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**FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES
SCHOOL OF PEDAGOGY OF NATIONAL AND FOREIGN
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TITLE OF PAPER
The role of art-based activities in promoting engagement in third-grade students of english as a foreign language in a private school in Guayaquil in the scholastic year 2025-2026.

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PROJECT ADVISOR
Jarrín Hunter, Ximena Marita, M. Ed.

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CERTIFICATION

We certify that this research project was presented by **Gallardo Salazar, Emily del Carmen** as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the **Bachelor's Degree in EFL Pedagogy.**

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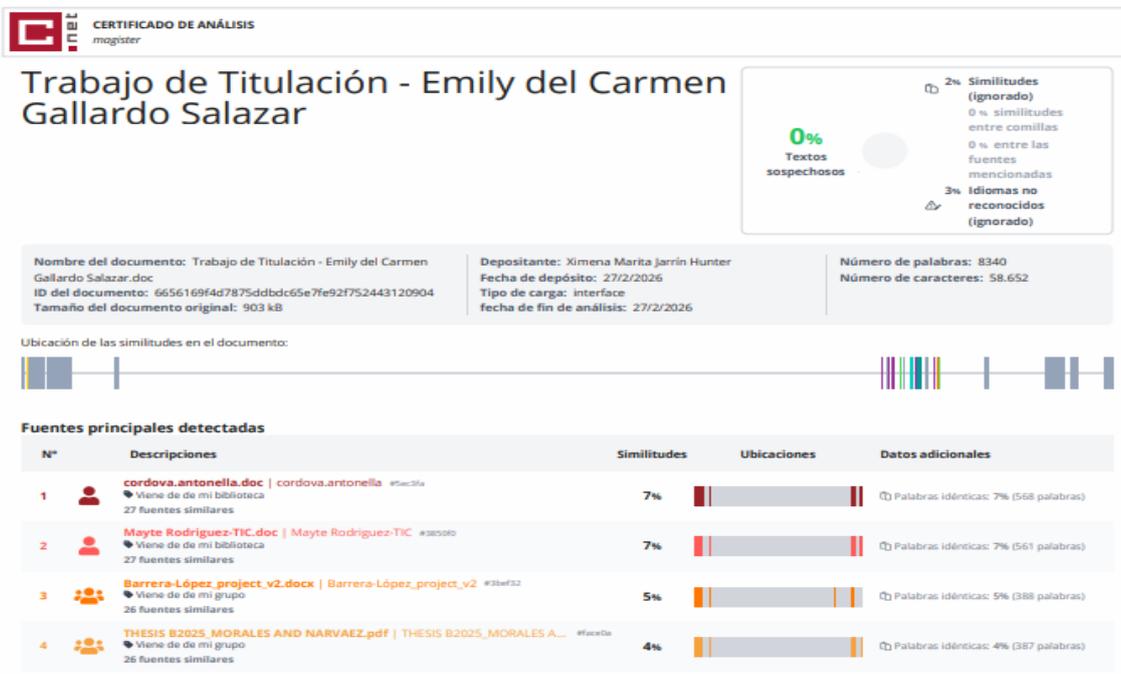**Guayaquil, on the 27**th **day of February of** 2026

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To all the people I have loved and to everyone who has loved me back, imperfectly yet unconditionally. It is to them that I dedicate this work.

To my dad, Fernando Gallardo, who believed in me fiercely.

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This achievement belongs to all of you. I am because you were. And I will carry you with me into everything that comes next.

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ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to analyze how engagement can be improved while using art-based activities among third-grade EFL students of a private school in Guayaquil. This project used a descriptive research methodology, and adopted the mixed methods which helped to analyze information. The quantitative data was collected through a teacher survey, taken by two teachers in the private school chosen for the study, which analyzed the frequency in which art activities were implemented in the classroom. Also, a student survey was performed to showcase how interested students would be in different art activities. Two different classrooms were surveyed: classroom A made up of 22 students and classroom B made up of 26 students. For the qualitative data, an observation checklist was used to gather information concerning the level of engagement in the classroom. After analyzing the data, it was found that some factors that influence engagement can be the type of strategies used in the classroom and the access to varied instructional materials. Therefore, it is through art-based activities that a viable solution can be found to improve engagement of third-grade students by giving them a variety of materials that are related to their different learning styles.

Key Words: EFL, engagement, art-based activities, third grade, learning styles, analysis

INTRODUCTION

Engagement is commonly described as the active participation and involvement students have in a classroom. According to Lena & Nikolov (2025), it is also a multidimensional construct that involves behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social components. This means that engagement implies that students participate, interact with others, and become active participants in their learning process.

Although the literature available in the field acknowledges its importance, low engagement is still often found in many primary-level EFL classrooms. This problem is related to what is known as traditional and teacher-centered strategies used inside of a classroom. As Lange (2008) explains, these are methodologies that rely merely on textbooks, drill, and repetition, which can often prevent students from using creativity and having meaningful interaction with the content they are learning. In consequence, students tend to assume a more passive role in the learning process.

When working with young learners, it is important to recognize that, to promote meaningful learning, engagement must be a priority. Even though it might seem a difficult task, art-based learning, which involves integrating professional artistic practices into academic subject can help teachers develop more student-centered activities; increasing engagement and motivation among young learners.

This study consists of three chapters. Chapter One includes the problem found, the justification on why the research is relevant along with the research question, main objective, and specific objectives of the work. In Chapter Two, the literature review contains information related to teaching young learners, engagement and art-based activities which gives the structure of the theory supporting the study. Lastly, chapter three includes the methodology used in the study, the instruments used and analysis of the data after collecting the information. To close this study there are conclusions and recommendations based on the information found.

CHAPTER I

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Engagement is a key component in young learners' academic and linguistic success. It is not straightforward regarding young learners, as they need to be active and motivated during the EFL lessons. According to Cameron (2001), teaching English to young learners presents several challenges, most of which stem from learner characteristics that differ from those of older students. When teaching young learners, instruction does not focus on isolated skills, instead, language development occurs holistically supported by teaching techniques aligned with children's cognitive and developmental stages. This approach allows young learners to experience higher levels of engagement during English classes.

