

Emily Gould: My Art Teaching Philosophy...(in progress)

Welcome!

You've all seen the amazing art projects that Grace students create on artsonia..

<https://www.artsonia.com/schools/school.asp?id=3389>

... and you may be wondering how I can achieve these results with your child? You have questions: Does paper matter? What about paint? As an art teacher for over 10 years, I've tried a lot of techniques with my students and have come up with a few tips for making art projects with young children...

1. Understand Horizon Line.

Many of my art projects involve a horizon line. It seems like a big word for little kids but kids instinctively feel that the blue sky belongs up there. To remedy this, I teach students how to draw a horizon line. Sometimes the horizon line is the line behind a vase on a table and sometimes its the line that divides the land and the sky.

In "Wheat Field with Crows" Fourth graders started this painting project by first drawing the horizon line...

<https://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?project=1395924>

2. Learning about The Elements And Principals Of Design

In addition to the importance of understanding the horizon line art has a language, a set of terms. The Elements and Principals Of Design are TOOLS and METHODOLOGIES with which to create art...Line, Shape, Form, Color, Value, Texture, and Space. All art is a language; a form of communication. Students must understand these terms when creating and critiquing art. Most art lessons are based on one or a few of these principals. A shape becomes a form when an artist adds shading and shadows to a drawing. Students create value scales to understand that successful drawings contain a range of light and dark values. Students learn to create the illusion of space by using vanishing points and understand perspective drawing techniques.

How can one learn to draw, paint, sculpt, or indeed create anything without first acquiring even a minimal understanding of how to go about doing so?

If an empirical approach is all that's necessary to learn how to create, would we have a need for art schools, art academics, or even art books? The mere practice of anything alone does not ensure perfection. Persistent practice guided by the knowledge of pertinent concepts, principles, and their implementation (techniques) will assist one along a path toward competency and freedom of self-expression.

3. Creating Painted Papers.

Younger students love to paint and creating painted papers allow students to use lots of paint and practice mixing colors and holding a paint brush. Students have fun covering papers completely with paint and during this process allows for instructing students on proper paint brush technique! Painted papers are used later for future collage projects.

See Nugget and Fang by first grade here...(students created sheets of painted paper and cut out shapes from the painted papers to make Nugget and Fang's body)

<https://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?project=1395931>

4.Layer Art Work

Creating a piece of art with many layers: back ground plus a subject, it can be easier to separate the layers. In the “Giraffes Can’t Dance” art project involves drawing a dancing giraffe in the moonlight. The obvious step would be to draw the giraffe and then draw the moon and field behind the giraffe. Instead, I broke up the layers and created TWO projects then combined the two. Using a big sheet of paper to draw a field and moon gave the students lots of room to paint. This allowed them to paint more freely without worrying whether the paint from the background would paint over the giraffe. The result is a sharper, less muddled art project. See Kindergarten’s Giraffes Can’t Dance here...

<https://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?project=1394423>

5. Art Supplies

Using the right supplies and the right paper can bring out the best features in any art project!

I use a heavy weight tagboard for most art projects that involve tempera paints, collage, and drawing. I order the paper in bulk online. I use the Pacon brand #5214. This paper is exceptionally strong, it’s a multipurpose tagboard and It’s ideal for a variety of arts and crafts projects! It holds wetness from tempera paint well and does not curl. Having a quality paper helps students focus on creativity rather than art supply problems.

Usually we use a large paper 12x18 size so that students are encouraged to work large, draw larger fruit when drawing a still life!

For water color art projects I use a school-grade watercolor paper. Watercolor paper contains sizing, which reduces the absorption of paint by the paper and prevents the wet paint from soaking in. This keeps the paint on top of the paper. The effect is brilliant, clear colors.

I use liquid water colors because pan watercolors tend to be frustrating for younger children; the colors get muddy quickly and are not as bright.

Liquid watercolors are a concentrated watercolor paint that come in bottles. They can be used full strength or diluted with regular water. The stronger you want the color, the less water you use. The lighter you want the color, the more water you use. They are a great substitute for pan watercolor paints as they produce such a rich, vibrant color that you can’t get from pan watercolor paints.

6. Outline

Kids are messy painters. To sharpen their amazing pieces of art, one of the tricks I use is to outline the main drawing lines. Sometimes we use oil pastels, black marker, black paint, or crayon and the outlines don’t have to be black the important thing is to define the details of the subject. This small step can really make a difference.

Second grade students used black oil pastels to outline their drawing of “The Great Wave” before painting. See the outline technique here...

<https://www.artsonia.com/museum/gallery.asp?project=1390039>

7.Drawing Skills.

Many art projects focus on drawing skills. There are many methods to teach drawing. For younger students templates are sometimes used. This helps students draw larger. In the painting project “Matisse’s Apples” Students traced paper plates for the apple bowl shape and traced cups for the apples while learning how to draw from basic shapes. A circle can be made into an apple when the circle is not traced perfectly. Students learn that it’s easier to draw when you can identify the basic

shape (circle or oval; square, rectangle, or parallelogram; or triangle) of that object. Students also learn that adding shading, shadows, and highlights make drawing look dimensional.

I will be teaching “Matisse’s Apples” painting lesson to kindergarten next next...pictures coming soon.

8. Artist Statements.

Students use higher order thinking skills when writing artist statements. An artist statement provides the viewer with an opportunity to see the art from the artist’s eyes. Artist statements are sometimes personal and often revealing. Students learn how to write artist statements and talk about their art and the art making process. Artist statements are often required when artists submit work for exhibition. Writing artist statements help students to become familiar with art vocabulary and learn to love language!

Fourth graders write Artist Statements that describe their creative process for “Wheat Field With Crows” here....

<https://www.artsonia.com/schools/statements.asp?id=3389&type=statements>