



Art Station's Children's Art Academy

For parents and students...what you can expect:

Goal: Students will gain real art techniques, practice artistic thinking skills and create more skillful artwork while working *within developmentally appropriate themes and methods*. We are not aiming for realistic or adult looking art. We are aiming for youthful, vibrant works developing as uniquely as your children. Students will achieve more skillful work in this sequential child friendly studio environment with classes that continue each term as the young artist develops. Class format is based on an approach still in use at Children's Art Institute sponsored by the Gresham-Barlow School District and founded by Annie Painter when she was a principal there. Each Art Station teaching artist will offer their own curriculum to support the following fun, skill building and creative steps for students:

Note: Parents are asked to stay for a 15-minute orientation on the first day of class.

1. Exploring tools, materials and ideas—with NO 'REAL' art expected. WHY? To gain experience, get excited and have prior knowledge of media and tools required for practice and independent work (steps 3, 4). Often involves teams or group working together, teacher directed. **This is a critical step in highest achievement for students.** Time is spent discussing. Samples are kept in binder or portfolio.

2. Finding, understanding and experimenting with the elements and principles of design AND thinking strategies that will be needed in more creative practice and independent projects. Time is spent discussing. Samples are kept in binder or portfolio. Accomplished artists' work is studied. Field trips may occur.

3. Practice projects with criteria (*Criteria are requirements for self management, suggested theme, various elements, principles and techniques to try WITH one's own creative approach*). Criteria guide what the student will create (such as observation drawing of a shell or a whimsical unique mask or clay figures inspired by world culture), and include design elements, principles and techniques to be tried (practiced in #2, above, such as symmetry or 3D form). Practice projects ALWAYS involve unique, creative thinking along with technical practice.

Because students have experienced steps one and two above, process and products are usually at a high level of achievement. Time is spent critiquing, appreciating, discussing one's learning and 'next steps' based on criteria for each project. Work is mounted, labeled, otherwise prepared and shown on the last day of class. Photos will be taken for portfolio or scrapbook.

4. Work as an independent artist (with teacher as coach)

Once students have explored media, learned design elements, principles and strategies for thinking AND created various practice projects, it is important for each to work independently, to apply learning to a project ***without teacher directed specific criteria***. Typically the teacher and students may select themes or ideas together, or create a group mural or cook up a completely new way to use the medium (wearable stuffed drawings?) but the emphasis here is on the young artist who handles self, materials, ideas and space with respect and knowledge to create completely new works. **Young artists must decide which elements and principles, which strategies for creation will best ‘fit’ their ideas.** This level of achievement may not be achieved in introductory course work.

However, students at every level may have Open Studio time and be invited to use the design elements, principles, tools and materials with no teacher direction. Teacher is consultant, coach, helper, of course. Freedom to think and find one’s own strategies is the idea. Literacy (making meaning) as an artist does is the goal.

Important: Studio Rules and self-management are required of all students. Teachers will demonstrate and students will practice safe, respectful processes at all times.

Final family art show: At Children’s Art Academy, work is saved for a final family art show so that students and visitors can see progress over time and celebrate the beautiful work.

About visiting: In order for teaching artists (and Annie Painter when coaching) to focus on students and implement the academy approach, and especially because our space is so small, we ask that parents let us know in advance if they’d like to visit after the third week so we can find seating for your observation. Adult visitors only please. We’d like to keep the studio as focused with quiet or exuberance as needed and as few distractions as possible. Thanks for understanding and helping us do our best for your children.

Attendance and punctuality: Due to the sequential nature of Children’s Art Academy, it is essential that students attend as many classes as possible. Each class uses a daily structure that promotes success in learning, so students truly benefit from being on time to class... and likewise are at a disadvantage if late. Please notify your child’s teacher if you may be late to class, early to leave, or miss a session.

Questions or need to make contact? Please do call or email Art Station staff and we’ll be happy to connect you with help, answers, and ideas. We want this to be a wonderful, successful experience your child will continue to enjoy...maybe for years.

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