In the 2025–2026 scholastic year at a private school in Guayaquil, it was observed that third-grade students showed low levels of engagement during EFL classes. They only participated if the teachers asked them to do it. They did not complete the assigned tasks, and they started conversations about topics not related to the class, among other situations. It was presumed that they were using only the textbook, which had to be completed to fulfil the contents of the program, and there was no inclusion of engaging activities.

This study might help teachers identify what factors contribute to the low-engagement and what art-based activities can be used to improve engagement inside of the classroom.

JUSTIFICATION

This study focuses on promoting art-based activities among third-grade students at a private school in Guayaquil to aid engagement and motivation during the learning process. It is known that when students are emotionally and cognitively invested, they are more likely to retain new information, use the target language confidently, and develop a positive attitude toward learning.

This research is justified because it addresses an evident pedagogical need: to identify strategies that enhance engagement among young EFL learners. Understanding what approaches influence classroom participation will not only benefit teachers and students in the institution chosen for the study but also contribute to the broader field of EFL pedagogy by offering practical, developmentally appropriate methods for early language instruction.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

What teaching practices are currently used for promoting engagement among third-grade EFL students at the institution chosen for this study?

MAIN OBJECTIVE

To analyze how engagement can be improved among third-grade EFL students at a private school in Guayaquil, to propose art-based activities to foster class participation.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

To identify the current EFL teaching methods used in the third-grade classroom and their impact on student engagement.

To identify what art-based activities can contribute to engage third-graders during EFL lessons.

To propose art-based activities that help third graders' engagement in their EFL classes.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Teaching English to Young Learners (TEYL)

2.1.1 Identification and Characteristics of Young Learners

Young learners are children attending primary school between the ages of 7 and 12, while those under the age of seven are classified as very young learners. Compared to older learners, children in this age group possess limited life experiences and developing cognitive abilities.

Norasiah & Sugirin (2023) states that young learners tend to crave attention, show creative imagination and prefer their learning process to involve dynamic activities such as play and imitation along with interaction. From a cognitive perspective, they are inherently curious and excited explore their surroundings. Cognitively, this helps them slowly move from concrete to abstract thinking.

In contrast, Tran & Hua (2023) highlight that a main characteristic of this age group is their limited attention span, which typically ranges between 10 and 20 minutes. Due to these natural challenges, young learners may quickly disengage during classroom activities specially if they are not perceived as meaningful, challenging according to their age, or connected to their interests.

2.1.2 How Young Learners Learn a Foreign Language

Young learners learn a foreign language through indirect and naturalistic processes rather than through explicit instruction. Norasiah & Sugirin (2023) note that children often realize the general meaning of interaction before understanding individual words or grammatical structures. Language learning at this stage occurs indirectly because learners absorb information from their environment through what they see, hear, and touch.

Therefore, during the early stages of foreign language learning, listening, and speaking are a priority, as children mostly depend on auditory input, visuals, and tailored support to construct meaning.

2.1.3 Importance of Play, Movement, and Creativity

Play-based learning is a fundamental component of effective instruction for young learners. Pinter (2006) explains that children are naturally active and often perceive the physical stillness of traditional, teacher-centered classrooms as restrictive and uninviting. As a result, integrating movement and kinesthetic learning strategies is essential for sustaining attention and engagement.

Tran & Hua (2023) point out that strategies such as Total Physical Response (TPR) allow learners to associate language with physical actions, supporting comprehension and retention. Creativity increases motivation by allowing learners to express ideas and emotions beyond their linguistic limitations. Smithrim & Upitis (2005) describe creative engagement as a holistic experience that involves sensorimotor, emotional, cognitive, and social dimensions, all of which contribute to deeper language learning.

2.1.4 Challenges in Teaching English to Young Learners

Teaching English to young learners presents several classroom and instructional challenges. Tran & Hua (2023) note that linguistic limitations are common among children, as many have not yet fully reached the potential of their first language. This often results in increased reliance on mother tongue during English instruction.

In addition to linguistic challenges, affective factors such as shyness, inhibition, and fear of making mistakes can lead to low or uneven participation in EFL classrooms. Krashen (1982) explains that when learners feel anxiety or there is not emotional safety it might prevent them from taking the risks necessary for language development. Furthermore, limited self-regulation can result in fatigue and boredom when activities are too long, involve too much repetition or just do not meet the needs of the learners.

2.1.5 Engagement Challenges in Young Learners' EFL Classrooms

It is known that keeping engagement active is one of the top challenges in young learners EFL classrooms. Lange (2008) reports that learners of this age frequently lose interest during lessons, which can bring restlessness, off-task behavior, and surface task completion. Once engagement is gone, students tend to hurry through their tasks which results in a lack of meaningful learning.

To address these challenges, Tran & Hua (2023) suggest dividing lessons into shorter activity segments which align with the chunking and scaffolding strategies and will help learners' attention. Additionally, Danielson (2022) emphasizes the importance of creating a supportive classroom environment where positive relationships and experiences are a priority. These learning settings promote trust and emotional safety, which are important for effective language acquisition.

2.2 Engagement in the EFL Classroom

2.2.1 Definition of Engagement and Motivation

Engagement is commonly described as the mediator that connects learners' home, school, and peer contexts to academic outcomes. Toronto Public Health & Toronto Children's Services (2019) defines child engagement as meaningful participation in learning and recognizes it as a fundamental right. Lena & Nikolov (2025) further conceptualize engagement as a multidimensional construct consisting of behavioral, emotional, cognitive, and social components.

Motivation refers to learners' willingness, enthusiasm, and desire to learn a foreign language. According to Lena & Nikolov (2025), motivation can be intrinsic, driven by enjoyment and personal interest, or extrinsic, influenced by rewards, expectations, or external pressures. Both forms of motivation play a critical role in shaping learners' engagement and learning behaviors.

2.2.2 Factors Influencing Engagement in EFL Classrooms

Engagement in EFL classrooms is influenced by a combination of developmental, environmental, and social factors. Lena & Nikolov (2025) explain that students' perceptions of competence and the perceived value of learning tasks significantly affect their level of effort and persistence. When learners believe they can succeed and see relevance in activities, engagement increases.

Additionally, Danielson (2022) highlights that a positive classroom atmosphere and access to varied instructional materials strongly influence students' willingness to participate actively in learning.

