



Extension

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN-MADISON

Parenting the
Preschooler



Art

What Does Children's Art Tell Us?

Through art, children express creativity and share their thoughts. Drawing is an early form of writing for young children, and their word skills and drawing skills develop together. Studies show kindergarten literacy skills relate to drawing abilities.

Tips for a Good Start at Art

- Give children many ways to paint - finger, brush, a cotton swab, or a feather.
- Let children use large or jumbo crayons, washable markers, or colored pencils.
- Spray shaving cream on a cookie sheet and add some finger paint. Encourage children to explore how colors blend together.
- Make fruit salad sculptures with toothpicks and small pieces of apple, pears, or grapes.
- Create a bookmark about the story in the child's favorite book.
- Gather some natural objects (e.g. pinecones, rocks, leaves) and let children arrange them in different patterns.
- Talk about color, line, pattern, shape, size, texture, and numbers.

Give Art Meaning

When the child is finished, ask them questions like, "Tell me about your drawing," or "Wow, what is happening here?" This will encourage a conversation, which is good for language growth and helps give their drawing meaning.



Photo by cottonbro from Pexels

Art & Words Develop Together!



Image by Cynthia Logan from Pixabay

Why is Art Important?

- Art allows children to explore colors, textures, and science.
- Children improve fine motor skills by using their hands in art activities, which is a pre-writing skill.
- Developmentally appropriate art activities help children delight in their abilities while boosting self-confidence.
- Art allows children to use and learn from their many senses.
- Art offers opportunities to be creative and explore new ideas.

What to Do?

- Display preschooler's artwork.
- During a neighborhood walk, talk about the art you see and ask questions.
- Explore math, shapes, textures, and colors through art.
- Read children's books about art.
- Show children art from around the world to help develop their interest and appreciation for art.

Written by Yia Lor. Reviewed by Tracy Henegar
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