CHAPTER ONE

Let's Teach Art

Art Has Its Own Curriculum

Elementary and middle school classroom teachers often incorporate art into some of their lessons, but it is a special treat for students to look forward to their art-class day, when the subject is art. Teaching art is not exclusively for art specialists, and most states recommend that elementary and middle school students receive 45–60 minutes of visual art instruction each week. Home-school teachers have also learned that their students benefit from art lessons.

Figure 1.1 *The Magical Zebra*, Peyton Cunningham, Grade 2, cardboard, tempera, 9" × 5" × 3.75", Chesterfield Elementary School, Rockwood School District, St. Louis County, Missouri. Art teacher Julie Glossenger.

ONGOING PROCESS

Teaching the curriculum of art is an ongoing process. Ideally students learn to look at and create art, expanding familiarity with artists, styles, and cultures throughout the elementary, middle, and high school years.

WHOLE-BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

The higher-order thinking skills and problem-solving abilities of students increase as a result of their ongoing experience. Research has shown that students who participate in the visual and performing arts perform better in other fields of study.

Developing skills is also an ongoing process. Students should have experience every year in creating by drawing, painting, printmaking, mixed-media, and sculpture. In-depth experience in a medium fosters creative exploration. Students can be encouraged to come up with creative solutions, and it is amazing how inventive students are.

HIGH EXPECTATIONS AND CHARACTER DEVELOPMENT

I saw a child making a production of throwing away a work of art that he had worked on carefully all hour. It was as if he were saying "Tell me to get it back out and that it is beautiful." As early as third grade, some students' expectations are so high that they rarely meet them, and some students keep "starting over" and never get anything finished. Perseverance is important in character development, and art is a wonderful place to reinforce it.

Art is such a personal thing! Students are highly sensitive about their work. Your expectations and suggestions should be phrased carefully. This does not mean that you should never criticize children's art. Simply ask the student what the next step might be to make it more complete.

New Concepts in Art Education

Teaching art has gone beyond simply introducing children to the appropriate use of media and improving their skills through projects. Although these have traditionally been the basis of teaching art, the potential for so much more exists. Informed teachers are willing to experiment with new concepts in art education.

Begin to develop a system for your classroom that allows for choice-based-art for students from about second grade on up through elementary school. It is also called TAB (Teaching Artistic Behavior). If students have learned a variety of skills before they begin choice-based art, they are more willing to choose from among all the options.

TAB—Teaching Artistic Behavior

TAB, also called choice-based art education, is a trend in art education that is exciting to students and teachers alike. In most districts, choice-based art is taught in grades two or three through five. Lower elementary students are exposed to drawing, painting, ceramics, sculpture, and fiber arts, which prepares them for making their own decisions as they advance.

From second grade onward in some schools, students are taught to become (and behave) as studio artists: making a plan of their idea with a sketch and a few words to describe the art. The concept can be revised and refined as they progress. Students select a medium or process, solve their own problems, complete their work, evaluate it, share it with others, and clean up. This sounds like an overwhelming experience for young people, but they appear to thrive on it and talk with confidence about it.

Based on conversations with TAB converts, it is suggested that teachers shouldn't be disappointed if at first the artwork doesn't seem to be the quality your teacher-directed artwork had been before you were using choice-based art education. If students have been taught the skills, or given a mini-refresher lesson, original, creative thinking will come out.

In the beginning of the year, each "studio" is introduced (one at a time) for students to explore and try out art materials to see what is possible. Each student might have a checklist of exercises to complete.

IN A STUDIO A STUDENT MAY BE WORKING ON,

WORK IN PROGRESS—continuing with the original plan, improving, innovating
SKILL BUILDER—trying out supplies to see what they will do, experimenting
MAKE AND TAKE—one-day project
A WOW PROJECT—something they are proud of, did their best work on, is original, and shows growth as an artist. Students do a self-assessment at the end of each day, as well as mark the studio they worked in—this helps the student and teacher keep track of which studios were visited.

Art Teacher Linda Sachs, Rockwood School District, St. Louis County, Missouri

TAB (CHOICE-BASED ART EDUCATION)

As they enter, each student picks up his or her notebook, in which they will sketch an idea and devise a plan for the day. They may begin something new or follow through on a previous sketch. In a studio, a student may choose to resume a work-in-progress, try a skill builder, or experiment with some new material. Choice-based learning can be all-out, as the authors observed in Linda Sachs' art room in the Ridge Meadows School, Rockwood

School District in St. Louis County, Missouri. A classroom is divided into identifiable studios such as *Painting*, *Sculpture*, *Drawing*, *Printmaking*, and *Fiber*. The centers might simply be tables separated as much as possible, with all the equipment, directions, inspiration, and materials for that studio nearby. Walls or cabinets in a studio-center might have examples by famous painters, sculptors, or printmakers. For example, the fiber studio might include small examples of weaving, a selection of yarns and fibers, needle selections, and an ongoing weaving on a large standing frame loom on which everyone in the class may weave.

A painting studio might feature aprons on a coat rack (students help themselves to the aprons as needed), tabletop easels and canvases on shelves, tempera in dispenser bottles, palettes (disposable paper plates or plastic palettes with wells), and clean brushes. The cabinet doors or walls in that center might display a color wheel, and paintings by one or two famous painters. Students either work on an individual painting or may choose to work in a group to paint something as major as a large ceiling tile. Or each is individually enlarging a portion of a famous painting reproduction (see the project titled "Enlarge a Masterpiece" in Chapter 5). A group project involves decisions such as: What is a design that we all can like? What is our painting medium? How many people should work on this together?

Creative teachers in small rooms solved the problems that such jam-packed rooms presented. One teacher identified studio-centers by placing a labeled cardboard box lid (or the bottom of a sturdy box) with specific materials at one end of each "studio" table. Another numbered wall storage cabinets to be "studio-centers," and the students wrote in their notebooks the numbers of the storage cabinets and the materials and equipment to be located in each. The sculpture equipment and media were in one cabinet while the painting materials and brushes, drawing and printing supplies were put in other cabinets. When students are ready to work, they check in their notebooks to find the location of materials. As real artists would, they put things back neatly near the end of the hour. Students are always given adequate warning when it is time to begin cleaning up in order to save time for the 5–10-minute end-of-hour critiques.