2.2.3 Relationship between Engagement and Motivation

Engagement and motivation are closely interconnected and mutually reinforcing. While motivation influences the rate and success of language acquisition, active engagement strengthens learners' persistence and long-term interest in learning. Lena & Nikolov (2025) suggest that high expectations combined with appropriate intellectual challenges increase cognitive engagement.

As a result, engagement is a key signal that meaningful learning is taking place and can predict long-term academic achievement. Educational environment that are constantly engaging will probably result on learners who showcase effort, persistence, and positive attitude toward learning.

2.2.4 Reasons for Low Engagement in Primary-Level EFL Contexts

One of the key reasons for low engagement in primary-level educational context is usually related to traditional and teacher-centered instructional approaches. Lange (2008) explains that methodologies depending heavily on textbooks, drills, and rote repetition restrict opportunities for choice, creativity, and meaningful learning. Through data it was identified that in primary classrooms, students might stay engaged for a very small amount of the teaching time during lessons.

According to Maslow (1948) disengagement is further intensified when learners' psychological needs for autonomy, emotional safety, and self-expression are not met. Therefore, these needs must be met before students can concentrate and be willing to be active participants in a classroom.

2.2.5 Activities to Boost Engagement and Motivation in Young Learners

To enhance engagement and motivation, teachers are encouraged to implement interactive and student-centered activities. Lange (2018) suggests that lessons must be meaningful and valuable to prevent young students from disengaging. Learner-centered instruction and creative tasks allow students to engage with content at their own pace while maintaining interest.

• **Visual Arts Activities:** These are related to painting, drawing and coloring tasks and they help learners represent visually the vocabulary and concepts they are learning which helps comprehension and long-term memory (Smithrim & Upitis, 2005).

• **Crafts and Hands-On Creation:** According to Tran & Hua (2023), activities involving cutting, gluing, and building models address young learners' needs since they often find prolonged sitting activities in the classroom as limiting and disengaging. Smithrim & Upitis (2005) mention these are also tasks that stimulate the sensorimotor aspect of engagement, providing a more holistic learning process for the student.

• **Music and Movement:** TPR, songs and different rhythms link emotional engagement along with physical activities with language learning. These types of activities support comprehension before speaking skills are completely developed (Tran & Hua, 2023).

• **Digital and Game-Based Creative Tools:** Teachers must move away from traditional routines and prioritize interactive and student-centered digital tools to ensure students find meaning and value in their schoolwork (Lange, 2018).

2.3 Art-Based Learning in EFL

2.3.1 Definition of Art

Khan (2024), based on Gardner's theory, explains that art can be used as a tool for communication that allows individuals to express ideas, knowledge, and emotions that may extend beyond verbal language.

2.3.2 Art in Education

In an educational focus, art has a vital role in encouraging holistic learning. Smithrim & Upitis (2005) state that combining art with education allows the engagement of four elements: The learners' sensorimotor, emotional, cognitive, and social areas at the same time. This holistic collaboration increases creativity, imagination, and meaningful learning.

2.3.3 Definition and Principles of Art-Based Learning / Art Integration

According to Smithrim & Upitis (2005), Learning Through the Arts (LTTA) model, is about combining artistic practices with academic aims. Moreover, a foundational principle of this approach is providing instructional variety. Helping teachers and other educators to support different learning styles and abilities inside a classroom. Within this theory, art is considered as a creative process and as a meaningful learning outcome.

2.3.4 Theoretical Foundations of Art-Based Learning

• **Multiple Intelligences Theory:** Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory proposes that intelligence consists of multiple modalities, including visual-spatial, musical, and bodily-kinesthetic intelligences. Khan (2024) argues that this perspective supports pluralized instruction, in which content is presented in diverse ways to reach all learners.

• **Sociocultural Theory:** Vygotsky's sociocultural theory views learning as a socially mediated process. Collaborative art activities allow learners to operate within their Zone of Proximal Development through guided interaction and scaffolding.

• **Constructivism:** Constructivist theory conceptualizes learners as active participants who construct knowledge that is meaningful and relevant to their personal experiences rather than passively receiving information.

2.3.5 Benefits of Art-Based Learning in EFL Contexts

Art-based instruction offers significant cognitive and affective benefits in EFL classrooms. According to Smithrim & Upitis (2005), visual and creative tasks help learners connect language with real-world experiences, enhancing comprehension and retention. Additionally, Art-based learning serves as a "door" for self-expression, allowing young learners to communicate thoughts, knowledge, and feelings that may exist beyond their current vocabulary.

Art-based learning also promotes student agency and self-expression. Danielson (2022) explains that when learners are given opportunities to make choices and represent understanding in multiple ways, they develop greater ownership of their learning and increased motivation.

2.3.6 Art, Engagement and Motivation in EFL

Toronto Public Health & Toronto Children's Services (2019) states that engagement functions as a mediator that links learners' environments to academic outcomes. Art-based activities promote behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement by transforming language lessons into meaningful and worthwhile experiences. Because artistic tasks encourage sustained attention, creativity, and persistence, they directly address the short attention spans characteristic of young learners.

CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Approach

This study employed a descriptive research design, according to Grimes & Schulz (2002), a descriptive study is designed only to describe how variables are distributed, without considering causal or other hypotheses. The descriptive approach was selected because the purpose of the study was not to manipulate variables or test the effectiveness of an intervention, but rather to describe and analyze the current levels of student engagement and instructional practices related to art-based activities in third-grade EFL classrooms.

The nature of this study is qualitative but includes some quantitative elements. According to Kalu & Bwalya (2017), qualitative research is used to understand the individual, ever-changing, and whole nature of people and their experience in a particular context. While Packer (2011) mentions that quantification can be useful in the descriptive phase of qualitative inquiry. The quantitative elements during this study helped recognize teaching patterns and levels of engagement that might not be as easy to identify through narrative analysis alone. As asserted by Black (1994), while qualitative methods are essential for understanding the nature of a phenomenon, quantitative elements are required to measure the frequency of behaviors.

