

# Educate. Inspire. Connect.

ARTS INTEGRATION LESSONS



Amy Wu  
and the  
Ribbon Dance

WRITTEN BY **KAT ZHANG**

ILLUSTRATED BY **CHARLENE CHUA**

# Who is Arts for Learning WNY?

Formerly Young Audiences of Western New York, Arts for Learning WNY is the leading arts education organization in Western New York seeking innovative ways to integrate the arts into learning. For more than 60 years, Arts for Learning has empowered teachers to inspire young people through meaningful creative experiences, seamlessly integrating the arts into the classroom.

## WHAT IS ARTS INTEGRATION?

Arts integration is an approach to teaching where the arts (e.g., music, dance, drama, or visual arts) are woven into lessons from other subject areas such as math, science, language arts, or social studies. The goal is for students to learn both the art form and the academic content at the same time.

## WHY IT WORKS!

Arts integration is a powerful educational tool because it unlocks how kids naturally learn. This type of instruction utilizes the whole brain and hands-on experiences connect academic content to real-life. It supports different learning styles, bolsters relationship-building skills, and naturally boosts motivation.

# How to Use this Arts Integration Guide

**THE ARTS ARE ALL AROUND US** and everyday moments can become creative adventures when we pause to look, listen, and imagine together.

Whether you are dancing in the kitchen, drawing your favorite story characters, or acting out scenes from a book, you are using the power of the arts to make learning stick in joyful, meaningful ways.

This guide is designed to help you and your family dive deeper into the story, beyond just reading the words on the page. With this book, the suggested art supplies, and a little imagination, you will explore the characters, setting, and themes in a whole new way.

You do not need to be a trained artist or teacher – just be willing to play, create, and explore. Along the way, you will support your child's learning, build memories, and maybe even discover your inner artist!



Visit our website to explore more arts integration ideas!



# Visual Arts meets Science

**Amy Wu is always on the move - dancing, tapping, twirling, and skipping! Let's practice making art without picking up our pencil to stop, just like Amy never stops moving!**

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- ▶ **Amy Wu and the Ribbon Dance book**
- ▶ **Paper**
- ▶ **Pencil**
- ▶ **Markers/Crayons/Colored Pencils**

---

## INSTRUCTIONS

**1. In our story, Amy is inspired when she sees a ribbon dancer.** The dancers use their ribbons to make smooth flowing loops. How do you think Amy felt watching the dancers? Do you remember a time when you felt the same way?

**2. Grab your pencil and paper and create a neurographic.**

Without looking at the paper, use your pencil to draw loops. Try not to pick up your pencil. Fill the whole page - it is ok if your lines cross or overlap. Can you change your tempo while you draw? What emotions do you feel with a faster tempo? How about a slower tempo?

**3. Once you are done with your continuous line drawing, use your crayons to fill in the different shapes you made on your paper.**

You can create unique designs, patterns, or solid colors - whatever you can imagine!

## VOCABULARY

**Neurographic** - A type of drawing that helps people relax by turning thoughts or feelings into lines and shapes on paper.

**Pattern** - Something that repeats, like colors, shapes, or lines in a design.

**Tempo** - How fast or slow the rhythm is.

**Continuous Line Drawing** - A drawing made without lifting your pencil or marker off the paper—just one long, connected line!

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**Think about the story when you are coloring your continuous line drawing.** Are you inspired by some of the patterns in the story, like Amy's hair ribbon or scarf? Copy those patterns into some of your shapes. Can you use colors that represent some of the feelings Amy had in the story? Like blue, when she is sad she cannot find a dance ribbon or yellow, for when she realizes she can dance without one!

**Play some music while you create your continuous line drawing.** How do you feel when listening to music? Can you use those emotions to change the shapes or lines in your drawing?

# Dance meets

## Social Emotional Learning

**Amy Wu loves to dance! She is always having fun while on the move. Let's make our own moves and dance along with Amy Wu!**

### SUPPLIES NEEDED

- ▶ *Amy Wu and the Ribbon Dance* book
- ▶ Dance Scarves
- ▶ Paper
- ▶ Pencil

### INSTRUCTIONS

**1. Reread the story.** Using your pencil and paper, for each page, write down the strongest emotion Amy is feeling in the story. Is she excited when she learns about the dance party? Sad or nervous when she can't find the right dance ribbon? How do you think Amy felt at the end of the story?

**2. Look at your dance scarves, pick a color that matches each emotion you wrote down.** For example, you could use yellow for joy, blue for sadness, red for love, etc. It is ok if you use the same color for more than one emotion.

**3. Use your body movement and the colored scarf to act out each emotion.** Think about how much space you take up for each emotion and the level of your movement. Jumping with your arms outstretched, waving your scarf widely, could express excitement, while soft, slow movements near the ground could express sadness.

**4. Put your movements together to act out the emotions of the story.** Which emotion expression did you enjoy the most? Was this also your favorite part of the story?

