

Ashfaq Ishaq, Ph.D.
Executive Chairman



Dear Sir or Madam,

The International Child Art Foundation is reaching out to you to invite you and your students to participate in our flagship program, the Arts Olympiad.

Conceived as a program to tap the inherent creativity in all children and build community through the framework of a supportive "competition," the Arts Olympiad has grown into the world's largest and most prestigious program of arts and athletics. We have sought from the beginning to be all-inclusive; let me emphasize that this program is free of charge to students, schools, and communities (although we don't fund students' travel expenses at this time).

The program's lesson plan introduces students aged 8 to 12 to the Artist-Athlete IdealSM — the power of a creative mind in a healthy body. It starts with students visualizing themselves as *artist-athletes* and then rendering that vision in a painting, drawing, or digital piece. Later in the program each student imagines the action of *My Favorite Sport*, a real or make-believe athletic activity. Points of pausing for group discussion and sharing are built into the plan.

In our 17 years of bringing art to children, we have found that activities such as these break down divisions in a classroom between those known for their athletic abilities, their academic strengths, and their artistic inclinations. More importantly, it breaks down barriers within students' own minds: suddenly they feel liberated to be all of these things at once. Students who have completed our program typically show gains in academic performance; in addition evidence is emerging that they are more likely to make healthy choices in behavior and nutrition.

The basis of our lesson plans is STEAMS education, which starts with the traditional STEM paradigm and integrates *art and culture* (signified by the "A") along with *play and sports* (the "S"). By combining a more holistic understanding of children's development with the excitement and structure of an event under the "Olympiad" banner (licensed by the U.S. Olympic Committee), the Arts Olympiad strengthens communities and builds ties to a larger world. After the in-class portion, a jury of school trustees, staff, and students pick an artist and their work to represent the school. This process repeats across communities and then moves to a higher level, selecting artists to represent a school district or a city (a state or country for our overseas participants).

We then invite selectees from across the United States and around the world to the National Mall in Washington, D.C. for the 2015 World Children's Festival, a gathering and celebration of children's creativity with a true international flavor. All of the final selectees' works tour the world in the final stage of the program in 2016, which includes a stop in Rio de Janeiro for the 2016 Summer Olympic Games.

Attached below is the lesson plan for you to review. The deadline for submission of entries to the ICAF is May 15, 2014. You may enjoy this clip from the music portion of the last festival > { [HYPERLINK "http://tinyurl.com/2011WCF"](http://tinyurl.com/2011WCF) }. It's not too late for your students to join this fun and edifying program. We look forward to your participation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ashfaq Ishaq".



U.S. ARTS OLYMPIAD LESSON PLAN

National Visual Arts Standards:

The Arts Olympiad meets the following standards:

- Content Standard 1: Understanding and applying media, techniques, and processes
- Content Standard 2: Using knowledge of structures and functions
- Content Standard 3: Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas
- Content Standard 4: Understanding the visual arts in relation to history and cultures
- Content Standard 5: Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the work of others
- Content Standard 6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

Objective:

Students will learn:

- About the Olympic Art Competitions as part of the Olympic Games
- Connections between Art and Sport and how these are tools for building peace in the world
- To appreciate each other despite their personal passion for art or sport
- How Art and Sport can make one think differently of oneself as an Artist-Athlete
- About the risk in creativity (the 4th-grade slump) and the obesity risk (a global health problem)
- To evaluate art by students from around the world on the theme "My Favorite Sport"
- To visualize their "inner athlete" and depict it in a painting, drawing or digital art
- About the World Children's Festival and the need to be creative and empathic

Materials:

- Art supplies and 18 inch by 24 inch art papers
- Typical sport equipment (bats, balls, athletic wear) and art tools (brushes, paints, easel)

Online Resources:

For Activity **A**: Smithsonian Magazine > <http://tinyurl.com/Olympic-Art-Competitions>
Richard Stanton (2000). The Forgotten Olympic Art Competitions. Trafford: Victoria BC, Canada

For Activity **B**: *ChildArt* Magazine > <http://icaf.org/pdfs/Art%20and%20Sport.pdf>

For Activity **C**: The Arts Olympiad works > <http://icaf.org/gallery/>

For Activity **D**: World Children's Festival > <http://icaf.org/whatwedo/wcf.php>
YouTube clip on the festival > <http://tinyurl.com/ICAF-WCF2011>



Arts Olympiad Lesson Plan

Part 1: Instructional Group Activities

The activities suggested below will allow students to develop connections between art and sport, express their opinions, and create their own individual artwork. You can select any combination of the activities described below and modify these to fit your curriculum.

Activity A. The Olympics Art Competitions

Have your students read the article on the competitions in the Smithsonian Magazine or the book, *The Forgotten Olympic Art Competitions*, to discuss the role of art in sport. You may also have them answer these questions:

1. Should the Olympic Art Competitions be reinstated? Why? For what age group?
2. What is your favorite sport and sport event? Why?
3. Which are the host cities for the Winter Olympics in 2014 and 2018 and the Summer Olympics in 2016 and 2020? What about 2022 and 2024?

Activity B. The Purpose of Art and Sport

Have your students read the *ChildArt* Magazine. Divide the class into two groups: "Artists" and "Athletes." Students are to develop and write down their response to these questions:

Questions posed to "Artists":

Question 1. *Why do people run, play soccer, climb trees, etc...?*

Question 2. *How would you feel if you were playing a Sport?*

Questions posed to "Athletes":

Question 1. *Why do people draw, paint, sculpt, dance, etc...?*

Question 2. *How would you feel if you were creating Art?*

Once they have finished writing their answers, the students are put in Artist-Athlete pairs to discuss their responses with one another and to answer one final question: What are the similarities between why people create Art or participate in Sports? At the end, each group may present their answers to the class.

