

Making the Connection to the Education Marketplace

Everything Your Business Needs to Increase Sales to Teachers
A Retail Guide from the Craft & Hobby Association

CHA
Craft & Hobby Association

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REACH THE EDUCATION MARKETPLACE

Reap financial benefits and satisfaction on a job well done

Open the door to the \$1.3 billion education market. Connect with teachers, the champions of the craft industry. Each and every September, educators across the country enter craft stores in droves. They believe in the powers of crafts as teaching tools, and return again and again throughout the school year — often reaching into their own pockets — to supplement their supplies.



Consider the following facts about craft supplies in elementary schools

- The public, private and home school market spends \$1.3 billion annually.¹
- Each year, the nation's 2.4 million K-8 teachers spend \$852 million of their own money on school supplies.¹
- Each year the nation's 2.4 million K-8 teachers spend \$476 million annually from classroom budget funds.¹
- Each year 1 million home school teachers spend \$500 million in out-of-pocket expenses.²
- The majority of educators (54%) spend more than \$250 on craft supplies each year; many (22%) spend more than \$500.³

Sources:

¹The Complete K-12 Report: Market Facts & Segment Analyses 2003

²Independent research by a major manufacturer 2003

³Teacherplace.org teacher survey 2003

The Bottom Line

Teachers enjoy teaching with crafts. They believe that hands-on assignments stimulate the imagination and reinforce learning. They consider a friendly, well-stocked craft store indispensable to creative lesson plans.

Join the many craft retailers across the country who have successfully tapped this lucrative education market by creating a teacher-friendly environment. Build your business by helping teachers teach effectively.

The Making The Connection To The Education Marketplace step-by-step guide offers a range of suggestions to reach the education market, from special events to in-service programs. Read on to reap not only financial benefits, but personal satisfaction through helping children learn.

PROMOTE *Crafts. Discover life's little pleasures.*

Consumer awareness campaign

Crafts. Discover life's little pleasures. This theme represents the heart of the multi-million dollar consumer awareness initiative launched by our craft and hobby industry. *Crafts. Discover life's little pleasures.*, or CDLLP for short, is an emotional and personal concept that reminds crafters about the pleasures they derive from creating treasures with both hand and heart.

Put CDLLP to Work for You

Connect your business with CHA's national consumer awareness campaign by including CDLLP in your promotion materials; you'll immediately be linked to a communications program that drives consumers to craft and hobby retailers. To get started, simply download the CDLLP logo you need from www.craftandhobby.org

Pride of Workmanship

From kindergarten finger paints to Intel Science Award Winners, kids from K – 12 use craft materials in projects that span the curriculum. And no matter what age or level of complexity, all students experience a rush of pride when completing a job well done.

Shared Memories

Students assigned hands-on projects often work in pairs or groups, where cooperation and teamwork is emphasized. Friendships and newfound respect for others blossom in successful team environments.

Childhood Delights

Hands-on projects are fun. Kids experience the fun twice; once while making the project, and then a second time when they say, "Look, I made it myself!"

Invite the Educational Community to Take Part in Annual Industry Promotions

Promotional events in March and September rally customers, drive them into stores and create opportunities to introduce new products, techniques and ongoing outreach efforts to the educational community. Industry-wide publicity exposes teachers and parents to the joys and benefits of crafting year-round with children.

National Craft Month

National Craft Month (NCM), held each March, is the bedrock of industry promotions. This month-long campaign took root in 1994, and receives significant media coverage each year. Focusing on families, NCM culminates with a coast-to-coast family-crafting event held on the last Saturday in March.

Celebrate the Season

Offering consumers a jump-start on holiday crafting, Celebrate the Season takes place during September. This nationwide promotion focuses attention on gift giving and decorating for holiday celebrations including Halloween, Thanksgiving, Hanukkah, Kwanzaa and Christmas.

“I think the Association’s Making the Connection to Education project is wonderful because it encourages teachers to challenge children to be creative. All of us want to help them in every way we can.”

Dana Cannito
Jo-Ann Stores, Crossroad Mall
Roanoke, VA

“When I know what a teacher is going to assign as a project, I am ready with a list of products when the children arrive. It gives them the opportunity to chose the materials that best matches the design they have imagined.”

