

Integrating Art into the Preschool Classroom

Collaborative for Children

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How Does Art Support Children's Development?

Motor development

- Motor control
- Hand-eye coordination

Pattern of physical growth

- Large to small—gross to fine
- Head to toe—cephalocaudal
- Inside to outside—proximodistal

Examples

- Fine motor
 - Cutting, pasting, finger painting, brush painting, finger puppets, clay modeling
- Gross Motor
 - Painting, pounding clay, tracing body forms
- Hand-Eye Coordination
 - Painting, pasting, drawing, modeling



Emotional Development

- Creative Mental Attitude
 - Child is open to new and different ideas when given freedom, time, and place to experiment and play with art
- Art and thinking skills
 - Concept of change, transformations
 - Flexible thinking
- Sensorimotor
 - Learns by doing
 - Using the senses in physical actions
- Modeling with clay
- Creative activities and the senses
 - Color concepts
- Vocabulary development & connections to other cultures
- Child's growing awareness of self
 - Feeling good about oneself
 - Learned by how others treat you
 - Learned through creative art activities
 - Means of communicating emotions

Stages of Art Development

Developmental Stages of Art Development (up to age 11)

1. The Scribble Stage (ages 2-4)

The child manipulates a drawing tool and makes random marks, dots, and lines on the drawing surface.

- random scribbling
- controlled scribbling
- naming of scribbling

By definition, a child in the scribbling stage is not drawing symbols for objects. Children like to scribble because it gives them a chance to move their arms around freely. The act of scribbling is purely kinesthetic and imaginative. Don't waste money on coloring books, they can actually inhibit children's creativity. Kids are much better off with a large sheet of paper and a fat, dark crayon.

2. The Pre-Schematic Stage (ages 3-7)

The child produces his first representative symbols for objects in his environment. These symbols are formed with circles, squares, and lines. The symbols change frequently. The pictures have a "floating organization and the paper may be turned many times while drawing. Later, the symbols may be organized horizontally. The tadpole man!

3. The Schematic Stage (ages 6-11)

The child uses repetition of symbols for familiar objects and employs a base-line. The child uses habitually repeated symbols for an object (E.g. the lollipop tree, the stiff scarecrow-type drawings of people, or a series of houses which are all drawn the same). Figures appear flat and stiff and are changed only when there is strong motivation to do so. Without further instruction and practice a few children (and some adults) will reach a plateau during the latter part of this stage.

*Remember that the **process** is where the valuable learning takes place.
The **product** may be about mom, grandma, or the refrigerator
but it's not necessarily about the child's growth.
Note: You may have to help parents understand this.*

Two-Dimensional Art Projects

Fingerprint Art

Materials: ink pad, paper, markers, crayons

Instructions: Children press one of their fingers onto a stamp pad or tray filled with thickened tempera and then onto a piece of paper. Encourage children to experiment using different fingers, singly or in combinations.

Afterwards, they can add details with markers and crayons.

Torn Paper Creations

Materials: construction paper, wallpaper, gift wrap, tissue paper, newspaper, illustrated magazines, glue

Instructions: Demonstrate tearing paper shapes. Have children tear paper shapes and glue them to background paper. Point out how torn paper creates a textured edge, while cut edges appear smooth. Point out to children how, in tearing paper, greater control of the paper is achieved by tearing slowly with fingers close together.

Encourage children to choose contrasting light and dark colors and to overlap paper shapes to produce new shapes and combinations of colors and textures. Change the texture of paper by wrinkling, crumpling, slitting, and folding.

Bubble Wrap Painting

Materials: bubble wrap, construction paper, tempera paint

Instructions: Lay a piece of bubble wrap on a table so that the bubbles are facing up. Have the child cover the bubbles with tempera paint. Then place a piece of construction paper on top of the bubbles. Press down on the paper so that all the bubbles are able to make a print. Lift the construction paper and see the design. See what happens when some of the bubbles pop when pressure is applied. How do the popped bubbles print differently? If you use more than one color of paint, how do the paints blend?

Variety Printing

Materials: household items, paint, paper

Instructions: For a change, try using household implements to paint or print with. Try a comb, an old toothbrush, string, an old wheel toy, sponges, a wadded bit of paper towel, alphabet letter magnets, and other safe items. Try different motions, such as pulling the object across the paint, or quick dabbing onto the paper.