Overall, as identified in the problem statement, third-grade students at a private school in Guayaquil have demonstrated low engagement during EFL classes, characterized by short attention spans, off-task behavior, low motivation, and incomplete or superficial task completion. Furthermore, the problem highlights a lack of descriptive information about the teaching process, which limits understanding of why young learners struggle to engage meaningfully in language acquisition. For this reason, a descriptive methodology was the most appropriate choice, as it allows the researcher to observe and document existing classroom practices and student behaviors as they naturally occur.

Participants

The participants in this study were students of two classes, class A made up by 26 students and class B made up by 22 students aged from 7 to 8 years old, who are enrolled in the third grade of a private school in Guayaquil, Ecuador. The students receive a total of 18 hours of instruction in English per week, of which 13 hours are dedicated to Language Arts. The remaining hours are divided between Natural Science and Environmental Science, both taught in English. In addition, two English teachers participated in the study. Each teacher was observed during two hours of classroom instruction. To gather data, the teachers were given a frequency-of-use survey related to instructional practices, while the students completed a survey focused on their interests.

Data Gathering tools

To address the nature of students' engagement and ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research problem, three data collection instruments were used: a Teacher Frequency of Use Survey which was adapted from an instrument developed by Krista J. Lange (2018) for a study at St. Cloud State University; a Student Interest Survey, adapted from the 'Attitudes and Practices' survey developed by Smithrim & Upitis (2005); and a Classroom Observation Checklist, adapted from the Meaningful Engaged Learning (McMEL) Walk-Through Form (Version 1001) created by Dr. Mike Muir (2008 - 2011). Each instrument captured a different perspective of the teaching–learning process, allowing for data triangulation and increased validity.

Protocol

The study followed a structured protocol to ensure systematic data collection. First, a formal permission letter was submitted to the school to obtain authorization to conduct the research. Second, once approval was granted, data collection began with the administration of a student interest survey to gather information about learners' preferences and engagement. As a third step, a frequency-of-use survey was given to the two participating teachers to identify their instructional practices. Finally, classroom observations were

conducted using a checklist as the observation instrument. Each teacher was observed during two English classes, resulting in a total of four observed sessions. This protocol ensured the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data to support the objectives of the study.
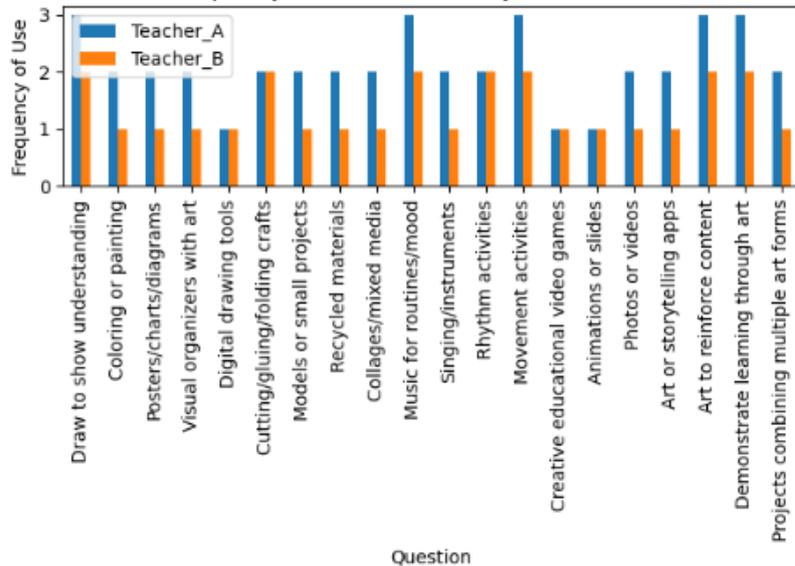
DATA ANALYSIS

Teacher Frequency of Use Survey

Figure 1: Frequency of art-based activities used. Prepared by author

The results of the Teacher Frequency of Use Survey indicate that both teachers show a generally low level of implementation of art-based activities in their 3rd-grade classrooms. Most responses are concentrated between 1 (rarely or never) and 3 (two or three times a week), with neither teacher reporting daily nor near-daily use of art-integrated strategies across instructional areas. Overall, Teacher A demonstrates slightly higher frequency levels than Teacher B; however, art-based instruction remains limited in both classrooms.

Regarding visual arts activities, the findings reveal that Teacher A uses drawing and visual representation two or three times a week, while activities such as coloring, creating posters or activities involving visual cues are used maybe once a week. In contrast, Teacher B reports little use of visual arts, most of the activities were classified in the "rarely or never" scale. Therefore, we can conclude that visual arts are not a common teaching strategy used.

In relation to crafts and hands-on creation, Teacher A reported the use of crafts, recycled materials, and small projects approximately once a week. None of these activities reached frequent or daily use. Teacher B, on the other hand, reported very limited engagement in hands-on creative activities, which are mainly reserved for special occasions rather than integrated into regular lessons. These results indicate that project-based and experiential art activities are not systematically incorporated into classroom instruction.

Concerning music and movement, Teacher A uses this strategy two or three times a week, singing and rhythm-based activities are checked to be use about once a week. On the other hand, Teacher B confirms occasional use, mostly for routines inside of the classroom and not instructional purposes. Compared to other sections, this category shows to be done more often, however the activities done are not usually connected to academic content.

With reference to digital and game-based tools, the end results demonstrate that both teachers rarely or never use them in the classroom. This category involved using educational games, animations, digital storytelling applications, or photo/video projects which are free tools online. However, it had the lowest frequency level of the survey which show us considerable lack of digital creative resources to reinforce learning.

Lastly, regarding art-integrated instruction, it was reported Teacher A uses art to review content two or three times during the week. Sometimes students were asked to demonstrate what they learned through art. On the other hand, Teacher B seldom uses art activities as assessments or projects involving art. This showcases that art is not completely used as a constant learning or assessment technique in either classroom.

In conclusion, the analysis established that art-based instruction does not play a central role in either classroom. Even though Teach A has higher frequency level of implementing artistic activities than Teacher B, none of the categories reached a high or consistent level of implementation by either teacher.