Carol Levosky
Playtime
Arlington, MA

“I have never been disappointed with the amount of time or energy I spend reaching out to teachers. It is a blessing! And when they come into the store, it is a double blessing!”

Patti Haltom,
Stamp.A.Dee.Do.Do
Rubber Stamp Art
Milwaukie, OR

MAKE THE CONNECTION TO EDUCATION

Reach children through crafts and instill lifelong hobbies

The Making the Connection to Education Project shows educators that through imaginative project-based activities that are tied to the core curriculum, craft retail outlets become resources for basic learning and esteem building skills. Many teachers look to retailers as creative consultants for new products and techniques that make learning more effective.



Assist teachers in their quest for craft materials.

Use these handy tips and ideas to thrive in the educational marketplace.

How to Make the Connection to Educators

Become a creative resource for teacher materials and ideas

- Welcome teachers. Set up a special teachers' corner filled with new products, project sheets, discount offers, class schedules and event announcements. Prepare a special form for class projects, and group together the necessary supplies.
- Post colorful announcement flyers in school district offices and staff lunchrooms.
- Recognize teachers and students for a job well done. Include their achievements in newsletters, in-store announcements and sponsorships.
- Display student's projects during the school year. Bring parents, grandparents and friends into the store to celebrate the students' work.
- For easy reference, keep all area schools' tax-exempt numbers on file.
- Send mailings with positive reinforcement about crafting and curriculum to teachers' homes, where they are more likely to read and act on the information.
- Donate paper for the school or PTA newsletter. Parents support retailers who support their children's schools.
- Supply baskets of apples and discount coupons for initial department meetings that begin each school year.
- Offer use of special sewing or die-cutting equipment free-of-charge with purchased materials.

How to Grow the Connection to Educators

Become a trusted partner

- Provide teacher in-service programs at your store or at the school. Focus on new products, new uses for existing products, new crafting techniques or demonstration techniques.
- Create a mechanism for teacher feedback — in the store or on a website. Make it easy for teachers to communicate their needs.
- Become a resource for the PTA. Incorporate crafts into school-sponsored programs or fundraisers.
- Blast fax or e-mail timely tips on projects and techniques to your teacher list.
- Forward relevant articles, websites and other appropriate research.
- Place educators on the newsletter mailing list.
- Coordinate in-school make-it/take-it sessions.
- Track teachers' inventories and notify them if they need to update or restock. Provide a handy checklist for special orders.
- Promote teacherplace.org, an industry website specifically designed for educators.

How to Sustain the Connection to Educators

Become the community expert on crafts and creativity

- Help local educators with fundraising. Display a drop-off box for new and unused craft supplies. Match donations every March, during National Craft Month. On sales days, allow customers to divert savings to a school program.
- Hire teachers for summer craft camps.
- Exhibit student craft projects in local libraries or other public spaces.
- Name a *Making the Connection to Education* staff liaison to coordinate teacher outreach.
- Research local districts' curriculum goals. Suggest craft projects to supplement core curriculum.
- Promote school partnerships. Photograph student-crafting activities for the local newspaper.
- Create multicultural and historical craft projects. Issue press releases complete with photos of each project.
- Advise educators of industry discount opportunities and closeouts.
- Add a *Making the Connection to Education* section to your website. Promote it in newsletters and ads.

APPLY THE RESEARCH

The Academic Value of Hands-on Craft Projects in Elementary Schools



Years of careful research led to the 2002 release of the Association's groundbreaking study, *The Academic Value of Hands-on Craft Projects in Elementary Schools*. One of the first studies ever to investigate the impact of hands-on projects and academic learning, this vital piece of research confirmed that crafting projects linked to curriculum positively influence children's learning and social behaviors. The study allows the Association to take enormous steps toward its goal of increasing the use of crafts and crafting in the learning environment.

This benchmark study suggests that hands-on projects are an effective means of teaching a standards-based curriculum, and that through crafts, students develop a greater appreciation for and understanding of what they learn.

