The Importance of Art

Why is it important for young children to create art? What skills, knowledge, feelings, and dispositions are these children developing?

Tempera paint — Age 5

Painted baker’s clay — Age 6

Crayon — Age 4

Tube print — Age 2
Working Together

Pet show. Cut paper mural — Kindergarten

What cooperative decisions did the children need to make to create these group artworks?

Our school neighborhood. Wood scrap and marker — Second grade
Artistic Expression

Making masks and puppets allows children to express their fears and dreams. This child made a monster from a paper bag. What could you say to help the child express her feelings about it?

Paper bag puppet — Age 5

How does direct modeling without the use of tools or cookie cutters benefit children’s self-expression, particularly those with special needs?

Play dough — Age 3
How is each collage unique?

“I am sticking them down.” Precut paper and marker — Age 2-1/2

In creating the artworks, what problems did each child have to solve?

“The bear is happy.” Cut paper — Age 5

What physical skills did the children use in creating these collages?

“Two flowers.” Cut paper and fabric — Age 7
Painting Stories

What comments would you make to these young artists about their painting discoveries?

Tempera paint — Age 2-1/2

At the beginning of a project on pets, this kindergartner made a painting of his cat. What does he already know about cats? What follow-up painting activities would benefit this young artist?

Tempera paint — Age 5

How does working within a crayon drawing both free and hinder a child artist? Which language activities could this picture inspire?

Crayon and watercolor — Age 8
Printed Patterns

How do these prints by children at different ages show increasing physical and spatial control?

Foam shape prints — Age 3

What could you ask these children to help them discover the different patterns they have made?

Gadget print — Age 6

Spool and stick print — Age 8
Modeling

Do you think these children have had a lot of experience using clay? How has their work been influenced by two-dimensional art experiences?

“Sun” “Sun.” Homemade playdough — Age 4

“Tiger.” Painted baking soda clay — Age 5
**Constructed Sculptures**

How are these constructed sculptures different from other art forms? What skills are needed to create works like these?

Block tower — Age 5

What kind of environment do children need to do this kind of art?

Cardboard box purple monster — Ages 6 and 7