At a Missouri Art Education Conference, keynote speaker Katherine Douglas said she pretends to "cry," saying "Oh, I've tried something that is too *hard* for you. I feel so bad! Things are *such* a mess." Of course, the students snapped right to it and cleaned up after themselves.

Structuring class time to accommodate self-directed learning might involve beginning the class with a brief overview (5–10 minutes) of the work of a specific artist, showing a short film or examples, or giving a short mini-lesson. One teacher takes a video of herself as she gives a mini-lesson, which she uses again and again when she needs a demonstration. She shows these even to her kindergarten students during their quieting-down time.

Art teacher Linda Sachs in St. Louis County, Missouri, has begun a TAB art gallery in the hall outside the studio, where students display their own art works, placing their statements next to it.

TAB may not be taught year-round, as some teachers use modifications of choice-based art. For example, at the beginning of the school year, a teacher might give a quick overview

of the elements and principles of art while introducing the artwork of one or two famous artists. Or one might choose to do messy projects such as ceramics with all grade levels at the same time for a 2–3-week period.

Some Considerations to Make TAB Work

- Keep track of the time. A 5–10-minute quiet time at the beginning and end of each class in front of the whiteboard is useful for introducing a new technique or artist.
- Plan your time well; organize space and materials; and give a special introduction about artists or various media.
- Help students develop a habit such as picking up and leaving their notebooks on a table near the door.
- Use wide plastic tape to mark on the floor a quick pathway from the door through the classroom, leaving space for a quiet-time sitting area in front of a whiteboard, in front of the drying rack, and in front of the sink.
- Have students roll out a neutral-colored display panel (felt) (approximately 30 × 70 inches) on the floor for displaying finished artwork at the end of the hour. At the end of class, it allows an artist time to share a new artwork with fellow students and have a discussion about the finished work.
- Some TAB teachers encourage students to write in their notebooks about what was accomplished that day, or to grade their day's work on the classroom computer.
- Pull-out plastic drawers contain a multitude of scrap materials: cloth, buttons, corks, paper scraps, aluminum pieces, etc.
- Label every single drawer or container on the front, asking that it be replaced front-side-out.
- The location and use of equipment such as a computer (for individual researches), glue guns, scissors, pliers, hammers, nails, small handsaws, etc., along with safety equipment (goggles—if needed), must be clearly labeled and introduced.
- Projects in a variety of media all going on at once need instruction. To avoid repeatedly answering the same question, write simple instructions, using Sharpie on white poster boards to hang near the appropriate studio. Older students might be interested in creating some of these posters.
- Record finished student work on a class camera or cellphone. This allows you and each student to maintain a portfolio that shows growth throughout the year—and is helpful for presentations or when you must give grades.
- Encourage students to display their work in a gallery that is not in the art studio. They may place an "artist's statement" next to it.
- Older or experienced students can be used as "coaches."

Figure 1.2 *Awesome Cool Band*, Hailey Davenport, Grade 2, collage, oil pastel, acrylic on paper, 12" x 18", Ridge Meadows Elementary School, Rockwood School District, St. Louis County, Missouri. Art teacher Linda Sachs.

Inspirational Sources for Project Ideas

More and more avenues exist today for teachers to share project ideas. Even if you already have an idea, it is always interesting to see how another teacher tackles the same project. Try *not* to copy anything you see exactly as you see it. That is really easier than it sounds, because, as you get involved in the process, you will naturally make some different decisions along the way. Use others' ideas as jumping-off points. Ask yourself: "What do I like best about what I see?," and then "What could I change to make it more *mine*?"

SOME SUGGESTIONS

- Go to art shows in other schools and school districts. Seeing an idea in person is the best way to learn. You can usually deduce the process enough to give your favorites a try. It is easier to decide if it's appropriate for you when you see the actual work.
- Exchange ideas with other art teachers in your school district or with colleagues who work in other school districts. You are the best support network for each other—in not only lesson ideas, but classroom organization, behavior management, and so much more.
- Buy books! You are already on a good path. Many ideas in one or two books can make your search for ideas so much easier and more time efficient.
- Many teachers follow other teachers on Instagram or on blogs. If you have a favorite or two, you can use them as a rich resource. Just remember that it's always best to give the project your own "spin" in one way or another.

- Pinterest is another great source that will give you multitudes of ideas from many teachers all over the world. It is from here that many find the teachers and artists they want to follow.
- Let yourself soak in ideas from many sources, but at the same time work on developing your own creative skills. You will soon find inspiration from nature, or a museum or gallery that stimulates a new idea in you!

What Children Should Know and Be Able to Do—Grade-Level Characteristics

The following characteristics of students at each grade level are aligned with National Core Arts Standards and grade-level expectations that were developed by experienced art professionals. Some students may work far beyond these levels while others may not yet have reached them.

THE KINDERGARTEN CHILD

Figure 1.3

Characteristics of Kindergarten Children

Have little sense of scale and omit things that are not important.

Quite self-centered, do not work particularly well in groups.

Usually are able to verbalize needs.

Unable to sustain any activity for more than 20 minutes.

What Kindergarteners Can Do with Materials

Art equipment—students begin to learn about using art tools in a safe, responsible manner.

Clay—manipulate to form a ball, make a coil, flatten, squeeze, make a pinch pot.

Drawing and painting materials—learn to use large markers, crayons, large and small brushes.

Paper—cut, glue, tear, bend, fold, curl, fold in half.

Print—make a simple print with stamps, fingers, or objects.

Scissors—use control to cut curved or straight lines.

Kindergarteners' Understanding of Concepts

Identify and draw differences in line—thick, thin, zigzag, curved, straight, interrupted.

Recognize and draw geometric and free-form shapes—categorizing as large or small.

Make large shapes by combining geometric and free-form shapes.

Identify and use light and dark, primary and secondary colors—red, yellow, blue, green, violet, and orange, but may not be able to identify whether they are primary or secondary.

Identify and create patterns by repeated use of line, color, form, or a single shape.

Perceive things that are alike and different—recognize differences in art media.

Talk about their own art and that of other artists, identifying the subject of an artwork.

Communicate ideas that are personally important.

Are aware of houses, buildings—are able to talk about design on clothing.

Suggestions for Teaching Kindergarteners

Introduce the skills and media lessons step-by-step.