Key Findings

- Hands-on learning helps teachers reach essential goals with all students. Teachers regularly use craft projects to teach the core subjects and link the projects to state and national curriculum standards. Almost three-fourths (72%) of the teachers surveyed link hands-on projects to instructional units involving state or national curriculum standards.
- Student learning improves when classroom lessons incorporate hands-on craft activities. *Students who spent a greater proportion of learning time engaged in hands-on projects scored significantly higher on writing and knowledge application tasks designed specifically for the study over students who spent less learning time in hands-on projects.*
- Students develop greater curiosity about the subject matter when craft projects are included. *Teachers reported increases in student motivation, curiosity about subject matter, willingness to ask questions and volunteer information, and attention to assigned tasks, when hands-on projects were incorporated in lesson plans.*
- Student behavior and socialization skills improve when crafts are undertaken. Teachers say hands-on projects facilitate productive socialization by students working together on a common effort that yields a tangible product. *Student cooperation, responsibility, dedication, confidence and time management skills improve when hands-on projects are incorporated.*
- Teachers say learning through craft projects accommodates students with different learning styles. *Teachers reported that visual and kinesthetic learners, slow readers and writers and ESL students are particularly well-suited for effective learning through hands-on projects.*

CRAFTS AND CURRICULUM

Teachers link craft projects to state and national curriculum standards

Given the importance of state and national curriculum standards and subject matter frameworks in the present educational climate, one of the main research questions of *The Academic Value of Hands-on Craft Projects in Elementary Schools* focused on the relationship between craft projects and curriculum standards. The study found that almost three-fourths of the participating teachers indicated that they explicitly and intentionally linked their instructional units involving hands-on crafts to state or national standards.

Specific Learning Styles

- Students who have a hard time reading and writing can learn through producing a craft. Kinetic learners need to demonstrate their learning in a more active way.
- On the follow-up teacher survey, teachers were asked if they agreed that crafts were particularly well-suited to students with specific learning styles, and if so, to explain. The study found that just over half of the teachers (53%) agreed that craft projects were suited to certain learning styles.
- Teachers believe that crafts projects help students understand not only basic ideas and information but also broader concepts and ideas.
- Almost all of the teachers (90%) selected the top three levels of agreement when asked if craft projects helped students understand basic ideas and information. Only slightly fewer, 86%, selected the top three levels of agreement when asked if crafts also helped students understand broader ideas and concepts.



LISTEN AND LEARN

Educators express strong opinions about crafts in the classroom

Teachers have expressed strong beliefs about craft activities' value to the instructional process and to students' learning. Not only do they see students' improvement in learning, but also in how students are learning to learn, the evolution of learning skills, and the processes needed to succeed in school.

Fig. 1 Teachers on Student Learning Behaviors With and Without Craft Projects

It is clear looking at the chart that the mean scores for the learning behaviors are consistently higher with craft projects than without craft projects.

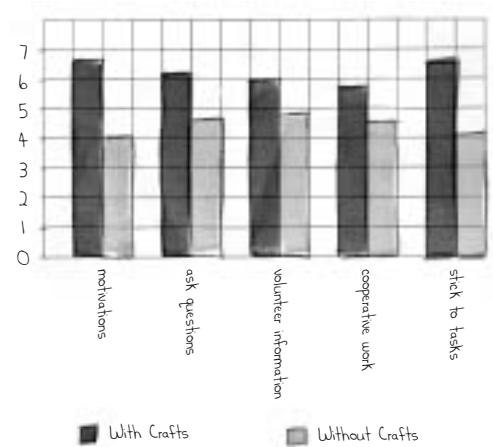


Fig. 1

Fig. 2 Craft Projects Help Students Understand Basic Ideas and Information

Teachers believe that craft projects help students understand not only basic ideas and information but also broader concepts and ideas. Almost all of the teachers (90%) selected the top three levels of agreement when asked if craft projects helped students understand basic ideas and information; only slightly fewer, 86%, selected the top three levels of agreement when asked if crafts also helped students understand broader ideas and concepts.

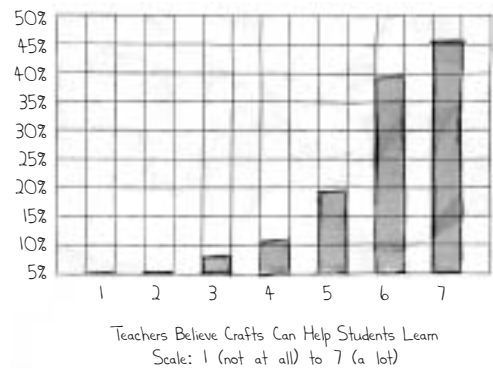


Fig. 2

Fig. 3 Teachers See Crafts as an Integral Part of Instruction.

