WHAT IS PROCESS ART?

Process art is a style of artwork where the focus is on HOW a piece is made, not what the piece looks like in the end.

There are a few rules to follow to ensure your child gets the most out of this rewarding experience:

- Correcting or interrupting a child while they are making art can hinder their creativity. Even if they are challenged by the activity, let them work through it.

- The outcome is not important. Many times, the final product of process art will be abstract. That’s quite alright! Children will get the most out of process art when they are free from expectations.

- If there are step by step instructions, then it is not process art. Children should feel free to experiment and take their own paths as they work with the materials.

- Hands off! Unless your child needs a quick crash course on how to use materials or they are using the materials in a way that is unsafe, let them focus on their own project on their own terms and at their own pace.

- Art should be a positive experience for children. For this reason, approach each activity with a “Yes, and...” attitude. Think ahead and set up work spaces and art invitations to make saying “No” less necessary. Also, never force a child to do an activity. Art should never become a chore.

HOW TO TALK TO KIDS ABOUT ART

Kids love to talk about their art! How you respond to the moment where they show you what they’re making is so important.

Here are some tips for encouraging confident, fearless creators:

- Respect the artist. Take their creative process seriously.

- Go beyond the standard response of saying something looks “beautiful” or “nice” and ask questions like:
  - How did you make this?
  - How did you decide to use these colors?
  - Tell me about this!
  - How do you feel when you look at it?
  - What do you think you’ll name this?
  - If I hold it this way, do you see something different? How about this way?

- It is never nothing. It is ALWAYS something. Talking through the process using questions like those above helps you understand the deliberate choices that were made to get to the final product.

- It’s okay if they don’t want to talk, too. In this case, you can just say, “I’m really proud of you.” It’s a phrase that doesn’t pass judgment and it’s also something everyone could stand to hear more often.

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Our Success Stories

Use conversational text when you can. Write to your reader as if you were having a conversation with him or her over a meal.

Keep your words simple. Don’t use a longer word than you need to. For example, in most cases “use” is a better choice than “utilize.”

White space gives the user an opening into your information. Don’t be afraid to leave spaces open.

- Use bullets to itemize lists
- Keep your bullets short
- Start each bullet with an action word
- Don’t use more than a few bullets in a row

More about our story

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Photo caption

STUFF TO KEEP ON HAND

- Food coloring
- Corn starch
- Cooking oil
- Clothespins
- Powdered milk
- Plenty of paper!

STUFF TO SPLURGE ON

These items are not completely necessary, but are great tools for your art supply arsenal.

- Quality Watercolor Art Paper- buy in bulk online from an art supply store like Blick. Canson Watercolor Paper Packs offer the most quality and quantity for the price point and works with a variety of art mediums.
- One black Prismacolor marker- this marker will not bleed when used with watercolors, so you can make your own coloring pages.
- Brushes- avoid wooden handles to make the brushes last longer.

STUFF TO KEEP IN MIND

- Cut paper in half to double your supply and save money.
- If you buy storebought paints, dedicate certain cups/plates just for art purposes.
- Whether you buy paint or make your own, cornstarch thickens, water thins.
- Keep an old shirt to wear just for art time.

STUFF TO SELL

Each activity here can be done for $5 or less. You probably have some of these items already!

Frozen Chalk Paint & Oil
by LearnPlayImagine.com

Make chalk paint and pour mixture into an ice cube tray. Freeze overnight. Present frozen chalk cubes, a cup of oil, and paper on the table. Brushes are helpful, but not necessary. Get the paper nice and oily and then watch the reaction as you apply the cubes to the paper.

Not A Brush!
In Artopia, we have learned that pairing paint with just about anything except for a brush is a winning combination. Leaves, cotton balls, fly swatters, yarn, bubble wrap...you name it, it’s way funner than a brush. Make the Powdered Milk Paint and get creative!

Squirt Gun Painting
by FirefliesAndMudpies.com

Fill a squirt gun with liquid watercolor. Fix a piece of paper onto an easel, a wall, or down on the grass or driveway. Have fun!

So what are the clothespins for? They’re great for hanging a piece of paper out to dry. They’re also a cute way to display artwork.

No paper? No problem! Let your child paint on a plate. All of the recipes seen here are food-grade, so you can wash the plate over and over again for an endless canvas and still have dinner on it later.

RECIPE

Chalk Paint by LearnPlayImagine.com

Ingredients:
- corn starch
- water
- food coloring

Directions:
Fill a container of your choice halfway with cornstarch, and pour food coloring on top. Add water and stir until the cornstarch has completely incorporated into the water. Add more cornstarch if the paint is too thin, add water if it is too thick. This will dry like chalk.

Powdered Milk Paint by TinkerLab.com

Ingredients:
- powdered milk
- water
- food coloring

Directions:
Mix 2 parts powdered milk and 1 part water together. Add food coloring and mix until fully incorporated. Make a small amount, or make a lot and store for up to 4 days in the refrigerator. This paint has the consistency of tempera.

Liquid Watercolors by EmmaOwl.com

Ingredients:
- food coloring
- water

Directions:
Start with water, add drops of food coloring, and stir.

*For all recipes, the intensity of the colors can be controlled by how much food coloring you add to the recipe. If you plan to do these activities often, it may be cheaper to invest in store-bought liquid watercolors.