



### ***ArtBound!* at Art League Houston**

This is the third consecutive academic year that Art League Houston has received an education grant from Target to provide free in-school visual arts residencies with professional teaching artists in Houston I.S.D. Title I schools. Art League Houston's residency program, *ArtBound!*, is curriculum-based with classroom teachers participating in the planning to ensure that the residencies support and enhance their classroom objectives.

Each residency has an Art League Houston teaching artist visiting a school eight times during a semester, working with three classrooms per visit. For each visit, the teaching artist works with each class for approximately one hour. Art League Houston teaching artists are professional artists and experienced teaching artists.

Due to the generosity of Target's funding, the residencies, including art supplies, are offered free of charge to the participating schools. A condition of the Target grant is that Art League Houston *ArtBound!* residencies be provided to Houston I.S.D. Title I schools during the school day (as opposed to an after-school or weekend program). In addition, the *ArtBound!* residencies should connect to H.I.S.D. curriculum and be provided primarily to grade levels third through fifth.

The *ArtBound!* residency includes a culminating event, which can be an informal showing of student art work at the participating school or at a neighborhood library or other venue. The Art League Houston teaching artist collects the art work from the teachers and works with an Art League staff member to prepare and hang the art.

#### **About the Curriculum-based Design:**

The *ArtBound!* residencies consist of visual arts activities that have students creating art under the direction of a professional teaching artist. However, the residencies are designed to make a connection to the classroom teacher's curriculum.

The following examples are from actual Art League Houston *ArtBound!* residencies implemented during the 2010-2011 academic year:

**Example 1: Art League Houston *ArtBound!* Residency at Dodson Elementary and Montessori School:**

“Birds: A Collection of Verse and Vision” (connecting art, poetry, and science)

Last fall, Art League Houston implemented an eight week residency at Dodson Elementary, working with three teachers and sixty-six students, primarily third and fourth grade students. The Art League Houston teaching artist introduced the students and teachers to paintings and sculptures of birds by Houston artist Isabelle Scurry Chapman. Art League Houston also gave each teacher a copy of *Birds: A Collection of Verse and Vision*, a book with images of Isabelle Scurry Chapman’s paintings of birds with accompanying poems by Jim Blackburn, whose beautiful poetry deals with ecological themes.

**The classroom teachers at Dodson connected the arts residency to the study of habitats and ecosystems, which had their students researching Gulf Coast birds.** The Dodson teachers incorporated the book of paintings and poems into their classrooms, introducing their students to Blackburn’s poems about habitats, ecosystems, interdependence, ecology, and food chains.

**The Art League Houston teaching artist introduced the students to the beautiful Chapman paintings of birds, and under the direction of the teaching artist, students created their own paintings of birds.** They learned about color, shading, hue, value, and basic elements of design. They learned how to mix paints to get a myriad of colors as well as different painting techniques, which resulted in gorgeous paintings of birds, which were on display at the Smith Neighborhood Library near the University of Houston.

This quote by one of Dodson’s teachers best captures the impact of the residency:

*“Each day, not only on art day, but each day, I saw students more interested in drawing and writing about birds. The class as a whole grew stronger and more united with this experience from a common interest, which gave them a group identity and pulled them together as a community. Some of my students were so creative....I had no idea they were so talented.”*

**Example 2: Art League Houston *ArtBound!* Residency at Wharton K-8 Dual Language Academy**

**“Cultural Differences in Art and Societies” (integrating art and cultural studies)**

Last academic year, two third grade teachers at Wharton K-8 Dual Language Academy had their students research and explore different cultures, communities, and artifacts. They asked their students to form small groups or “tribes,” and each tribe was given the assignment to create an identity and symbols to represent its tribal institutions and values.

The Art League Houston teaching artist, a former graphic designer for the Houston Chronicle, taught the students about graphic illustration, design, and color symbolism. He facilitated the “tribes” in designing and creating tribal flags and designs for textiles and artifacts. The designs

by the Wharton students were amazing and displayed for two months at the downtown branch of the Houston Public Library.

This quote by one of the Wharton teachers best captures the impact of the residency:

*“My students had multiple opportunities to learn that there is more in art than the final product. While they were working on inventing their own “tribes” and creating their cultural symbols and artifacts through art, they also learned about the difficulties in decision-making, how to rely on each other’s conflict-resolution skills, and that cooperation is a much needed skill to succeed in the real world.”*

### **Example 3: Art League Houston *ArtBound!* Residency at Field Elementary:**

“Observing, Creating, and Writing” (connecting science, art and writing)

Last spring, Art League Houston implemented a residency at Field Elementary working with three teachers and their second, third, and fourth grade students.

One of the teachers with a combined class of third and fourth graders requested that the teaching artist focus on science. The teaching artist took the students outside to observe and sketch their observations of the natural environment. This supported the classroom teacher’s assignment which had his students going outside three times a day to observe how light changes as the day progresses. The teaching artist facilitated the students in creating paintings of the outside of their school to reflect a time of day (morning, noon, or evening) and a specific season. She also taught them about perspective, how to mix colors, and shade to show shadows in art.

