examining the dynamic interaction of human beings and their ethical dilemmas and choices. They may be asked to write essays discussing conservation efforts around the world and offer their opinions on the most economically effective measures, using their social studies, science, and mathematics knowledge. Accomplished teachers create opportunities for students to use their information processing skills across curricula to increase their students’ social science vocabulary, ability to read, critical thinking skills, and effective use of technology.

Accomplished teachers create integrated lessons to help students build a foundation of facts and information for their exploration of social studies. With an acknowledgement of their biases and perspectives, teachers design activities that encourage respect for opposing points of view, appreciation of well-supported opinions, sensitivity to cultural differences, and commitment to the social welfare of communities. Teachers link new content with pre-existing knowledge and beliefs to help students make connections across curricula. They develop activities that encourage community involvement through which students may apply their knowledge to current, local issues. They provide experiences that feature active learning in small group settings to stimulate student interaction and collaboration. Accomplished teachers provide students with opportunities to develop a sense of belonging and heighten their awareness of the multicultural world in which they live so they may become engaged and empowered citizens.

The Arts

Accomplished teachers understand the intrinsic value of the arts and their usefulness in gaining insight into other disciplines. Dance, music, theater, and the visual arts individually and collectively contribute to the stimulation of imagination and cognitive growth while providing vehicles for creative expression. Teachers understand that the arts represent a unique human endeavor that enriches students’ artistic heritages, tastes, and creativity, while nurturing divergent thinking and an appreciation for various forms of expression. They know that teaching about and through the arts helps students develop knowledge and skill sets that can challenge, expand, and enhance their lives; teachers include the arts in their classrooms for the aesthetic, intellectual, and perceptual value they offer. By including the arts on their own, with the help of subject-area specialists, or through available community resources, middle childhood generalists foster a thoughtful and interactive learning environment. They know that involvement in the arts will develop their students’ thought processes, deepen their understanding of other academic areas, and promote their understanding of different cultures.

Accomplished teachers are willing to take risks to create environments that nurture their students’ individual expression of, and experimentation with, the arts. Teachers may share their personal artistic perspectives with students as they provide them with the opportunities, resources, and encouragement they need to explore their emerging tastes. Teachers recognize the value of the arts in bringing pleasure, enthusiasm, and heightened motivation to their students. They help students develop skills in the arts for their inherent creative value and as a means of communicating
about interests and issues important to them. They guide students in forming an appreciation of aesthetic values and the social and global uses of the arts by drawing attention to similarities and differences in major ideas and themes. For example, to enhance a comparative literature unit on *Cinderella* stories from various cultures, an accomplished teacher might ask students to develop and perform a play to demonstrate a version of the tale they have written themselves. Teachers understand that the arts can offer a helpful way of assessing students’ academic skills and abilities.

Accomplished teachers help students extend their study of other subject areas in creative and critical manners. They relate content to the arts and have students engage in various learning modalities by interpreting subject matter using alternative forms of expression. For example, teachers may provide students with opportunities to create visual poetry from typographical word arrangements or perform a kinesthetic representation or pantomime of plant growth from seed to maturity. To emphasize their students’ understanding of other content area concepts, teachers might examine the relationship between mathematics and music by comparing metric beats with fractions or the similarities of pattern development in tessellations and the architectural wall renderings of the Alhambra in Granada, Spain. Accomplished teachers know that creating, critiquing, and evaluating in and through the arts help students interconnect the world they live in with more clarity. They also know that these experiences bridge the transfer of knowledge and understanding from one content area to the other through the integration that is facilitated by the arts and their connections to the global community that surrounds them.

**Health and Wellness**

Accomplished teachers understand that a comprehensive health education program encompasses the many components of wellness, taking into account students’ social, physical, emotional, and intellectual well-being. These teachers advocate for and create safe and healthy learning environments, which may include access to water, hand washing before meals, healthy snacks, bully-free zones, and frequent physical activity breaks. Teachers create innovative opportunities for students to develop and practice health-enhancing skills through daily routines such as regular exercise, nutritious eating, conflict management, and the maintenance of positive interpersonal relationships. For example, they may have students move throughout the school environment in creative ways—instead of simply walking, they may hop or skip to use different muscle groups. Teachers may also show students how to manage conflict by using techniques such as “I-messages” to express feelings. They may have students manage their stress by learning strategies such as removing themselves from stressful situations, breathing deeply, taking walks, getting water, or speaking about their conflicts. Teachers also recognize that organizing time and resources can help students manage work-related stress.

Accomplished teachers are aware of the distinction between physical activity and physical education. They recognize that children need breaks from sedentary activities in the classroom. They plan activities that help develop students’ motor