Allow kindergarten students to experiment with materials.

Let them make portraits of themselves, family, and friends.

THE FIRST-GRADE CHILD

Figure 1.4

Characteristics of First Graders

Have a great range in maturity, which results in wide differences among them in their ability to listen, comprehend, and follow directions, but may have difficulty with more than one idea at a time.

Draw what they know, not what they see—can draw a complete figure, but tend to exaggerate the more important parts.

Love lessons that are full of activity and fun—imaginative stories, fantasy, plays, games, and dances.

Can work enthusiastically and be absorbed in creating art.

Show satisfaction with artwork and desire approval of the teacher and classmates; are more aware of the people around them.

Are interested in mechanical devices and moving parts.

What First Graders Can Do with Materials

Clay—make pinch pots or form a piece of "pinched-out" sculpture from clay, simple slab construction, apply glazes.

Equipment—use safe practices with art tools and can learn to close the lid on a glue bottle.

Markers, pencils, or crayons—use materials to fill an area with solid color.

Paint—mix primary colors to make secondary colors, fill an area with solid color, make value differences (colors lighter or darker), finger paint, use crayon resist with watercolor, and can learn to make controlled (dragging, not pushing) strokes with the brush.

Paper—fold and identify an edge, glue, fringe an edge with scissors, tear, cut.

Weaving—use large paper strips to weave paper in a simple pattern.

First Graders' Understanding of Concepts

Recognize and describe line, shape, color, and pattern in historical artworks. Recognize texture and pattern in clothing or in nature and describe it. Appreciate movement in a work of art such as van Gogh's *The Starry Night*.

Respond to a feeling about a work of art based on their own lives.

Understand that form and function go together (a clay pot must be strong).

Know that artists have designed clothing, buildings, and furniture.

See the difference between two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional forms.

Discuss subject matter in art, understand differences in still life, portrait, landscape, seasons.

Begin to understand how to show space (with reminders): overlapping, making figures smaller in background.

Suggestions for Teaching First Graders

Introduce the vocabulary of line, pattern, color, shape, and space. Have them identify line and shape in the room or on their clothing.

Teach students one step at a time and encourage them to talk about their own work and that of others at appropriate times.

THE SECOND-GRADE CHILD

Figure 1.5

Characteristics of Second Graders

Welcome responsibility—the chance to show they know how to do something.

Observe more details in their surroundings (buildings, people, clothing).

Love nature (animals), imaginary creatures, fantasy.

Are extremely self-confident; willing to tackle anything.

Are fascinated about how things work—castles, boats, machinery.

Are open to new experiences—field trips, TV, books, movies, new clothes.

Love games, stories, dances, plays.

What Second Graders Can Do with Materials

General—construct sculpture from found objects, create realistic forms such as animals.

Brush—wash brush between colors.

Clay—create sculptures, roll a few coils, make pinch pots, apply glazes.

Equipment—understand and use safe practices, assist in getting materials out and putting them away.

Paint—mix two colors of tempera paint to make a third color, control paint to make a variety of lines.

Pencil, crayon, charcoal—create value by changes in pressure.

Paper—use joining methods, curling, bending, folding, tearing, attaching one piece to another, weaving to create a pattern.

Second Graders' Understanding of Concepts

Become more aware of size relationships in comparing objects and in regard to themselves.

Become more aware that things are designed by artists (cars, clothes, kitchen items, furniture, buildings).

Become aware of themes in artworks from various cultures.

Are able to add lines that resemble real texture, for example, hair, or to incorporate real texture within a composition.

Understand that personal selections, such as clothing, reflect personal expression.

Understand that lines can be used to make something appear three-dimensional.

Make geometric shapes.

Understand positive and negative shapes (may be best done with cut paper).

Observe design (pattern, balance) in natural organisms such as butterflies or insects, and in artworks.

Recognize differences in art media.

Suggestions for Teaching Second Graders

Stress cooperation, sharing, and responsibility.

Introduce unfamiliar art forms and materials.

Talk about jobs that artists have—let them be designers.

Allow them to combine found materials in sculpture.

Show them fantasy art in history and encourage fantasy paintings and sculpture.

Create a composition that uses a variety of lines: dotted, zigzag, wavy, interrupted.

Introduce a paint-mixing technique that uses several values (tints and shades) of one hue, such as green. Allow the use of a small amount of the complementary color (red).

Lead them to compare and contrast two works of art, referring to subjects, the purpose for which it might have been created, the media used, and elements and principles of art.

Expose them to differences in art among several cultures—European, Native American, and Egyptian.

Caution not to use trite symbols (suns in corners with rays, stick figures, pointy mountains, balloon or cauliflower trees).

Have them make an original landscape or cityscape about their school, home, or neighborhood that creates the illusion of space (foreground, middle ground, background). Other appropriate themes are nature or the country.

THE THIRD-GRADE CHILD

Figure 1.6

Characteristics of Third Graders

Enthusiastic, open to new experiences and using new materials.

Anxious to please their peers, careful not to do anything too different from what the other students are doing.

Tend to separate themselves by gender outside the classroom, but work well in mixed-group projects.

Interested in learning to draw realistically, frustrated at times when they are not able to appreciate that fantasy exists in the imagination and may be used in artwork.

Enjoy art museum visits and learning about the role of artists in society.

What Third Graders Can Do with Materials

General—distribute and collect materials, clean tables, take general responsibility.

Brushes—wash brushes, mix colors with the brush.

Clay—create sculptures, roll a few coils, use a roller to make a slab, apply glazes.

Paint—mix tempera, understand crayon resist, use and take care of watercolors.

Ink—make monoprints, stamping, collagraph printmaking.

Printing materials—glue cardboard, string, and/or found objects to a piece of matboard and make a print from it.

Fiber arts—weaving.

Colored pencil, oil pastel, crayons, layer two or more colors.

Paper—cut well with scissors, use joining methods, curl, bend, score, fold, make forms from paper (origami, portrait heads).

Papier mâché or plaster gauze, create facial mask forms.

Paint—apply watercolor, thinned tempera or thinned acrylic in even strokes to make a wash (as in a sky), use paint to draw shapes and fill in evenly.

Third Graders' Understanding of Concepts

Use horizontal, vertical, and diagonal lines, textures, colors, and sizes.

