- Learn math and science concepts, vocabulary, and habits of mind.
- Practice and experience 21st century skills such as communication, creativity, collaboration, cooperation, and flexible thinking which are key to future success.
- Achieve pre-K and Kindergarten learning outcomes as defined by national education organizations and local education districts, including the Common Core State Standards.

INSTITUTE SERVICES

Classroom Residency Program Information

Classroom Residencies are at the heart of Wolf Trap Institute for Early Learning Through the Arts. Wolf Trap Institute brings professional performing artists – musicians, dancers, actors, or puppeteers trained in the Institute model as Wolf Trap Teaching Artists – into preschool and Kindergarten classrooms to provide innovative and effective arts-integrated strategies that align with curriculum objectives. The Institute’s Classroom Residency model provides direct, in-classroom services to children while emphasizing the professional development of early childhood educators, enabling them to infuse the performing arts into classroom instruction. Improving early childhood educators’ ability to achieve learning objectives for children in their classrooms yields a greater, more sustained impact, as teachers will use the arts strategies and skills they learn throughout their careers. Classroom Residencies are creative partnerships between Wolf Trap Teaching Artists and early childhood educators as they collaborate in using the performing arts to engage children, enrich their learning, and reinforce the curriculum. A Wolf Trap Teaching Artist works individually with each teacher to develop lesson plans and customize the residency to the needs of the teacher and the class. Each residency includes orientation and planning sessions, participatory classroom sessions led by the teaching artist in partnership with the teacher, and 15-minute follow-up discussions between the teacher and the Teaching Artist.

Early Childhood STEM Learning Through the Arts

The Wolf Trap Institute’s *Early Childhood STEM Learning Through the Arts* (Early STEM/Arts), pioneers arts-infused strategies to teach these increasingly essential subjects. Grounded in its intentional arts-integrated approach to STEM learning, Wolf Trap provides innovative and effective STEM teaching for educators, children and families nationwide. Wolf Trap enables all educators to advance children’s learning with dynamic, performing arts experiences that engage young learners in the discovery processes integral to engineering, the sciences, and all disciplines while supporting their cognitive and social/emotional development.

For additional information about the Wolf Trap Foundation STEM Initiative, see the website: <http://www.wolftrap.org/STEM>, or review the featured article Wolf Trap developed for the US Department of Education, Office of Innovation and Improvement as a resource:

<http://www.ed.gov/oii-news/feature-wolf-trap-institute-unites-arts-nd-stem-early-childhood-learning>

Baby Artsplay Residencies

This program focuses on supporting the intellectual, language/emergent literacy, social/emotional, and physical development of children under 36 months of age.

The goal of the Wolf Trap Baby Artsplay!™ residency program is to enhance young children's learning in all areas of development, through the performing arts of music, movement and drama. Taught by veteran Wolf Trap Teaching Artists, the classes engage children, ages three months to three years and their parents or caregivers, in arts experiences designed to include all learning styles in multisensory, active experiences that facilitate language and vocabulary, social/emotional and motor skills, and promote understanding of the arts as an integral part of early childhood development.

The program is designed to:

- Support children's multi-sensory learning styles, sense of discovery, and innate curiosity.
- Stimulate children's vocalizations and language.
- Use steady beat as a tool to assist children in focusing and self-regulation.
- Offer children the opportunity to experience a variety of music tempos and movement qualities.
- Encourage children's social emotional skills.
- Provide experiences that stimulate children to make connections to their world and environment.
- Promote early literacy and vocabulary.

Educators, Parents and Caregivers will:

- Learn the important connection between the performing arts and infant/toddler learning and development.
- Understand the importance of singing/chanting and develop confidence using voice that is pleasing, comforting, and appropriate for infants and toddlers to hear and begin to imitate.
- Develop confidence in using simple dance and movement with infants and toddlers that is appropriate to their age/stage of development.
- Learn how to use the performing arts to introduce children's literature that is engaging, expressive, multi-sensory and fosters a love of books.
- Learn and practice quality and developmentally appropriate songs, movement, and drama experiences to use with infants and toddlers.
- Learn arts strategies that can be infused throughout children's daily routine and that promote receptive and expressive language.

Professional Development Workshops

Wolf Trap Institute Workshops are led by Master Teaching Artists who specialize in music, movement, drama, or puppetry and engage participants in the natural connections between the performing arts and children's learning. These intensive, interactive sessions increase teachers' confidence in working with young children as they learn how to foster creativity, critical thinking, and emergent literacy skills in the classroom. Each session includes a handout (and CD, if applicable), is 3 hours in length and can accommodate up to 60 participants.

Family Involvement Workshops

Wolf Trap Institute Family Involvement Workshops are led by Master Teaching Artists and bring young children and their siblings, parents, and caregivers together through shared arts experiences. The workshops introduce parents and caregivers to a variety of simple yet effective arts-based literacy activities they can conduct with their children at home, in the car, or even in line at the grocery store. Each session is 45 minutes to 1 hour in length and can accommodate up to 60 participants.

Arts Integration Institutes

Arts Integration Institutes are customizable professional development trainings for early childhood educators led by Master Teaching Artists who specialize in music, dance, and drama. Arts Integration Institutes allow participants to explore strategies for utilizing the elements of the performing arts to support children's learning and mentor the creation new customized classroom experiences. The training can range from one day or up to four full days depending on the desired professional development goals. Additional topics can include math learning, science and engineering, literacy or supporting children with special needs.