Analysis of the Student Art Activities Survey

The Student Art Activities Survey was administered to two third-grade classrooms to identify students' interests in different types of art-related activities. Classroom A consisted of 26 students, while Classroom B consisted of 22 students. The survey measured students' preferences in four main areas: Drawing and Making Art, Music and Movement, Games and Digital Activities, and Art and Learning.
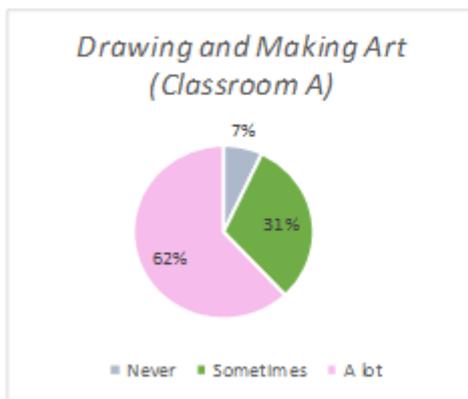

Figure 2: Interest in Drawing and Hand- crafts Classroom A. prepared by author
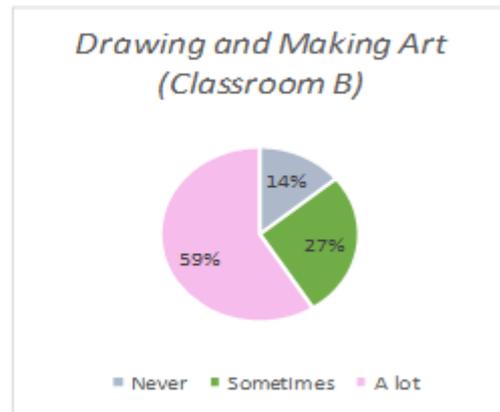
Figure 3: Interest in Drawing and Hand- crafts Classroom B. prepared by author

The results indicate that drawing and hands-on art activities are among the most preferred activities for students in both classrooms. In Classroom A, 62% of students reported that they like drawing, coloring, painting, making posters, and creating crafts "a lot," while 31% indicated that they like these activities "sometimes," and only 7% reported that they never enjoy them. Likewise, Classroom B displayed strong interest in this area, with 59% of students showing high enjoyment, 27% selecting sometimes, and 14% with no interest.

These results suggest that visuals play an important role in student engagement. Most students in both groups enjoy partaking in activities that allow them to express ideas through artistic creation.
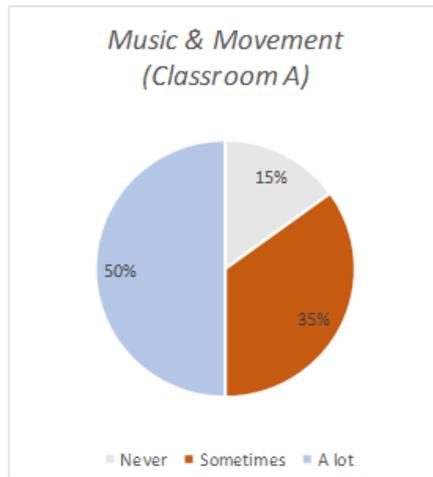
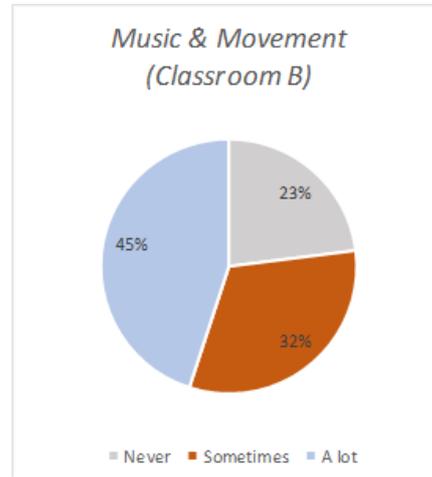Figure 4:Interest in Music & Movement.
Classroom A. Prepared by author

Figure 5: Interest in Music & Movement.
Classroom B. Prepared by author.

Interest in music and kinesthetic activities were slightly lower compared to visual art activities, particularly in Classroom B. In Classroom A, 50% of students reported high enjoyment of singing, listening to music, kinesthetic activities, and rhythmic learning strategies. Moreover, 35% showed moderate enjoyment, while 15% have no interest. In Classroom B, 45% of students have high interest, 32% chose sometimes, and 23% do not enjoy these activities.

Students' interest in music and movement activities was overall positive, but there is still a high percentage of learners in Classroom B who are not interested. This might be due to individual learning preferences. However, the results still show that music and movement activities could be valuable techniques of student engagement for a big portion of learners.
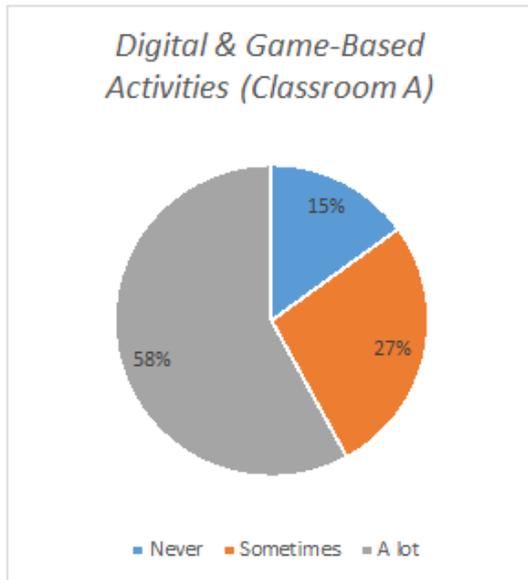
Figure 6: Interest in Digital & Game-Based Activities. Classroom A. Prepared by author.
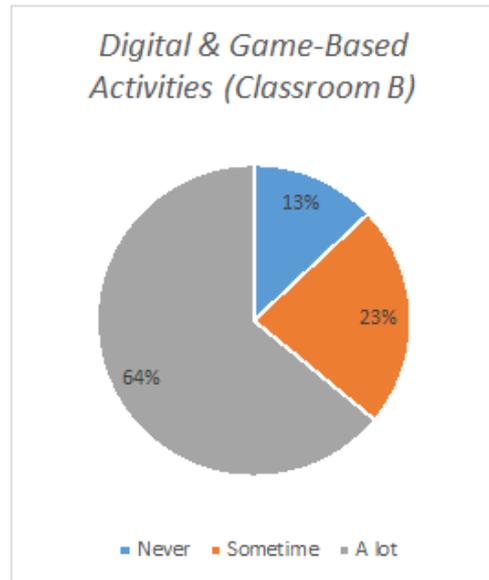

Figure 7: Interest in Digital & Game-Based Activities. Classroom B. Prepared by author.