Comprehend foreground, middle ground, and background, and show these by using overlapping, size differences, and value differences.

Discriminate between warm and cool colors—identify how artists have used colors for expression.

Recognize and use real and invented texture.

Identify contrast by variation in size and color.

Define symmetrical, asymmetrical, and radial balance; identify columns, beams, domes, and arches, and analyze how a building is constructed; develop personal use of color and other elements effectively in two-dimensional work.

Become aware of articulation of parts of the living body (examples—human, horse, cat).

Suggestions for Teaching Third Graders

Allow them to create a nonobjective work of art through the introduction of abstract historical art.

Teach them to see—teach contour drawing of a hand and the human form; blind contour drawing of something such as a simple plant.

Discuss proportions of the human form; have them draw their classmates in an action pose.

State objectives when beginning, then help them evaluate halfway through whether they are meeting the objectives in their own work.

Talk about works of art; compare and contrast two similar paintings from different cultures or time periods. Discuss subject, elements and principles, the theme of the artwork.

Introduce sculpture in the round (both by showing existing artworks and demonstration). Help them realize that this is not just two-dimensional (height and width) but also has depth and will be looked at from all directions.

Discuss how people are different in what art appeals to them.

Talk about how things work (buildings, machinery, transportation)—the *why* of form and function.

THE FOURTH-GRADE CHILD

Figure 1.7

Characteristics of Fourth Graders

Are developing a sense of humor; love comics and cartoon characters.

Can develop feelings of inferiority about their lack of ability to draw what they see.

Talk at appropriate times about their own work and that of their friends.

Know analogous, complementary, warm, cool, shade, primary colors, secondary colors.

Are open to viewing different art styles and do not yet judge if something is "good" or "bad."

What Fourth Graders Can Do with Materials

Brushes—successfully mix paint; care for watercolor sets; wash brushes and clean up.

Clay—do ceramic coiling; make pinch pots or clay animals; create portrait and figure sculpture; apply glazes.

Crayons—color firmly for scratch-art.

Metal tooling foil—emboss and stipple.

Paint—mix colors to make tints and shades; apply watercolor wash, wet-on-wet, and resists.

Make a value scale—pencil, marker, charcoal: create light medium and dark values.

Ink—create a brayer printing, a glue-line print, a collagraph, or a monoprint on plastic sheet; draw with pen and ink.

Paper—cut skillfully with scissors, score, curl, fold origami shapes.

Fiber arts—weave with a simple loom (cardboard, straws).

Sculpture materials—handle plaster-gauze well, do additive sculpture, use papier mâché.

Fourth Graders' Understanding of Concepts

Comprehend color scheme based on color wheel.

Know the meaning of color terms—analogous, complementary, shade, tint, primary, secondary, warm, cool, contrast, mood, "grayed" colors.

Create the illusion of space through placement, size, and value.

Use facial proportions correctly, develop a more realistically proportioned human figure, show movement.

By looking at art, become aware of how artists depict animals and the human figure.

Identify different media, subject matter, and art forms such as sculpture, tempera, watercolor, prints, portraits, landscapes.

Comprehend that form follows function in design, and bring in specific examples.

Understand that many artists use artwork to express themselves and their cultural identities.

Recognize architecture from various climates and cultures of the world on the basis of the construction materials used, including their own regional architecture.

Suggestions for Teaching Fourth Graders

Use distortion, simplification, or exaggeration to create an abstraction of an object, place, facial characteristics, a still life.

Avoid having them copy, as many already lack confidence in their ability to draw. Remind them to avoid trite symbols such as balloon or broccoli trees, happy faces, and rainbows. But talk about real symbols—things that are understood by most people, such as street signs and bathroom identification.

Introduce still life to foster the decision-making process, highlighting unity, variety, emphasis. Talk about positive and negative space, radial balance, center of interest, focal point, contrast.

Introduce proportions of the face; have them do self-portraits; draw fellow students; discuss body proportions; learn to really look.

Encourage exploration of color schemes through an open-ended landscape assignment.

Introduce sculpture in-the-round.

Compare and contrast two artworks from two different cultures (time or place) on the basis of theme, media, subject, and elements and principles of art.

THE FIFTH-GRADE CHILD

Figure 1.8

Characteristics of Fifth-Grade Students

Love being designers—doing an actual assignment to design clothing, furniture, a house, and so on.

Are eager to help; enthused about art; take responsibility; are helpful to classmates; work well in groups; are open to creative problem-solving.

Are interested in learning about new tools and techniques; are capable of working with almost any material.

May lose confidence in their artistic ability because their drawings are not "real" enough or because they think their classmates' projects are better.

Tend to stay separate (boys and girls), with different interests, hobbies, activities.

Are able to concentrate for much longer periods of time.

Can begin to display giftedness in art; those who love art will devote long hours to it.

What Fifth Graders Can Do with Materials

Charcoal, pastels, pencil, colored pencil; create texture and surface interest.

Equipment—use scissors, lino tools.

Clay—make clay tiles, create boxes, do slab or coil construction, make a section of a ceramic mural.

Paint—tempera: make a sharp edge; watercolor: blend from light to dark, mix a variety of hues; acrylic: same skills as tempera, use intermediate tones.

Ink and markers—apply ink wash; display control of line; use markers with style and control.

Metal tooling foil—emboss and stipple.

Paper—fold, score, cut with scissors, do controlled tearing, use joining techniques such as slits or tabs.

Fiber arts—do batik, print; use tie-dye.

Sculpture materials—create an assemblage of found materials, use papier mâché and plaster-gauze, create a ceramic sculpture, create a cardboard sculpture.

Printmaking—use lino-cuts, do eraser stamping; create stamp Styrofoam images.

Fifth Graders' Understanding of Concepts

Learn that sculptors are sometimes commissioned to do monumental artwork for public places.

Respect that appropriate sculptural materials must be used, or the sculpture may disintegrate.

Compare and recognize differences in artworks from a variety of cultures.

Recognize the artist's intention in using images and color to create mood.

Identify symbols, natural images, and objects used to create artworks.

Understand and use several different ways of showing depth (overlapping differences in color and size, rudimentary perspective); recognize that light, distance, relative size, etc., affect the appearance of an object.

Suggestions for Teaching Fifth Graders

Let them point out strengths and weaknesses in their artwork and changes that might improve it.