Teachers combine crafts with other instructional activities when teaching an entire unit, but give craft projects a prominent role. When asked to break down instructional time among a variety of activities, teachers devoted the largest single portion of classroom time to craft projects, followed by direct instruction and class discussion.

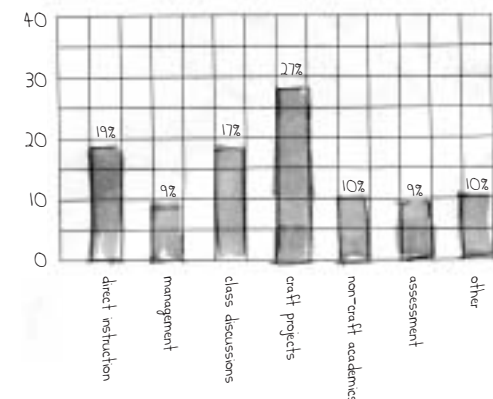


Fig. 3



VISIT www.teacherplace.org

The online resource for the education market

The Association created a special online resource just for teachers. It promotes the benchmark study: *The Academic Value of Hands-On Craft Projects in Elementary Schools* and provides pages of useful projects, lesson plans and tips for crafting in the classroom.

A Crafting-in-the-Curriculum Resource

As consumer dependence on Internet research grows, the Association has sought to supply educators with a wealth of helpful information at teacherplace.org. Educators who are aware of this online resource, can connect with up-to-date information for a hands-on, interdisciplinary approach to teaching, and tap into the imaginations of teachers throughout the country.

Teacherplace.org supports the following links:

Lesson Plans

Filled with creative project lesson plans that outline desired objectives, necessary materials and step-by-step instructions for each project. Most lesson plans can easily be adapted to suit age groups from K-8 and many can be utilized for special holiday projects.

Education Research

Executive Summary and the full report of *The Academic Value of Hands-On Craft Projects in Elementary Schools*.

Teacher Feedback

A sampling of teachers' thoughts and practices in utilizing crafts in the curriculum.

Working with Retailers

A downloadable version of the recently released *Making the Connection to Project-Based Learning in Your Curriculum*. This handy brochure is a step-by-step guide for educators, and provides complete information for efficient and successful partnerships with craft retailers.

Craft Tips

A series of tips designed to ensure successful crafting in the classroom.

Free Stuff

Free to educators – posters that promote crafting.

Teacher Resources

Links to lesson plans, product samples, project ideas, education grants, discounts and other education resources.

APPROACH ADMINISTRATORS

Make administrators and building principals strong allies

Go straight to the head of the class by contacting district supervisors, school principals and curriculum directors. Offer to share the findings of *The Academic Value Of Hands-On Craft Projects In Elementary Schools*, and to provide in-service seminars built on this benchmark study.

Dear (Name):

Among the many findings of the recent study, *The Academic Value Of Hands-On Craft Projects In Elementary Schools*, the following stand out:

- Student learning improves when classroom lessons incorporate hands-on craft activities.
- Student behavior and socialization skills improve when crafts are undertaken.
- Learning through craft projects accommodates students with different learning styles.
- In classes where teachers devoted a moderately large proportion of instructional time to craft projects, students achieved significantly higher scores on a test that required them to apply what they learned in a new context.

(Store name) wants to help (school name) achieve student-learning goals for this academic year. Backed up by research, I am convinced that craft projects can play a significant role in academic achievement.

In order to help (school name) integrate crafting in the curriculum, I can present your staff with this groundbreaking education research, discuss teachers' needs, and introduce (store's name) special resources for educators. I want to ensure that (store name) can provide all of the creative materials and ideas to assist teachers in reaching students through creative and fulfilling projects.