Regarding games and digital learning tools a lot of students demonstrated interest. In Classroom A, 58% of students chose the option of "a lot,". While 27% selected sometimes and 15% reported to never have interest in these activities. Classroom B demonstrated an even higher interest in this area, with 64% choosing high enjoyment, 23% selecting sometimes, and 13% with no interest.

Through this data it is shown that digital and game-based activities are highly motivating for this group of students. More than half of the learners appear to have a positive reaction to technology-based activities that combine having fun with learning. Moreover, these results indicate that digital creativity and game-based learning can play a key role in holding students' attention and promoting participation.
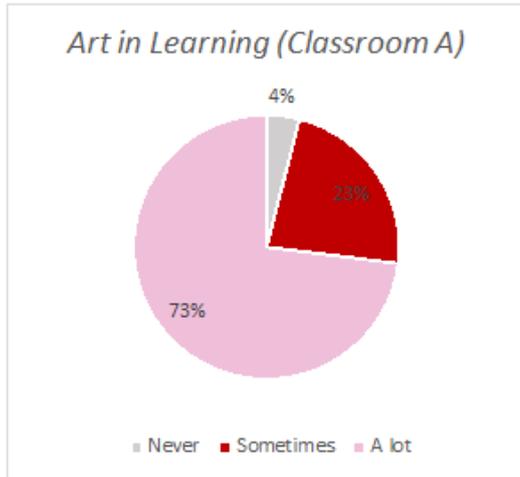
Figure 8: Interest in Art Learning. Classroom
A. Prepared by author.
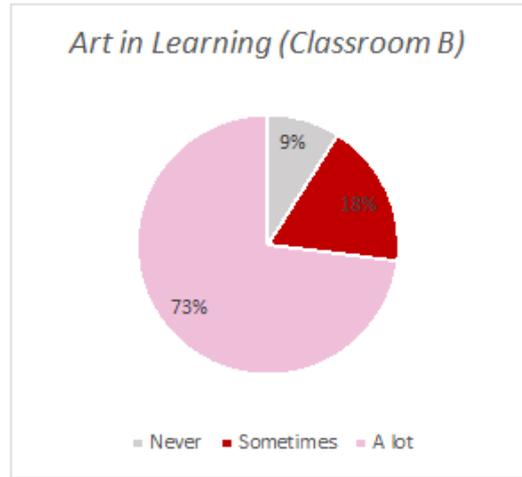
Figure 9: Interest in Art Learning. Classroom
B.   Prepared   by   author.

The strongest results in both classrooms were found in the Art and Learning
section, which explored students' perceptions of how art influences their
overall learning experience. In Classroom A, 73% of students indicated that
art makes school more fun and that they feel happy when art is used in class.
Additionally, 23% reported sometimes, and only 4% are not interested.
Classroom B showed similar results, with 73% students indicating high
enjoyment, 18% sometimes, and 9% with no positive perception.

These results highlight the emotional and motivational impact of art-based
activities on students. The high percentage of positive responses suggests
that students strongly associate art with enjoyment, engagement, and
positive learning experiences. These findings support the idea that
incorporating artistic elements into educational settings can contribute to
increased student satisfaction and classroom participation.

Analysis Based on the Observation Checklist: Teacher A

The observation checklist results show that Teacher A demonstrated limited integration of art-based and student-centered practices in the 3rd grade EFL classroom. The classroom environment had very few visual evidences of work done by students, and the physical part of desks in rows had very restricted opportunities for movement, collaboration, or creative activities.

These conditions seem to showcase a classroom with a traditional setup. The student engagement ranged between 51% and 75% which means they were barely on-task / attentive. Some students followed instructions and completed assigned tasks, but most of the students needed frequent reminders to go back to their task. Engagement appeared to decrease during longer periods where the teacher was giving instructions, this could indicate that students were more responsive to shorter, structured activities. Regarding learning by doing, the lesson relied mainly on passive learning strategies, such as listening, repetition, and written work. Opportunities for active creation or hands-on learning were few, and no sustained art-based activities were observed.

As a result, the lesson provided few chances for students to actively construct knowledge through creative means. The learning styles observed were primarily visual, with students using the board and written materials to support vocabulary learning. However, other learning styles, including musical, bodily-kinesthetic, and digital-creative, were not evident during the observation.

Analysis Based on the Observation Checklist: Teacher B

The observation checklist results demonstrate that Teacher B has seldom usage of art-based and student-centered techniques in the 3rd grade EFL classroom. There was not any student work shown around the classroom, and according to the sitting arrangement it would be difficult for collaborative or creative activities. Overall, it fits the perception of a traditional classroom set up.

Student engagement was observed at a moderate-low level, with an estimate of 51% and 75% of student engagement meaning they were barely on-task / attentive. While a few students did participate when they were called, a good amount of them were not giving their full attention during the class, especially during the written exercises. There was a decrease on engagement during the moment's teacher-led instruction, this could suggest that students would benefit from shorter, structured tasks.

In terms of learning by doing, Teacher B's lesson was mostly done through passive learning strategies such as listening, repetition, and completing the workbook. There was a lack of opportunities for active creation and art-based activities were not a part of the lesson. Therefore, students had very little opportunities to build knowledge actively or creatively explore the content. There were some learning styles shown but mostly it was just auditory and verbal, there was listening and drills of repetition. However, other learning styles were not observed. This suggests that the techniques used during the lessons did not cover different learner preferences.

CONCLUSIONS

Since the main aim of this research was to identify current teaching methods and factors that could contribute to low engagement levels among third grade EFL learners while analyzing how art-based activities can improve engagement, the following conclusions were drawn based on the findings:

- After the analysis of the observation checklist, it was revealed that teaching strategies were traditional and did not imply a lot of variety. Students would often work individually and in the workbooks or activities that came directly from the school platform.

- The results of the teaching frequency of art-based activities were low, neither teacher reached the 4th or 5th scale, which indicated that they rarely used activities that promote engagement.

- Students are interested in activities related to different types of arts such as visual arts, digital games, music, etc.