Introduce many different styles of art and discuss whether something has to be "real" to express the artist's idea.

Enlist students to assist in hanging artwork, organizing materials, in performing any of the art room chores.

Review concepts of realism, abstraction, positive and negative space, light and shadow, texture.

Introduce one- and two-point perspective.

THE SIXTH-GRADE STUDENT

Figure 1.9

Characteristics of Sixth Graders

Know everything, or think they do, but are still quite open to new experiences.

Ready to be exposed to learning about artists, why their work looks the way it does, what contemporary artists are doing; have begun to form a real opinion on certain kinds of art and artists.

Experience dramatic mood swings because of physical and emotional changes; seek peer approval.

Have a short attention span at times.

Display a preadolescent interest in music, language, videos, cell phones, and social media.

Often prefer being by themselves, independent of adults.

What Sixth Graders Can Do with Materials and Technology

Drawing media—use charcoal, pencil, pastel, or oil pastel; draw an object from observation; apply tip or side of media firmly or softly.

Clay—sculpt a bust; make box forms; do slab or coil construction.

Paint—mix colors in all paint media; overlap and smoothly blend colors.

Ink—control ink wash; make line drawings.

Paper—create a sculpture; use three-dimensional forms; make origami folds.

Fiber arts—use batik; print on cloth; tie-dye; tie simple knots; wrap yarn; weave.

Sculpture materials—use assemblage; use papier mâché or plaster gauze; make a cardboard relief; sculpt with paper or pulp; use found materials; cut paper.

Printmaking—monoprint, collagraph, or a string print.

Technology—-create a variety of designs using both a drawing/painting program as well as a photo editing program or website. Begin to take pictures with digital cameras.

Sixth Graders' Understanding of Concepts

Understand one- and two-point perspective concepts; want to learn how to show depth.

Open to learning new, difficult technical skills in drawing, painting, printmaking, and sculpture.

Judge works by formalism (elements and principles of art), emotionalism (the viewer's emotional reaction to the art), and realism (the belief that *best* art closely resembles reality).

Understand the elements and principles of art, and identify their use in their *own* artwork and that of others.

Identify functions of architecture for worship, burial, public, and private use.

Suggestions for Teaching Sixth Graders

Introduce one- and two-point perspective concepts.

Base as many projects as you can on the self (self-portrait, human form). Have them create a realistic portrait.

Help develop abstract thinking by giving several different three-dimensional projects.

Students should be able to look at a work and identify into which of the following categories it most logically fits: reality, expressing feelings, or serving a practical purpose.

Conduct aesthetic discussions about nonrealistic works of art. Talk about how different cultures have different ideas about what is beautiful. Students may respond negatively to unfamiliar artwork from other cultures or time periods because of their personal experience or what their friends may think.

Take them outside the classroom to draw houses, buildings, people, cars, playground equipment.

Help them progress sufficiently in their art skills so they will want to continue learning, rather than concluding that they are not "artists" because they may not draw realistically.

Interest them in art from other cultures and in trying their hand at similar projects.

Introduce them to making posters, teaching the use of balance, space, and emphasis.

Motivate through encouraging fantasy art or depicting imaginative experiences; they tend to be very interested in Surrealism.

Make handmade books to be used for a journal.

THE SEVENTH-GRADE STUDENT

Figure 1.10

Characteristics of Seventh Graders

Are more aware of physical appearance than previously; suddenly interested in the opposite sex.

Would like to be treated like an adult, yet often revert to childish solutions and behavior.

Want to be individuals, yet very sensitive to peer pressure and want to identify with a group.

Interested in exciting experiences.

Eager to learn controlled technologies to improve their skills.

What Seventh Graders Can Do with Materials and Technology

General—capable of handling materials and equipment with skill.

Equipment—use lino-cutting tools; X-acto® knives.

Clay—Do slab and coil building; sculpture; clay architecture.

Paint—understand mixing color to make tints, shades, "grayed" colors; make textures with a variety of strokes.

Ink and markers—use hatching, cross-hatching, sketching, and ink wash; understand controlled directional use of markers; create implied texture.

Paper—make handmade paper; origami or paper sculpture.

Fiber arts—stitch, weave, basketry, batik, fabric collage, knot, wrap, make paper, understand book arts.

Sculpture materials—use files or sandpaper; adhere materials; clay or plastercraft; papier mâché.

Printmaking materials—make a relief linoleum print (lino-cut).

Technology—create more complex designs and begin to utilize the layer menu, learn how to bring photos into a photo editing application for enhancement.

Seventh Graders' Understanding of Concepts

Recognize that different cultures have styles in artwork that reflect people's values and beliefs.

Identify and use elements and principles of art, recognizing rhythmic lines, complex shapes, analogous colors, balance (radial, symmetry and asymmetry), focal point, and contrast.

Do research on something if it is of interest to them.

Record reality in landscapes, cityscapes, and portraiture.

Aware of how color, line, shape, and composition affect a composition.

Interpret subject and theme, identify center of interest.

Interest in learning about architecture; recognize how different cultural influences and location affect the style of buildings.

Suggestions for Teaching Seventh Graders

Assign research projects about artists.

Encourage them to take photographs and use photos to record their world, and use photos as an art form.

Compare and contrast two artworks by artistic style, media, and art processes.

Assign more technical computer graphics lessons.

Spend more time talking about what artists might have been thinking, why they work the way they do, and what effect society has on the appearance of art.

Allow students to select the appropriate media to express themselves.

THE EIGHTH-GRADE STUDENT

Figure 1.11

Characteristics of Eighth Graders

Are highly self-conscious and interested in personal appearance; are aware of how others see them.

Trying to figure out who they are, trying various roles from week to week.

Helpful—interested in service projects and environmental concerns.

Inquisitive and interested in complex ideas; want to relate education to their lives.

Interested in the personal lives of entertainers, sports stars, TV personalities.

Sensitive about artistic ability; take criticism of their artwork personally.

Interested in working with others on a joint project.

What Eighth Graders Can Do with Materials and Technology

General—physically work with most artistic materials, simply differing in degree of skill.

Marker, ink, pencil, or colored pencil—create continuous, even tones and blending.

Technology—apply elements and principles of design to photography and graphic design.

Clay—model sculpture; work with coil and slab building; make pinch pots.