Activity C. Thinking Beyond the Stereotype

Have your students view some of the artwork on the ICAF website. Introduce students to the *Artist-Athlete Ideal*SM of the creative mind and healthy body—*mens sana in corpore sano* ("a healthy mind in a healthy body"). Anyone be an artist and athlete, and anyone can be creative and athletic.

This activity is designed to encourage students to look beyond old assumptions and break stereotypes. Class should be divided into teams of three or four with each group assigned one of the following objects. The questions below ask students to reflect and conceive a sport using an art object, or conceive an art project using a sport object.



Groups with Art Object:

*What is the name of the sport?
What are the rules of the sport?
How is the object used in the sport?
How is the use of the object in the game different from its common usage?*

Groups with Sport Object:

*What is the name of the art project?
What materials are needed for the art project?
What are the steps for making the art project?
How is the use of the object in the art project different from its common usage?*

Activity D. Building Peace through Art and Sport

Have your students read about the World Children's Festival and watch the YouTube clip. Students are to discuss the following quotation by Nobel laureate Nelson Mandela:

"Art and sport have the powers to change the world, the power to inspire, the power to unite people in a way that little else can. Art and sport speak to people in a language they understand. Art and sport can create hope where there was once only despair. They are instruments for peace, even more powerful than governments."

Part 2: Independent Art Creation

Students are to create art on the theme, *My Favorite Sport*. They can select any sport to picture themselves as "artist-athletes." The sport can be a local, traditional or an Olympic sport, or one that they imagine. The students can produce a painting/drawing or digital art.

Traditional 2-D Art: A painting or drawing on paper, canvas, or silk 18x24 inches in size

Digital Art: Static visual work created using digital tools or a collage (300+ dpi)

Each student should write a short essay on his or her work, describing their feelings and creative objective, and comparing their work in relation to the artwork of peers. This paper should be clipped to the artwork.

Part 3: Exhibition and Selection of School Entry

- Organize an exhibition of the artwork produced under the Arts Olympiad
- Form a panel of judges responsible for selecting the school entry
- Include a few students as judges to provide an intergenerational perspective on aesthetics
- The judges should give equal weight to originality/creativity as technical/aesthetic merit to select one best painting and one best digital art
- Complete the School Entry Form (attached as Appendix) and mail the entries and the students' essays to the address below on or before **May 15, 2014**

Mail:

ICAF, P.O. Box 58133, Washington, DC 20037

Courier:

ICAF, 2540 Virginia Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20037 Phone: (202) 530-1000

Email:

program@icaf.org



Sending School Entry

The painting or drawing should be mailed (packaged flat and not rolled up). The finalist digital art can be emailed, or a CD can be mailed along with the painting/drawing. The School Entry Form should be completed for both categories. This form could be taped to the back of the painting/drawing. For digital art, the form can be scanned and emailed.

OFFICIAL DELEGATES TO THE WORLD CHILDREN'S FESTIVAL

Held on the National Mall in Washington, DC every four years as the "Olympics" of children's co-creation, the 5th World Children's Festival will be a 3-day educational event to be held in June 2015.

The Official Delegations to the World Children's Festival are about 1,000 Arts Olympiad winners, their parents, and school principals or teachers.

The ICAF selects 50 school groups to perform at the festival. All types of performances are entertained. Your school can apply when the performance applications are posted on www.WorldChildrensFestival.org in April 2014.

The U.S. Arts Olympiad Schedule:

January/April 2014	– Implement the lesson plan in the classroom
April/May 2014	– Organize a school art exhibition for judging of best works
May 15, 2014	– Mail the School entries to the ICAF
September 2014	– The U.S. Arts Olympiad winners announced
November 2014	– Finalize plans for the 5 th World Children's Festival
Spring/Summer 2015	– Participate in the 5 th World Children's Festival in Washington DC
February/May 2016	– Follow news on the traveling International Arts Olympiad Exhibition

Optional Activities:

You can submit your school entry early for posting on the ICAF website and Facebook to cultivate global conversations on how the power of art can be a positive influence in children's lives.

You can make a video on the Arts Olympiad experience of your class and send it to the ICAF with release forms from parents for posting on the ICAF YouTube channel.

The ICAF:

An independent and nonpartisan 501(c)(3) non-profit, the ICAF has served since 1997 as the leading arts & creativity organization for the world's children. Our mission is to enhance academic performance and imbue global citizenship by nurturing children's creativity and developing their empathy—key attributes of 21st century learners and leaders.

What the ICAF is doing reflects such a refreshingly integrated view of children's development – a much-needed perspective in a time when children's growth and learning often seem to be approached in a very reductionistic, fragmented way.

- Martha Farrell Erickson, Ph.D., Director, Center for Early Education & Development, University of Minnesota



School Entry for the Arts Olympiad

I. School

School/Institution name		Name of Organizer	
Mailing Address			
City	State	Zip code	
Telephone (with area code)	Organizer's email	School/Institution email	
How many students participated?	Comments on the lesson plan?		

II. Student Artist

First name	Last name	Age	Date of birth
Title of work and medium			
Student's comments on his/her work			
Student's height in inches	Weight in pounds	Ethnicity or race (optional)	
Parent's Name	Email	Telephone	

III. Declaration

I hereby certify that the attached "My Favorite Sport" artwork is the original work of the student artist named above. I further understand that the student's artwork becomes entirely the property of the International Child Art Foundation (ICAF) and cannot be returned. I agree that the artwork may be published, exhibited or reproduced by the ICAF or transferred or loaned to another organization or individual without further authorization from or any compensation to the student or his/her teacher and parent.

IV. Teacher and Parent

Name of Teacher	Signature	Date
Name of Parent	Signature	Date