- While both teachers were able to cover most of the content they had planned, engagement throughout classes was low and inconsistent. The data gathered through the observations showed that among the factors contributing to low engagement were lack of student-centered strategies or activities implemented for different learning styles.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study, the following recommendations are suggested to improve student engagement in third-grade EFL classrooms:

- During lesson planning, teachers must consider engagement from the beginning. They should pick activities which encourage students to move, create, and participate instead of only completing exercises from the workbook.

- Since many students showed strong interest in art-related activities, teachers should consider students' interests when designing lessons. Using activities that students enjoy can increase motivation and participation.

- Teachers should consider using more than just textbooks or the school platform. These materials are important, but they should be combined with art-based activities that support different learning styles, such as visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learners.

- Teachers should include more art-based and student-centered activities in their lessons. Activities such as drawing, crafts, music, movement, and simple digital creative tools can help students participate more actively and enjoy learning English.

- The school should offer training for teachers on how to use art-based strategies in the classroom. They could benefit from short sessions to understand how creativity can improve engagement and learning.

- Teachers should be given a practical guide with examples of art-based activities they could implement in the classroom to improve engagement.

PROPOSAL

One of the recommendations established after the research was to provide activities for teachers to use art-based strategies among third-grade students. The proposal from this work is to give an instructional guide with a variety of art-based activities that teachers could implement in the classroom.

Table 1: General Data of Proposal

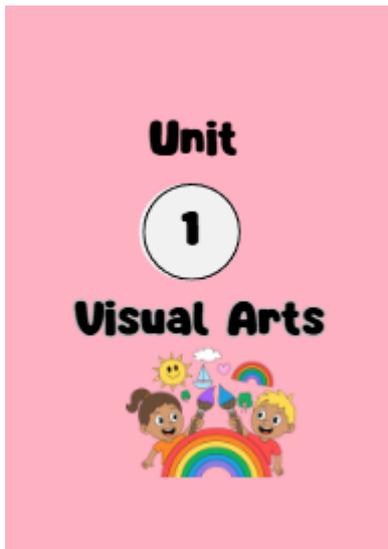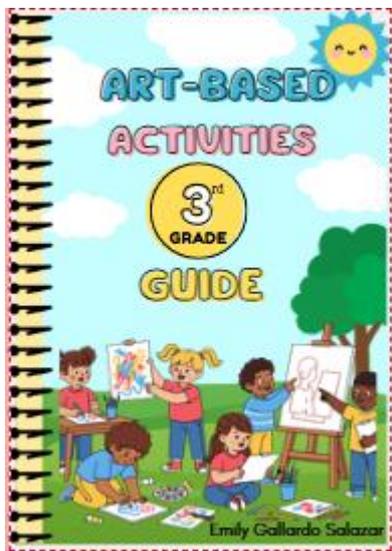| General Data				
Project Title:	**Art Strategies: A Teacher's Guide for Art-Based Activities in EFL**			
Project Team:	Emily Gallardo			
Main Objective:	To design and implement a Teacher's Guide with art-based activities that include visual arts, handcrafts, music, and educational video games to improve third-grade EFL students' engagement during English lessons.			
Specific Objectives:	To increase third-grade EFL students' attention and participation using visual arts and handcraft-based activities.			
	To sustain students' interest and on-task behavior during EFL lessons by incorporating educational video games as an engagement strategy.			
Execution time:	Starting	26/04/2026	Ending	05/06/2026
Project Description				
This project consists of the implementation of an art-based activities in third-grade English as a Foreign Language (EFL) class at a private institution in Guayaquil during the 2025–2026 academic year. The main purpose of the project is to improve students' engagement by creating a teacher´s guide to				

give them a variety of art-based activities they can implement into regular
English   lessons.

The guide is composed of a variety of art-based activities, including visual
arts, handcrafts, music, and educational video games. These activities are
created to capture students' attention, increase active participation, and
encourage positive emotional involvement in the learning process. The
activities are implemented as part of structured classroom tasks that allow
students to interact with English content in a meaningful and fun way.

The activities will be implemented during a four-week period. Student
engagement will be monitored through systematic classroom observations
using an engagement checklist.

Link to the Proposal:

**https://www.canva.com/design/DAHBu2FicUc/6ivhTOD3K8I936SK8Vjm
Sw/edit?utm_content=DAHBu2FicUc&utm_campaign=designshare&ut
m_medium=link2&utm_source=sharebutton**

ART-BASED
ACTIVITIES
3rd GRADE
GUIDE

Emily Gallardo Salazar

Units

Unit 1: Visual Arts
Unit 2: Hand-crafts
Unit 3: Music
Unit 4: Digital Games

Unit
1
Visual Arts

Unit
2
Crafts

Unit
3
Music
&
TPR

Unit
4
Digital Games

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APPENDICES

Teacher Frequency of Use Survey – Teachers A & B

Directions:

Please rate how often you use each art-based activity with your 3rd-grade students.

Use the scale below:

5 = Every day

4 = Almost every day

3 = Two or three times a week

2 = Once a week

1 = Rarely or never

Questions	1 = Rarely or never	2 = Once a week	3 = Two or three times a week	4 = Almost every day	5= Every day
Section A: Visual Arts Activities					
How often do you ask students to draw to show their understanding of a topic?					
How often do you use coloring or painting activities in your lessons?					
How often do students create posters, charts, or					

simple diagrams to support learning?					
How often do you use visual organizers with art elements (e.g., mind maps, comics)?					
How often do you use tablets or computers for drawing or creating visual content?					
Section B: Crafts & Hands-On Creation					
How often do students engage in cutting, gluing, folding, or paper-based crafts?					
How often do students create models or small projects (e.g., dioramas, 3D shapes)?					
How often do you use recycled materials for art projects in class?					
How often do students make collages or mixed-media artwork?					
Section C: Music & Movement					
How often do you use					

music for classroom routines, transitions, or setting the mood?					
How often do you include singing or the use of simple classroom instruments?					
How often do you use rhythm activities such as clapping patterns or chants?					
How often do you include movement activities (e.g., dance, gestures, mime)?					
Section D: Digital & Game-Based Creative Tools					
How often do you use educational video games that include creative elements?					
How often do students complete simple animation or slide-creation projects?					
How often do students take photos or videos for class projects?					