Fiber arts—make jewelry, weaving, understand book arts.

Paint—mix paint to create tints and shades, tones, or neutral colors; model; show depth; represent something realistically.

Technology—begin to work with drawings using vector points in a drawing program, use filters and effects appropriately in a photo editing application.

Eighth Graders' Understanding of Concepts

Want to know why things are taught and the application to real life.

Can continue to learn about careers related to the visual arts.

Can identify and use varied line quality, value differences, complementary colors, formal and informal balance, scale relationship, perspective, diminishing size, and color to show depth.

Use materials and techniques to depict moods, ideas, feelings.

Discuss design elements to create objects and materials for living.

Identify artwork from different cultures and time periods by specific common characteristics.

Think abstractly—can grasp double meanings, morality, and symbolism in artwork.

Can interpret the meaning of work and identify whether it demonstrates reality (imitationalism), expresses feelings (emotionalism), emphasizes the elements and principles of art (formalism), or is a useful object (functionalism).

Suggestions for Teaching Eighth Graders

Help them improve skills in a variety of media, introducing new ways of using familiar materials.

Give them "real" assignments when possible: posters, designing jewelry, fabrics, murals.

Assign open-ended topics that allow them to express moods such as happiness or sadness.

Assign a painting related to time or space (past, present, or future).

Help them develop aesthetic judgment and discuss how they apply it to daily life (as consumers and connoisseurs of art).

Continue to introduce and discuss historical artworks from a variety of cultures.

Personalize some projects, encouraging them to use their own faces, names, or initials as design elements.

Encourage them to work in groups on a large project such as a mural, or reports on artists, or even several working together as collaborative artists.

Modifications in Art for Special-Needs Students

Art teachers try to accommodate a variety of learning styles by using different methods to introduce a lesson, such as demonstrating, writing on the board, talking about art, and individual guidance. For the students with physical and mental disabilities, a variety of other methods of learning can be utilized that will make their art experience easier and more successful.

Many of the accommodations listed here are for those who are mainstreamed students (placed in the least restrictive environments) or are participants in inclusion, where they attend a resource classroom part of the day and are included in special classes such as art, physical education, and music.

GENERAL SUGGESTIONS

- Be aware of the goals on the student's IEP (Individualized Education Plan) or IDEA/504 (Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, Section 504) in order to help the student achieve personal goals. It might be a more important goal for the student to learn socialization, complete a task, or develop fine-motor ability than it is to make a work of art.
- The Internet has resources such as catalogs of *tools and materials that are helpful for special needs students and adults*. Simply type the italicized words into a search engine to search.

- Check the student's IEP for testing adaptations. Allow more time for a special-needs student or read the questions aloud. Highlight words you feel the student especially needs to learn or recognize. Check on work-in-progress.
- Para professionals or teacher aides may be assigned to special needs students to coach and assist with materials, but they should never actually do the work for the students. It is the job of the art teacher to tell the helping adult that the artwork is to be done by the student's hands.
- Give support only as you sense the student needs it, instead of automatically assuming you know what the student's needs are. That being said, help the student as often as possible.
- Ignore small behaviors and notice the positive behaviors. Use the student as a model of appropriate behavior as often as possible.
- Relaxing background music or headphones may help students who have trouble focusing on the task at hand.
- Break lessons into shorter tasks. Perhaps print the "steps" on the board or on a poster as a reminder. Many young people have trouble following lengthy verbal instructions.
- Provide a calming corner or break space within the classroom for students to go to when they feel overwhelmed by emotions. Set a timer and tell them when it is time to rejoin the class.
- Substitute the medium for the project if a student has difficulty with a certain medium (e.g., use oil pastels instead of tempera or watercolor paint). Offer extra-credit projects.
- Draw lines with chalk, pencil, or pencil eraser where you want a student to apply glue or cut with scissors.

ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH SOCIAL/ EMOTIONAL NEEDS

- Over-teach! Allow the student to complete one stage before beginning another. For many students, separate steps should be explained. Explain repeatedly if necessary.
- This student may do well with three-dimensional materials or those that offer resistance (such as clay). This student usually thrives on being given responsibilities and being a helper. Offer praise freely for a task well done. One teacher suggests a ratio of one positive comment to one that might be taken as less than positive.
- If the student is disruptive, move him or her to a quieter place to work (see general suggestions about working with special needs students).
- Frequent breaks or a change of pace allow the student to remain composed.

ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

- Select projects that are appropriate for the ability of this student. If necessary, substitute a different medium or goal.
- Demonstrate how to do something, since the student is often able to follow something that he or she sees rather than by listening to complex instructions.
- Especially in this instance, never try to improve the student's artwork; but, if necessary, demonstrate on a paper towel or tracing paper that is then wadded up and thrown away.
- Over-teach. Sometimes sitting next to the student while he or she works gives confidence.

ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS ON THE AUTISM SPECTRUM

- Try to accommodate an autistic student's learning style. Become familiar with the student's capability.
- The student may be artistically gifted or may have retained almost nothing art-related from earlier lessons. To check for retained knowledge, ask the student to draw lines for you that are straight, curved, or zigzag.
- See if there is a subject that is fascinating to the student with autism. Learn about any fixation (and therefore, perhaps, in-depth knowledge) this student might have. Encourage this special interest to become part of his or her interpretation of the lesson.
- Perhaps this student might work best with a few other students, away from noise that might be distracting.
- Provide structure by breaking a lesson into simple, specific directions. The autistic student thrives on routine. Have a specific routine for class time that can quickly become familiar. Give enough notice for finishing and putting away work, cleanup, and the end of class. A few extra minutes warning for the autistic student may make for a smoother transition. Allow time to adjust to change. Unexpected or loud disruptions can send them into a tailspin. For planned fire drills, check your roster for autistic students who may need to stay with the classroom teacher or another trusted adult.
- Model a project by working side-by-side with the student.
- Give adequate warning for the end of work time or for a change of pace.