I will telephone next week to further discuss crafting and the curriculum. Meanwhile, if you would like more information about *The Academic Value Of Hands-On Craft Projects In Elementary School*, you can find the complete study online at www.teacherplace.org

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Manager, store name)

CONTACT EDUCATORS THROUGH THE MEDIA

Use the power of the press

Pull out all the stops to fill seminars, classes and special events for educators. Reach public, private and home school teachers by sending timely information (six weeks in advance) to calendar of event editors at local newspapers, radio and television stations. For optimal results, use official company letterhead and follow the format of this sample press release.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(STORE NAME) OFFERS FREE MONTHLY SEMINARS FOR TEACHERS

Connect Hands-On Crafting to Elementary School Curriculum

(City, State), (Date) – A recent study shows that 96% of teachers believe that students show greater interest in learning when hands-on projects are used. To ensure that teachers are well equipped to meet the challenges of teaching with crafts, (store name) will host free monthly seminars on the first (day of week) of every month, at (time) PM. Each (length of presentation) seminar will focus on different projects and techniques that illustrate how to connect hands-on crafting projects to the elementary school curriculum.

The first seminar in the series will be held on (day, date) and will feature (brief description of program). The seminar will be taught by (name and presenter's credentials). All seminar registrants will receive discount cards, sample craft materials and project sheets.

Much of the information utilized in each seminar to connect crafting to the curriculum is taken from the recent benchmark study *The Academic Value Of Hands-On Craft Projects In Elementary Schools*. The full study can be found online at www.teacherplace.org.

(Store name) is located at (store address). To register for an individual seminar, or the complete series, please contact (name) at (store telephone number). Or you can register online at (website address).

TAP INTO TEACHERS

Collaborate with teachers to bring crafting into the classroom

Offer assistance with research and projects and win the hearts of local teachers.

Collaborate on lesson plans that incorporate crafts in the curriculum.

Dear (Teacher Name), or Dear Educator:

A recent study called *The Academic Value Of Hands-On Craft Projects In Elementary Schools* validated crafting within the curriculum. Here are some of the key findings:

- Teachers believe that when craft activities are part of a unit, students develop greater curiosity about the subject matter, gain confidence, take greater responsibility for time management, and are more cooperative in groups.
- Teachers believe that student behavior and socialization skills improve when crafts are undertaken.
- Teachers believe that learning through craft projects accommodates students with different learning styles.

(Store name) wants to help (school name) achieve student-learning goals this academic year by assisting in integrating crafting in the curriculum. To do so, (store name) is presenting a series of free seminars held each (day of week) at (time) PM, which will introduce the education market to innovative uses and techniques for craft materials. In addition to learning creative ways to incorporate crafts in lesson plans, each registrant will receive a discount card, sample materials and creative project sheets.

To register for one seminar, or the complete series, please contact (name) at (telephone number). Or you can register online at (website address). (Store name) is located at (store address).

Meanwhile, if you would like to read *The Academic Value Of Hands-On Craft Projects In Elementary Schools* groundbreaking study, you can find it online at www.teacherplace.org.

I want (store name) to be your creative resource center for teaching materials and ideas and I look forward to our collaboration this year. Please feel free to contact me directly at (phone number) or via e-mail at (e-mail address) with any questions or requests.

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Manager, store name)

PERSUADE PARENTS

Sign on for family fun

As children's first and most influential teachers, parents continue to strive for creative and stimulating activities for their offspring. Help find the perfect craft activity for every child and build a client base with a lifetime love of crafting.

Dear Parent,

The recent study *The Academic Value Of Hands-On Craft Projects In Elementary Schools* confirmed some interesting facts about crafting and student achievement:

- Elementary school teachers around the country successfully incorporate craft projects in the core elementary school subject areas of mathematics, science, language arts, and social studies.
- Teachers believe that when craft activities are part of a unit, students develop greater curiosity about the subject matter, gain confidence, take greater responsibility for time management, and are more cooperative in groups.
- Students indicated that when looking back over what they had accomplished during the school year, they were most proud of their craft projects.

(Store name) wants to support your child's learning and achievement this year. The staff is ready to expand your child's creative potential by providing imaginative ideas for class projects throughout the school year.

We'd like to begin by inviting your family to a series of free Family Fun events that will be held each (day of week) at (time) PM, at (store name), (address).

To sign up for these one-hour sessions, please contact (name) at (telephone number). Or, you may register online at (website address).

Meanwhile, if you would like to read the entire ground-breaking study, *The Academic Value Of Hands-On Craft Projects In Elementary Schools*, you can find it online at www.teacherplace.org.

My staff and I look forward to meeting you soon and beginning our collaboration in helping your child's imagination bloom!

Sincerely,

(Name)

(Manager, store name)



Craft & Hobby Association

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