String Painting

Materials: yarn or string (cut into 12" lengths), paint, white paper

Instructions: Hold one end and dip string into paint. Lay string on paper to create a design. Re-dip and repeat, or use a new string and new color. For variety, try dropping the string onto paper. For a print design, press a second sheet of paper on top of the string design and lightly press.

Pulled String Painting

Materials: yarn or string (cut into 12" lengths), paint, white paper, damp rag or sponge

Instructions: Dip string into paint and lay on paper in a design. Leave one end of string hanging off the edge of the paper. Place another piece of paper over this. Lay a hand gently over the paper and string. Pull the string from the paper, keeping the hand pressing gently on top of the paper. Remove the top paper and see the design. For a variation, use a folded piece of paper. Or try several colors, one at a time. For a large group activity, use a length of rope and a large sheet of butcher paper. Many hands can help this time!

Finger Painting with Ice Cubes

Materials: ice cubes, finger paint, glossy paper (do not wet the paper)

Instructions: Give child an ice cube to use to spread and dilute the paint while making designs on the paper.

Smash Painting

Materials: white construction paper (let the children cut or tear it into interesting shapes), plastic cling-type wrap cut a bit larger than the pieces of paper, plastic eye droppers, tempera paint, markers

Instructions: Children pick up one color of paint with an eyedropper and drip it onto the paper. Repeat with the next two colors. Then children place the plastic wrap on top of their paper and rub, causing the paints underneath to blend and swirl. Talk about the colors being created. When the child is pleased with the blended colors, remove the plastic wrap and enjoy the design. After the paintings are dry, children can add details and designs with markers and crayons.

Scribble Art

Materials: pencil, black marker, white paper, crayons

Instructions: Have the child make a scribble with pencil. The teacher then traces over the scribble with black marker. The child then colors in scribble spaces, filling in the white areas with different colors. Finished scribble art can be mounted on black construction paper.

Bubble Prints

Materials: 1 cup water, food coloring, ¼ cup liquid detergent, ¼ cup liquid starch, straws (poke a hole in the top of the straw to prevent children from accidentally sipping with the straws), paper, 6-8" bowls

Instructions: Mix concoction in the bowl. Have children blow bubbles until the bubbles form a structure above the rim of the bowl. Make a print by laying a sheet of white paper across the bowl rim and allowing the bubbles to pop against the paper. Talk about the lines, shapes, and patterns the bubbles make on the paper.

Recycled Puzzle Piece Prints

Materials: puzzle pieces from sets that were missing pieces (you know you have several of those), empty cereal boxes, white glue, scissors, tempera, paintbrushes, and construction paper

Instructions: Talk about printmaking and how you can make several of the same image. Discuss what a pattern is—a repeated design. Talk about how patterns can be made of repeated lines of the same object. Cut cereal boxes into pieces about 6"x8". Have children arrange several puzzle pieces on the nonprinted side of the cereal box cardboard. The pieces can be arranged to create a picture, a random design, or a pattern. Once happy with the way the pieces look, children can glue them down. Let the glue dry. Lay a sheet of paper on top of the painted puzzle pieces. Rub gently with the palm of the hand. Peel off the paper to see the print.

Yarn Letter Prints

Materials: yarn, crayons, glue, tempera, cardboard, paper, mirror

Instructions: Use crayons to draw a letter on the cardboard. Outline the letter with glue. Apply yarn to the glue. Let the yarn and glue dry thoroughly. Brush tempera paint over the picture. Place another piece of paper over the picture. Press lightly with the palm of the hand. Peel off the paper to see the string print. Hold the print up to the mirror to see it facing the original direction.

Three-Dimensional Art Projects

Brown Bag Surprise

Materials: scissors, glue, marker, crayons and lunch bags filled with yarn, paper tubes, sections of egg carton, foil, cellophane, fabric, Styrofoam cups, stickers, glue sticks,

Instructions: Place different items in each brown bag. Children work with a partner to create a 3-D art project. One child might decide to make a flat collage while another may make a sculpture. When children have finished creating their artwork, ask them about it. They can dictate to you how they made their work or what materials they used, or they can make up a story to accompany the work. Invite children to share their creations with the class. Take photos while children are working and of finished pieces. Find a place to display the art in the classroom.

Foil Sculptures

Materials: aluminum foil

Instructions: Have child crumple the foil into individual forms, shapes, or creations. Several forms can be combined into one sculpture using tape.