ADAPTATIONS FOR THE VISUALLY IMPAIRED STUDENT

- Use tactile materials such as clay, wire, finger paint, cardboard pieces, wooden craft sticks, or other three-dimensional materials that allow the student to feel the texture.
- Place supplies within a frame taped on the table. (This could be no bigger than a roll of masking tape, or a taped-down box lid.)
- The student can hold or feel an object with one hand while drawing it with the other (e.g., a twig or a friend's ear).
- Use square crayons, or those that are flat on one side, to avoid having them roll off a table.
- In talking about perspective with a visually impaired student, relate the appearance of objects farther away to hearing. The farther away something is, the fainter it sounds.
- For the student who wants to use appropriate colors, pencils, markers, or crayons could be "color-coded" by putting a different number of rubber bands on each color (arrange by spectrum).
- Tape screen-wire to a piece of cardboard as a drawing board. The student can feel a waxy surface left by drawing with crayon on paper that has screen-wire placed underneath.
- Make an outline with a glue gun, wide black marker, glued yarn, wax crayon, or black glue. A visually disabled student can then draw with crayon, chalk, or paint within the outline.
- Scented markers give visually impaired students the use of appropriate colors.
- Add sand to paint, so the student can feel what has been painted. The student also can "paint" on an 8" × 10" piece of cardboard with tiny balls of softened colored modeling clay. Demonstrate how to press the ball on one side so it will adhere to the cardboard.
- If the student cannot see at all, speak when you approach. Also let the student know when you are leaving. Have the student touch your hands while you are demonstrating.
- A sample "texture board" can be created for a visually impaired student to identify what he or she is feeling.
- Substitute yarn, crumpled tissue, or construction paper and glue in place of tempera paint.
- Students can use textured rubbing plates or make fish prints from plastic textured fish.

ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH IMPAIRED HEARING

- Touch the student's arm to get his or her attention.
- For those students who may be able to read lips, be sure you are facing the student when giving instructions.

- If you have a mustache, keep it short so your lips are visible.
- Check that the student understands the assignment. Repeat twice, slowly, or write what the assignment is about on the board.
- It may be necessary to draw or write what the assignment is about.
- Many hearing-impaired students will bring a microphone for you wear while you are teaching, which connects to their hearing device. Be sure to silence it if you find yourself in a conversation with someone else that the hearing-impaired student should not hear.

ADAPTATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH MOTOR IMPAIRMENT

- This student typically responds well to having a choice of two media.
- Cutting paper may be a problem, and several types of special scissors are available—for example, Squizzers, which are spring-action scissors that spring open after being squeezed. Some scissors have four finger holes, so a "guiding hand" can be used to help the student cut.
- A student might find it easier to tear paper rather than cut it. Or someone else could hold the paper between both hands while the student cuts from the bottom toward the top.
- Tape paper to the table to hold it in place while the student is drawing or painting.
- Use tempera paint in large refillable markers.
- For a student who has difficulty gripping a pencil, crayon, or paintbrush, place the object inside a foam curler or tape it to the hand.
- A student with motor impairment may benefit from being able to trace around a template.
- Felt-tipped pens may be easier for a student to handle than crayons.

ADAPTATIONS FOR ATTENTION-SEEKING STUDENTS

For some students, negative attention will serve just as well as positive attention. You can help these students control themselves by intervention techniques.

- Give this student more classroom tasks and responsibilities.
- Let him or her be a special helper to get out and put away supplies.
- Have a table or place where a student who is disturbing others can be moved for a time to work alone.
- Move him or her to a calming corner for a student to visit if necessary. Use a timer that lets the student know how long he or she will be there. The calming corner should have a chair, as well as some activities for the student on which he or she may work.

- If necessary, get eye-level with the student and clearly state what you would like for him or her to do, then ask for your request to be repeated back to you.
- If the student has severe behavioral problems, work closely with the classroom teacher, special educator, counselor, principal, and parent on a mutually agreed upon action plan to keep art a pleasant learning experience for everyone.
- Sometimes you just have to back off, busying yourself nearby and getting back to it later.

ADAPTATIONS FOR LOWER GRADE LEVELS

Primary children have short attention spans (theoretically 1 minute per year of age), but they are capable of using most media. Working step-by-step is a necessity. Their work is often so free and charming that it is possible to over-teach at this level. They are generally better at painting than drawing. Sometimes just put out painting materials and allow them to paint with fingers, small pieces of sponge, Q-tips, or jumbo brushes. Give a suggestion or two, such as applying paint all the way to the edge of the paper. Children enjoy learning to use the brush to create textures, lines, or shapes. For watercolor resist, one teacher suggests using oil pastels and cake tempera instead of crayon and watercolor because oil pastels don't need much pressure to get intense lines.

- Create an "art book" during the year that students are in kindergarten. Start it with a drawn self-portrait on the first day and finish it with a self-portrait drawing during the last week. You may be the one to add a date on each piece, but this portfolio can be used to assess progress in art and teaches students that their work is valued and worth taking care of.
- On finger-paint paper, put out two small puddles of primary colors (red, yellow, and blue); allow students to use a finger to mix and make a secondary color (orange, green, violet), then draw a face using the colors they have mixed.
- If you use finger paint paper (slick-finish), and the paint gets a little too thick, a monotype can be made by placing a second paper on top, and gently rubbing the back of the clean paper with the palm of the hand from the center toward the outside edges.
- Students can use crayons to make rubbings on copy paper of a variety of textures (indoors or outside). They can then cut these textures into shapes to use in a collage. After it is glued in place, ask them "What can it be?" Perhaps then they would draw on the textures with marker or cut and add accents of colored paper.
- Art teachers at times avoid using geometric templates, but drawing around a circle (for example) can teach cooperative learning, with one student holding the template in place while the other draws. Where the circles overlap, students can fill with different texture or patterns in each distinct area.
- Talk about art with the students. Show paintings of landscape, seascape, portrait, narrative (story telling), and abstract compositions. Have them figure out the real objects in an abstract painting (Picasso always had a subject, as did Miró).

CHALLENGING ARTISTICALLY GIFTED STUDENTS

Students who are gifted in art usually love to draw at an early age. They show unusual perseverance in completing a project and will often put in far greater detail than most, sometimes taking their interpretation of an idea far beyond the basic premise. Keeping this type of child content is seldom difficult because they naturally tend to work harder and longer at most open-ended assignments. Allow some flexibility on due dates. If a complex project takes more time, use your judgement to extend the deadline, allowing the student to work on it at home, or during recess.

Be sure not to just give these students more work on a new version of the same project (if it is finished.). Rather, encourage a higher level of work on the same assignment from the beginning of the lesson. Take it to another level.