## VOCABULARY

**Emotion** - The feeling you have (e.g., happiness, sadness, anger).

**Expression** - Showing how you feel through your face and body movements.

**Level** - How high or low your body moves.

**Space** - The area you move in; it can be big or small.

### EXTENSION ACTIVITY

**Make your scarf dance.** With the help of a grown up, pretend your scarf is the choreographer—like it's telling your body what to do! Have your grown up hold the scarf out in front of you and imagine:

- The top corners are like your right and left arms
- The bottom corners are like your right and left legs

Now mirror the scarf's movements with your body. If the top left corner of the scarf goes up, your left arm goes up. If the scarf spins, you spin too! Follow the scarf like it's leading a dance—have fun with it!

# Music meets Social Emotional Learning

While Amy is dancing, she is also using her chopsticks to make some music and keep a beat. Let's make our own music using rhythm sticks!

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- ▶ *Amy Wu and the Ribbon Dance* book
- ▶ Rhythm Sticks

## INSTRUCTIONS

**1. Reread the story.** In the beginning, Amy uses her chopsticks to rap-tap-tap on the side of her bowl during dinner. She loves to dance and make music! How do you think she is feeling while rap-tap-tapping? How do you think Amy's mom is feeling?

**2. Now let's make our own beat!** Start by counting out loud "1...2...3...4" at a steady pace.

**3. Add your feet!** Walk in place or around the room and with each step say out loud "1...2...3...4". Can you still keep a steady beat?

**4. Add a clap!** When you are counting out loud, add a clap to each number or make a pattern of your own. You could clap when you say "1" and "3" or "2" and "4" or only on "4".

**5. Now it's time to grab your rhythm sticks and put it all together!** Instead of clapping, tap your sticks together in the same pattern while counting "1...2...3...4" and keeping your steps in tempo with your voice. Can you change the tempo and make it faster? How about slower? What emotion do you feel when there is a fast tempo? How about a slow tempo?

## VOCABULARY

**Beat** - The steady sound or pulse in music that you can clap, tap, or move to.

**Tempo** - How fast or slow the rhythm is.

**Pattern** - Something that repeats, like colors, shapes, or lines in a design.

**Emotion** - The feeling you have (e.g., happiness, sadness, anger).

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**Make your rhythm sticks unique by coloring or painting them.**

Think about the colors and patterns you are using and how they might express the emotions you feel while playing music.

**Amy finds music all around her.** Can you look for music and beats all around you? Maybe it is the steady thump thump thump of your heartbeat or the low hum of a washing machine. How do these different beats or sounds make you feel?

# In the Community

**In the story, Amy inspires her friends and family to move and dance. Let's make a public art project to encourage your friends, family, and neighbors to move creatively!**

## SUPPLIES NEEDED

- ▶ **Amy Wu and the Ribbon Dance book**
- ▶ **Poster or Canvas Board**
- ▶ **Markers/Crayons/Colored Pencils**
- ▶ **Sticks or Ties** (to display your sign)

## INSTRUCTIONS

**1. When Amy is happily dancing around her neighborhood, how do you think her neighbors feel seeing her dance and move?** Are they inspired, happy, excited, something else? How would you feel?

**2. With a trusted adult, take a trip around your neighborhood and look for things that make you feel inspired, happy, or excited.** Maybe it is how someone is moving or a work of public art. Seeing public art can bring joy and inspiration to a person or a community.

**3. Let's inspire your own neighborhood by making a piece of public art that inspires people who pass by to move creatively!** Think of a movement that brings you joy. Is it skipping? Jumping jacks? Silly arm movements? Use your imagination!

**4. Think about what you want your neighbors to do when they see it.** Use both words and pictures to give clear and fun directions. For example:

- If you want your neighbors to skip, you can draw someone skipping and write: "Skip the rest of the way down the block (or hall if you live in an apartment)!"
- If you want them to do jumping jacks, draw a person doing jumping jacks and write: "How many jumping jacks can you do in 15 seconds?"

Make your sign colorful, creative, and easy for someone walking by to understand!

## INSTRUCTIONS CONTINUED:

**5. Ask a trusted adult to help you place your sign in your front yard for anyone walking by to see.** If you live in an apartment building the sign could be on your front door outside the main door of the building. You can attach it with ties to a fence or glue it to a stick to place in your lawn.

## VOCABULARY

**Neighborhood** - A place where people live near each other—like your street or the area around your home or school.

**Community** - A group of people who live, work, or play together.

**Public Art** - Art that everyone can see and enjoy, like a mural on a wall or a sculpture in a park.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

**With a trusted adult, explore public art in your neighborhood or city.** Here in Buffalo you can explore Hertel Avenue or Allentown to see many different murals. If there are people in any of the murals what expressions are on their faces? How do you feel looking at some of these murals?

**Education** ▶ For over 60 years, we have been the leading arts education organization in Western New York seeking innovative, equitable, and inclusive ways to integrate arts into learning.

**Inspiration** ▶ We are committed to empowering local artists to teach and inspire young people and educators through new and meaningful creative arts experiences.

**Connection** ▶ By serving as a reliable connector between artists and organizations and providing high-quality education, we seamlessly fill a need to integrate arts into the classroom.



2495 Main Street  
Suite 443  
Buffalo, NY 14214  
[artsforlearningwny.org](https://artsforlearningwny.org)



*Affiliated with the national Young Audiences Arts for Learning*