



4-H Art Helper's Guide

Welcome to a new art experience, teaching visual arts to young people. Now that you have reviewed the *Get Started in Art* requirement sheet posted at <http://www.uidaho.edu/extension/4h/projects/art-get-started> we wanted to give you a few tips and suggestions on how to structure the project activities, learning experiences, presentation, and exhibit.

We all learn and perfect new skills through practice. A concert pianist only plays concerts by having practice again and again. Athletes compete and win only because they have practiced. This is true with visual arts. Art is visual communication. We develop art skills through, trial and error, stepping back and re-thinking the process. As you work through this project with youth, plan to repeat an activity multiple times to build their skills. The best product from each activity should be attached in the *Get Started in Art* book.

The activities in *Get Started in Art* follow the Experiential Learning Model of *Do, Share, Reflect, Generalize and Apply*. Youth participants should complete *Talking It Over* sections. As the adult helper, you can reinforce the project skill and life skill as the youth work through *Talking It Over*. Check the success indicator (See page 41) to ensure the youth are building skills.

Get Started in Art is just that – getting started. Idaho 4-H is supporting *Get Started in Art* with the optional *How to Teach Art to Children* book. The activities in both books focus on learning the elements and principles of design. The *4-H Art Matrix* has been developed so you can see where the two books work together. For example, use line activities in *Get Started in Art* (pages 12-15) to supplement line activities from *How to Teach Art* (pages 6-15 and Part Two as appropriate). Remember, art takes practice. So, try several ways to teach the same concept.

As the adult helper, stay focused on teaching the *elements* of design: line, form, color, shape, space and texture. Then help the youth put the elements together, thus applying the *principles* of design: balance, emphasis, pattern, repetition, movement, rhythm, proportion, variety, and unity. Use the *Idaho 4-H Elements and Principles of Design Card* when you gather for the art activities. We recommend each youth have his or her own card.

Use the art vocabulary (elements and principles) to enhance discussion and critiquing skills. If youth have a name for concepts then they are more likely to use and apply the concept. Each youth is unique. Therefore, no two art pieces should look the same. As the adult helper, you provide the guidance and parameter for the creative process, skill building and vocabulary development.

“Narrowing the parameters of a project while still requiring each student to produce a unique result can be more conducive to fostering creativity than a seemingly open-ended lesson.”

Eileen S. Prince, *Art Matters* (2002).



Prepare to Create with Youth

- Prepare which activities the youth will do at each gathering.
- *Get Started in Art* provides additional art activities, pages 29-37.
- The summary of learning outcome and success indicators will assist you in staying focused on art skill building and the critiquing process. (See page 41.)
- Before leading the youth, practice the activity multiple times. You may find different teaching strategies to use with your unique group of youth.
- Think about the creative process and the instructions you will give. Clear directions help youth understand the concepts and process before they practice and experiment.
- Focus on individual skill building, not conformity in the artwork.
- If you demonstrate the process, go through all the steps before the youth start. This will set parameters that guide the youth thinking and actions.
- Remind youth of being respectful.
- Cover all safety rules at every gathering.
- Practice the critiquing process with the youth. *When* all youth are comfortable, you may direct the critiquing process with each youth in front of the group. Youth should not critique other youth's work as they do not have the knowledge, vocabulary nor skills to be constructive.
- It is a good idea to have reading books or puzzles on hand for youth who work quickly or become easily bored. Establish the rule of being respectful while others work. Offering quiet activities off to the side of the group fosters a positive environment.

Logistics of Doing Art

Although we cannot always pick an 'art studio' to work in we can structure the work environment to help the youth stay focused on the creative process.

- Use tables and chairs so that youth can share supplies in the center.
- Place common supplies (pencils, crayons, markers, scissors, brushes, etc.,) in a basket for small group sharing.
- Water cups need to be weighted enough not to tip over and large enough for several youth to share one cup. If no water is available in the room, set up a clean water bucket as the source and have a dump bucket ready.
- Have a drying space as needed.
- Have paper towels on the table in a plastic shoe box.
- Have clean-up bucket and sponges ready. All youth should do the clean-up as part of the activity.
- A sketchbook for each youth is good for practicing and capturing ideas.
- Have a portfolio (construction paper and masking tape 18" x 24") for each youth. Youth can take portfolios home after each gathering or store them in a large plastic container. Use the portfolio for all works.
- The best artwork goes into the *Get Started* book. Keep others works in the portfolio and use to show skill growth.



