

Art



Creating an Engaging Interest Center

What Children Are Learning

- Expressing emotions through open-ended art
- Focusing attention
- Describing their creations with new language
- Developing new processes to create art
- Problem-solving skills
- Mixing colors to make new shades and colors
- Balancing when building abstract sculptures



Developmental Skills Typically Acquired

Motor Skills

- Fine motor
- Hand-eye coordination

Note: *This is not an exhaustive list, and children will develop according to their own individual timelines.*

Brain Connections

- Problem-solving
- Executive functions
 - Plan, monitor, and adjust to achieve a goal



Materials and Storage

Use various nontraditional items, such as the following:

Nature Items

- Shells
- Sand
- Leaves
- Flowers

Painting Tools

- Brushes
- Sponges
- Toothbrushes
- Cars
- Cotton swabs
- Feathers

Various Recycled Items

- Cardboard
- Fabric scraps
- Magazines

Medium

- Paint scented with powdered, flavored gelatin
- Paint mixed with shaving cream
- Stamps and ink

Paper

- Wallpaper
- Tissue paper
- Crepe paper
- Construction paper

Materials

- Small trinkets
- Gems
- Buttons
- Pom-poms
- Ribbon
- Yarn
- String
- Pipe cleaners

All Materials Are Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP) for All Age Groups

NOTE: Appropriately monitor children and include variations based on interest and developmental skills.

IMPORTANT: Make safety the top priority to avoid choking hazards.

Storage



Organize items using baskets or tubs with a picture of each item that belongs inside. Place them within children's reach.

Contact the OECOSL Child Care Support Line at 1.800.299.1627 for assistance.



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Best Practices

Focus your goals on the process, not the product.

Allow children to decide how to use the materials (within reason).

Locate the art center on a washable surface and near a sink.

Check labels to ensure materials are safe for use by young children.

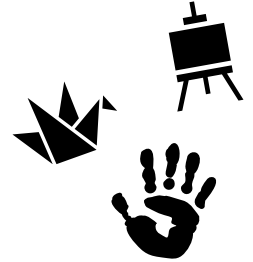
Ask questions that encourage children to focus on techniques, image, colors, and their messages in their art.

Display children's artwork and examples at their level around the learning environment.

Allow children to save their work to continue later.

Supervise children while they are using art materials.

Rotate various common materials through the center and introduce new or interesting items on a regular basis.



Activities and Project Ideas

Expression

- Ask preschoolers and school-agers to express a feeling or tell a story through art.
- Introduce younger children interested in smearing food to fingerpainting as another way to spread color.

Exploration

- Allow older infants to explore messy (non-toxic) art materials.
- Introduce art materials as soon as infants can sit up and begin controlling hand movements.

Modify

- Modify activities for sensory-avoiders or children who do not like messy hands, such as providing fingerpaint with brushes or zipper baggies.

Family Engagement

Encourage family engagement by suggesting they include art as part of regular routines and experiences. Suggestions include the following:

- Include a brief description of the process used and what the child said about the artwork when sending artwork home.
- Ask families to suggest projects and materials their child enjoys using at home.
- Avoid recommending use of food as an art material when families consider it offensive or waste.



ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- **Accessing Knowledge and Extending Learning: Art Center**
https://drive.google.com/file/d/1VXtvqIDVJ7oBgqq9bw_WIYZIllinois4ogTY0/view?usp=share
- **The Art Center in Child Care**
<https://childcare.extension.org/the-art-center-in-child-care/>
- **Supporting the Development of Creativity**
<https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/supporting-development-creativity>