How often do you use kid-safe apps for art creation or digital storytelling?		34			
Section E: Art-Integrated Learning					
How often do you use art-based activities to introduce or reinforce academic content?					
How often do you allow students to demonstrate learning through art (e.g., posters, drawings, songs, videos)?					
How often do you assign classroom projects that combine multiple art forms?					

Adapted from:
Lange, Krista J., "Teaching Strategies to Increase Student Engagement at the 4th Grade Level" (2018). Culminating Projects in Teacher Development. 34. https://repository.stcloudstate.edu/ed_etds/34

Art Activities (Students Survey)

Directions

(Teacher reads aloud):

This survey is about art activities you enjoy doing in class or after school.

There are no right or wrong answers.

Choose the answer that shows how often you do each activity.

☺ 4 = A lot   ☺ 3 = Sometimes

✖ 1 = Never

	✖ 1 = Never	☺ 4 = A lot	☺ 3 = Sometimes
Drawing & Making Art			
I like to **draw pictures**.			
I like to **color or paint**.			
I like to **make posters or pictures for schoolwork**			
I like to **cut, glue, and make crafts**.			
Music & Movement			
I like to **sing songs**.			
I like to **listen to music**.			
I like to **move, dance, or act while learning**.			
I like to **clap or move to learn**.			

Digital Games			
I like to **play learning games on a tablet or computer**.			
I like to **play learning games on a tablet or computer**.			
I like to **watch learning videos**.			
Art & Learning			
Art makes school **more fun**.			
I feel **happy** when we use art in class.			

Adapted from:

EFL Teacher Observation Checklist

Instructor: **Grade: 3rd Grade**

Date:

Observer(s): Emily Gallardo

1.1 Classroom Environment & Setup	YES	NO	Notes
Student work (art-based) displayed			
Room arrangement supports art, movement, or digital games			

Level of Student Engagement	Check
1.2 Engagement Level	
91–100% on-task / attentive (high enthusiasm)	
76–90% on-task / attentive	
51–75% barely on-task / attentive	
0–50% off-task / attentive (high restlessness/disengagement)	

Learning by Doing	Check	Notes
1.3 Type of Learning		
Active Creation (painting, crafting, designing, coding games))		
Transition Activity (between traditional work and hands-on learning)		
Passive Learning (listening or seatwork, no art production)		

Learning Styles Considered During Classes	Check	Evidence / Examples
1.4 Learning Styles		
Visual / Spatial (drawing, coloring, painting)		
Musical / Rhythmic (songs, instruments, clapping)		

Bodily / Kinesthetic (movement, gestures, dance)		
Digital / Creative (tablets, computers, educational games)		

Teacher Role	Check	Notes
1.5 Role Observed		
Modeling (demonstrates art technique or movement)		
Facilitating / Coaching (supports groups individually)		
Directing (whole-group instructions or lecture)		
Managing (behavior or materials management)		

Adapted from: The Meaningful Engaged Learning (McMEL) Walk-Through Form (Version 1001) created by Dr. Mike Muir (2008 - 2011). Retrieved from: https://www.scribd.com/doc/299675933/Student-Engagement-Observation-Tool-5-1

UNIVERSIDAD CATÓLICA
DE SANTIAGO DE GUAYAQUIL

Facultad de
Artes y Humanidades

FAH-PINE-017-2025
Guayaquil, 17 de diciembre del 2025

Mgtr. Grace Aguirre
Directora de Área de inglés
Centro educativo Espíritu santo
En su despacho.

Reciba un cordial saludo. Por el presente solicito a usted, muy comedidamente y salvo su mejor criterio, se permita a la señorita Emily Del Carmen Gallardo Salazar con CI# 0929062198 estudiante del 8vo ciclo de la carrera de Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros – inglés, de la Facultad de Artes y Humanidades de la Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil, realizar recolección de información para elaborar su Trabajo de Integración Curricular (Proyecto de titulación).

La señorita Gallardo estará realizando dicha actividad en la clase de inglés que reciben los estudiantes en la institución que usted acertadamente dirige, durante el mes de diciembre 2025 y enero 2026.

De antemano agradezco la atención brindada.

Atentamente,
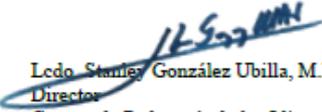
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DECLARACIÓN Y AUTORIZACIÓN

Yo, **Gallardo Salazar, Emily del Carmen**, con C.C: # **0929062198** autor/a del trabajo de titulación: **The role of art-based activities in promoting engagement in third-grade students of english as a foreign language in a private school in Guayaquil in the scholastic year 2025-2026,** previo a la obtención del título de **Licenciada en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros - Inglés** en la Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil.

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FICHA DE REGISTRO DE TESIS/TRABAJO DE TITULACIÓN	
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AUTOR(ES)	**Gallardo Salazar, Emily del Carmen**
REVISOR(ES)/TUTOR(ES)	**Jarrin Hunter, Ximena Marita**
INSTITUCIÓN:	Universidad Católica de Santiago de Guayaquil
FACULTAD:	**Artes y Humanidades**
CARRERA:	Pedagogía de Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros - Inglés
TITULO OBTENIDO:	**Licenciada en Pedagogía de los Idiomas Nacionales y Extranjeros - Inglés**
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PALABRAS CLAVES/ KEYWORDS:	*EFL, engagement, art-based activities, third-grade, learning styles, analysis*

RESUMEN/ABSTRACT

The present study aimed to analyze how engagement can be improved while using art-based activities among third-grade EFL students of a private school in Guayaquil. This project used a descriptive research methodology, and adopted the mixed methods which helped to analyze information. The quantitative data was collected through a teacher survey, taken by two teachers in the private school, which analyzed the frequency in which art activities were implemented in the classroom. As well as, a student survey to showcase how interested students would be in different art activities which was applied to two different classrooms, classroom A made up of 22 students and classroom B made up of 26 students. While for the qualitative data, an observation checklist was used which gave information on the level of engagement in the classroom. After analyzing the data, it was found that some factors that influence engagement can be the type of strategies used in the classroom and the access to varied instructional materials. Therefore, it is through art-based activities that a viable solution can be found to improve engagement of third-grade students by giving them a variety of materials that are related to their different learning styles.

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