For the other two classes, the Art League Houston teaching artist was asked to link visual arts with verbal and writing skills. As the *ArtBound!* residency is also designed to give classroom teachers arts strategies to use in the classroom, the activities introduced by the teaching artist gave teachers new ways to engage their students and inspire writing. Students learned how to observe art and write about it. For example, they learned how to look at a piece of art and distinguish between describing and interpreting it. They also learned how to mix colors to create paintings based on adjectives.

This quote by one of the Field teachers best captures the impact of the residency:

*“This (the art residency) was a different way to be with my students doing something that was fun and instructional. They were exposed to a new experience. Every week they couldn’t wait for the art class to happen again.....I realized that art relates to math and other subjects much more than I thought. I gained knowledge on the subject (art) as well as techniques that I can use in class with other projects. This will help since our school does not have art.”*

### **Responsibilities for Participating Schools in the Art League Houston *ArtBound!* Residencies:**

While Art League Houston provides its *ArtBound!* program free of charge to the schools, it does require the following from the campuses it serves, listed as follows:

1. **The school principal is responsible for endorsing the program on his or campus including recruiting three enthusiastic teachers (grades 3 though 8) to participate.**
2. **The school provides a contact person or liaison between the school and Art League Houston.** The school contact is responsible for communicating with Art League, as for example in the case of needing to cancel and reschedule a teaching artist's visit.
3. **Although not a requirement for participation, it is helpful if the school can provide storage space for the art supplies** provided by Art League Houston.
4. **Although not a requirement for participation, it is very helpful if the art classes can be held in one room such as an empty classroom, especially one with a sink.** It saves time if the teaching artists can set-up in one space, and it allows for a wider range of art media in the residency, such as the use of paint.

### **Responsibilities for Participating Teacher:**

1. Teachers participate in the planning of the residency with the teaching artist to ensure that it meets teacher and student needs. This entails attending two planning meetings with the teaching artist and Art League project coordinator. Meetings are usually held at the school after 3:00 pm.
2. Teachers ensure that their classroom and students are ready for the teaching artist's visits.
3. Teachers participate during the teaching artist's visits. Participation can take form in a variety of ways. The classroom teacher may choose to create art with his or her students or the classroom teacher may request a team teaching format with the teaching artist with opportunities to interject a comment or make a connection to other curriculum with the students.
4. Teachers complete a short pre and post survey which helps determine what they know about art before and after the residency. In addition, they complete an evaluation of the teaching artist's work at the conclusion of the residency. Results of surveys and evaluations are confidential and used only to ensure that the quality of the program remains high.
5. A component for each residency is a showing of student work. Art League Houston teaching artists prepare the work for showing. Teachers assist them by providing them with names of their students and ensuring that their students' art is properly labeled with names printed on the back of art pieces.
6. It is Art League Houston's policy to prohibit its teaching artists from teaching in a classroom without a classroom teacher or other school staff person being present. In the rare instance when a teacher might have to leave the room, such as in the case of an emergency, Art League Houston requires that another staff member from school be in the classroom with the teaching artist.

### **Impact of the *ArtBound!* Residencies on Students:**

1. The *ArtBound!* residencies will have students exploring concepts, skills, and themes through visual arts, while they are also engaged in the creative process of planning and creating original works of art. As students create their own art, they will make use of skills such as fine motor, observing, comparing and contrasting, analyzing, interpreting, and verbalizing. They will learn arts vocabulary and will experience creative problem solving.
2. Students will receive instruction from a professional artist and will have the opportunity to work with quality art materials, which will be provided to them at no cost. In addition, students who don't routinely have access to art instruction at school are given the opportunity to study with an artist and experience how an artist investigates ideas and strives for the best solution to a creative problem.
3. Students will have fun while they learn and create in a collaborative environment.
4. Students will discover new things about themselves as a result of participating in the residency as exploration in the visual arts serves as a catalyst for discovery, self-awareness, and enhanced self-esteem.

### **Impact of the *ArtBound!* Residencies on Classroom Teachers:**

1. Classroom teachers will have input as to what will occur with the *ArtBound!* residency making for the possibility of a significant professional development opportunity. They will also gain additional insight into how their students process information through participation in visual arts. A number of teachers who have participated in *ArtBound!* residencies also report that the art residency serves as a stress reducer for them and their students.
2. Because classroom teachers will be asked to participate in the *ArtBound!* classes, their experience with the art activities will make it possible for them to replicate the art activities or adapt into new ideas to enhance their teaching strategies.

### ***ArtBound!* Residency Coordinator for Art League Houston:**

Zachary Gresham, Education Programs Director at Art League Houston, oversees the *ArtBound!* residencies for Art League Houston. He has extensive experience with arts administration and programming. A former education staff member at the Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, Gresham assisted with family and community programs. Gresham has worked at arts organizations across Houston, including Houston Ballet, Lawndale Art Center, and the Houston Center for Photography.

For more information about *ArtBound!*, e-mail Zachary Gresham, Education Programs Director at [zachary@artleaguehouston.org](mailto:zachary@artleaguehouston.org) or call Art League Houston at 713-523-9530.