Art Rules

- Respect others, always.
- No touching others artwork. As the adult helper, make suggestions verbally or by demonstration on a separate artwork. Avoid doing art for the youth, even if he or she asks.
- Show and share, but each youth should complete his or her own work.
- Accidents happen and one youth might drip paint of another's canvas. Ask the youth to find solutions, or ask for help. Retaliation is not acceptable.
- No one may destroy another's work.
- Destroying one's own work is negative. Ask the youth to set it aside for later discussion. Use every work to learn and develop skills.
- Label works with names at the start so there is no confusion about individual ownership at the end.
- Title and date all final artwork.

Learning Experiences:

These experiences may be worked into a presentation. (See page 6.)

- Visit with a local artist and learn how she or he creates artwork.
- Explore how crayons, colored pencils or paints are made.
- Visit an art museum and select one or two works to explore – media, artist, history, culture, etc.
- Check out the art at a local college/university, library or municipal building.
- Compare and discuss art in children story books.
- Create a group artwork using a large poster or paper. Pick one theme for all to share.
- Tour an art supply store and compare different pencils, markers, paint brushes. Purchase several and experiment how they can be used.
- Tour a commercial paint store and learn how paint is mixed and how colors are created.
- Take a walk and see how many shades of green, blue, brown, etc. there are. Document in the sketchbook.
- Explore another culture's art. Learn about the style, historical period, techniques, etc.
- Check out the architectural styles of buildings in your community. Where do you see similarities and differences?
- Visit with a farrier, woodworker or metalsmith and see how she or he uses the elements and principles of design in artworks.
- Practice the critiquing process on public artworks.

Leadership/Civic/Community Experience: (See page 6.)

- Curate a groups art exhibit - a celebration of learning, communicating artist's ideas, culturally relevant; learn organizational, logistic and promotional skills; enhance with artist statement (typed or audio) and social media component.
- Create a community mural service project.
- Organize and host a family art night.
- Make a walking art tour of your community noting murals, artworks and sculptures.
- Design and print invitation/cards/wrapping paper for a community group to use.



Critiquing to Build Critical Thinking Skills

Critiquing your own artwork is necessary to grow in skill, understanding, thinking and technique. With *Get Started in Art* activities we recommend each youth critique his or her own work. It is fine to practice critiquing public artworks. However, during the first years, stay focused on individual self-reflection rather than allowing youth to critique each other.

Structure the critiquing process and avoid random, unconnected commentary. We recommend using the four-step process developed by Edmund Burke Feldman (1923-). As the youth work through the process, use the concepts and vocabulary they have learned. Reference the Elements and Principles of Design Card.

Step 1 – Describe what you see. Write a list of elements used, materials use, or the medium, date created, artist name (if not your own).

Step 2 – Analysis how is the artwork organized or the elements used? What principles are applied? What is the subject matter?

Step 3 – Interpret the content or meaning based on steps 1 – 2. Do the objects, elements and principles work together? What is the artist’s statement and what is the evidence for the statement?

Step 4 – Evaluate or Judge – What do you think of the artwork and why? Is it saying what the artist intended? Is it successful? Could the artwork be improved and how?

Additionally, have the youth compare his or her first attempt with the final product. Can he or she see growth in skill, understanding, knowledge and technique?



Resources

Project materials and supporting documents (4-H Art Matrix, 4-H Project Requirements, etc.):

- Idaho 4-H Get Started in Art page:
 - <http://www.uidaho.edu/extension/4h/projects/art-get-started>

Portfolio (optional):

- Speaks to what the youth has learned.
- Provides a platform for the youth to present his or her best work and reflections on that work.
- Presents evidence of how the youth developed his or her work throughout the learning process.
- Helps keep artwork organized and contained in one location.

<http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/supporting-individual-needs/portfolios-assessment-through-the-arts>

Learning to Critique Your Artwork:

- *Teaching Students to Critique*, <https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/tipsheets/student-critique.aspx>
- *Critiquing Others Artwork: Art Critiques Made Easy, Tips for leading classroom discussion about works of art*, <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/tipsheets/art-crit-made-easy>
- *Do Tell: Giving Feedback to Your Students. Seven ways to respond to your student's creative works*, <http://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/how-to/supporting-individual-needs/do-tell-giving-feedback>