Encourage the student to draw in a personal sketchbook, or to make a drawing of a still life that you have set up elsewhere in the room. In schools that offer classes for *artistically* gifted students, problem-solving and skill development are featured. For example, students might be challenged to make an architectural model, or to work on a computer graphics assignment.

SAFETY IN THE ART ROOM

Figure 1.12 Fire extinguisher

General Suggestions

For the students' protection and your own, always instruct students in the safe use of tools and materials, beginning in kindergarten and reinforcing each year. It is crucial that you take responsibility for making the environment in your art classroom safe for students. Students under the age of 12 are particularly vulnerable to substances in art that might not affect older students. Be certain your materials have an AP (approved product) or CP (certified product) seal that is given by the Art and Craft Materials Institute. Check old materials for this seal, and throw them away if they do not have it. It is also advised that you use materials that state "Conforms to ASTM D-4236" on the label. Some art materials also come with Material Safety Data Sheets (SDS).

Recommended Materials

CP or AP pencils, watercolors, tempera, acrylic, oil sticks, crayons, chalks, and colored pencils; CP or AP water-based inks instead of oil-based inks; CP or AP cellulose papier mâché; CP or AP clear acrylic emulsion to fix drawings; CP or AP lead-free glazes for ceramics.

Mineral spirits (preferably odorless) instead of turpentine or kerosene.
Water-based markers; non-scented, instead of permanent or scented markers.

Glue sticks or white glue instead of rubber cement.
Shellac containing denatured alcohol.
Food or vegetable dyes (onion skins, tea, Rit) in place of Procion dyes.
Procion dyes are still available. One recommendation if you choose to use these dyes is to wipe up spills with a paper towel and throw it away so the fumes do not get into the air.

Working with Clay

For a healthy environment, your kiln should be in a separate room or at least separated by a screen. If this is simply not possible, consider using wet, premixed talc-free clays, or paint the fired clay rather than using glazes. Have students wipe the tables with damp sponges after working with clay and dry them. Ideally, have your floor mopped nightly to avoid dust in the air.

Care of Cutting Tools

Be aware of age-appropriate use of certain tools. Give frequent instructions on safe practices with scissors. Sharp cutting knives and lino-cutters are wonderful tools but should not be used by anyone younger than students in fourth or fifth grade (and then too only with very specific safety instructions). Have students use bench hooks when doing lino-cuts and instruct them to always keep the knife facing forward while keeping the other hand behind the knife. For curved cuts, show students how to rotate the material rather than the cutter. Cutting tools should be kept in a locking cabinet, counted before distribution and again at the end of class.

Using Equipment

If you must use extension cords, they should be three-pronged and rated for the appropriate wattage for the purpose. Make every effort to run them around the side of the room or even up and over the top of a door rather than across a floor. If necessary, tape them down on the floor.

Staple guns. Should be off-limits to students. Whatever their age, students of all ages cannot resist trying to see if they work (sometimes by aiming them at someone).

Electrical equipment. Have the kiln, electric drill, etc., inspected for proper operation on a regular basis.

Fire extinguisher. Make sure it is routinely inspected and replaced.

Sturdy ladder and stepstool. Use them rather than climbing on stools, chairs, or tables.

Glue guns. Teach students how to use and respect glue guns. Some mini glue guns have super-low temperature and should be used by the younger students. Set up a glue station where you can keep a close eye on it.

Paper cutter guard. Make sure the guard on your paper cutter is always in place.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Parent Communications

This communication is the most important one of all and one that is crucial for many students. It's usually impossible to send individualized notes home to every parent. However, if you see a problem situation starting to show itself, it is best to send a quick note or e-mail home to the parent about a small issue before it becomes a big monster. These same students need a note home to praise good behavior. Parents need to know you also recognize the good in their child. Do as many as you can fit in your available time. It is always worth the effort. The best way to send this type of communication is via the parents' email. It is likely that you have access to parents' email addresses through the student roster files.

News Releases

Most school districts have a Public Relations person whose responsibility it is to send releases about student achievements to local newspapers, often including photos of artwork.

Technology

Develop your teacher/art department website on the school's or district's website. Make sure artwork that is used in your classes is posted for each grade level. This can appear overwhelming at first. Try to just get a small start in the beginning, then add to your page whenever you get a chance. It will slowly build over time. If you want to include a photo of the student's work, take the highest-quality picture you can take (the picture should be of reproduction quality, 300 ppi (pixels per inch). High-quality photos might also be included in a school yearbook or newsletter. This is your chance to show off your students' masterpieces!

Facebook

Fort Zumwalt, a large suburban school district near St. Louis, Missouri, has a Monday-morning Facebook upload titled *Modern Museum*, which features artwork and background music from students. Student artwork may be titled, but student names are never included. They also take advantage of YouTube and Twitter.

School or District Website

Students' faces are not usually shown on this district's YouTube videos—while students may be shown working, their faces are not visible. Special units are featured, such as a study of Mondrian done by fourth graders, but nothing is included that would allow a stranger to identify a face or name.

School or District Art Exhibits

Change student artwork displays in the school, with occasional displays in the school library or at a local library. Show the work at larger district exhibitions (often at a recreational complex or shopping mall). Parents are very interested in their children's schoolwork, and artwork is a visible means of showing what is happening in their lives. If a student's work is displayed somewhere off the school grounds, post information about it on the school's website and send a note home with the student to inform the parents about it.

Digital Photography

With the advent of the digital camera, photographing artwork is much simpler than it was earlier. After taking a picture, you can check the exposure to see if it is correct, or if it is sharp enough. Some teachers keep a digital camera readily available to photograph every piece of finished art. These might be used for sharing with colleagues, or for the student's portfolio. In some schools, older students are expected to record their own work, using the "classroom camera."

Natural Light

Photograph artwork in natural light to record the color as faithfully as possible. Try to pin the work on a wall at eye-level when photographing, with natural light behind you. Use a flash if natural light is not available. Try to fill the frame of the viewfinder with the artwork to eliminate distracting borders.

Outdoors

Do this on a calm day in a spot that is sheltered from the sun. A cloudy-bright day is ideal. If the finished photograph is distorted or needs to be cropped, some of the problems can be resolved using a computer program.