Line Sculptures

Materials: piece of wire about a yard long for each child

Instructions: The child bends this "line" into an object to create a simple sculpture. This activity can serve as a stepping-off point for an investigation of Alexander Calder and his wire innovations.

Imaginary Animals

Materials: boxes of different sizes and shapes (children can bring from home, oatmeal boxes work well), paste or duct tape, towel rolls, paint, brushes, construction paper, scraps of fabric, wood shavings, bark, buttons

Instructions: Talk about animals and their shapes, sizes, and colors. Have children stack the boxes to make imaginary animals then add details such as eyes, hair, mouths, etc.

Integrating Art with Math, Science, and Social Studies

Outdoor Weaving

Materials: long strips of wide ribbon, cording, crepe paper, scarves, or rope in as many colors as possible.

Instructions: Locate a chain link fence on the playground. Children weave the materials in and out of the links on the fence to create a colorful woven design on the fence. Be sure to take a picture of the finished piece of art.

Circle-Shaped Plunger Prints

Materials: new plungers of a variety of sizes, large sheets of butcher paper, tempera paint, foam trays or plates

Instructions: Cover the art area with newspaper. Tape the newspaper to the floor. Lay out butcher paper, and tape it to the floor as well. Prepare paints in trays. Set plungers in paint trays. Have children dip the plunger in paint and press the plunger to make a print. Continue printing to create a design or pattern. Add other round objects to print such as plastic drinking cups or towel rolls. Use the paper as a giant class mural or as wrapping paper or book covers. Make sure you take photos of the children while they are painting; no one will believe this wonderful art was made with plungers.

Pinecone Prints

Materials: pinecones, thinned tempera paint, paper

Instructions: Talk with children about pinecones, their shapes, how they feel, and how they smell. Go out on the playground and find a few pinecones for each child. Give each child a piece of paper. Dip a pinecone in tempera paint (or brush on the paint). Press the pinecone onto the paper. Use all sides of the pinecone to make prints. Try rolling the pinecone, too.

Weeds Painting

Go outside and collect a variety of weeds to use as paintbrushes. Queen Anne's lace is one that works especially well. Children dip the weed into a small, shallow container of paint. Then they can either print with the weed or use it as an interesting paintbrush.

Water Painting/Printing

Materials: large paintbrushes, buckets of water

Instructions: Go outside to let children develop gross motor and hand-eye coordination as they paint broad strokes on the sidewalk. This activity can also lead to a simple discussion of evaporation.

Sun Prints

Materials: construction paper or colored paper that is not guaranteed to fade (dark colors work best), interesting objects such as seashells, spools, forks, cookie cutters, stray puzzle pieces, etc.

Instructions: Place the objects on the sheets of construction paper. Leave in the sun. In a day or two, go outside and remove the objects. When the objects are removed, the sun will have bleached the paper, leaving dark silhouettes in an interesting design.

Recycled Materials Class Mascot

Materials: large paper shopping bags, small paper lunch bags, colored yarn, scrap material, glue gun (for teacher use only), googly eyes, pipe cleaners, feathers, etc.

Instructions: Children use materials to create a class mascot. Then can stuff the smaller bag and tie it off for a head. The larger paper bag can serve as the body. Children use materials to make a face, hair, and clothing for their mascot.

Wooden Friends

Materials: wooden clothespins, pipe cleaners, fine tip markers, craft sticks, felt scraps, glue, scissors, ribbon, sequins, beads, buttons, yarn, glue gun (for teacher use only)

Instructions: Children use the wooden clothespin for the body. Attach arms by twisting a pipe cleaner around the clothespin. When satisfied with the positioning of the pipe cleaner, glue them into place. Children may use markers to create the face. Discuss possibilities for using materials for the clothing etc. Have children share thoughts and feelings about their wooden sculptures and the sculptures made by others. Ask them to comment on the likeness and personalities of the figures and how accessories and details help convey personality and identity.

Homemade Face Paint

1 tsp. cornstarch

½ tsp. cold cream

½ tsp. water

2 drops food coloring

Mix ingredients well. Then use different food coloring to make different colors.

Homemade Shiny Paint

White glue

Dish detergent

Tempera paint (liquid)

Pour glue into small cups. Mix your choice of liquid tempera paint into each. Use to paint on wood, paper, or cardboard as you would any paint. Paint will dry shiny as if glazed.