



What do I do....



What do I do when a child complains "I can't draw!"?

Give this child plenty of other options and simply avoid "drawing lessons" for awhile. There's plenty to do without drawing. Introduce clay sculpture, woodwork and 3-dimensional collage (assemblage) with glue and found objects. Try print-making, fiber arts and collage. Stay away from the "pressure" of pencil on paper until the creative young artist naturally dives in again.



What do I do when a child is frustrated because their painting isn't perfect?

The young perfectionist is often disappointed when their work doesn't look like a photograph or some adult-made example. Introduce this student to abstract art, folk art and primitive art traditions...art forms in which the young artist can excel without being representational. Also be sure to present examples and models that are child made - not adult made.



What do I do when a child won't stop working and is messing up their perfectly good painting or drawing?

Hey - take a break and come back later. This child is doing exactly what he or she should be doing - enjoying the process of making art and being correctly unconcerned with the "product."



What do I do when a child only draws tiny, tense pictures?

Introduce a "quick draw" game, where the time spent on a drawing is limited to just a minute or less. There won't be enough time to be analytical about the drawing, so the child can switch into creative mode. Try drawing with eyes closed...or drawing on a sketchbook balanced on top of the head. Try giant drawings with big pieces of chalk on large sheets of newsprint taped to the wall. But whatever exciting exercises you introduce, always keep it fun for the child.



What do I do when a child is embarrassed by people who ask "What's your drawing supposed to be?"

Give young artists the power of the word "design." Instead of apologizing that their drawing of a cat doesn't quite look like a cat, the child can proudly answer such common (but thoughtless) inquiries with "It's a design!"

What do I do when an older student thinks that art is too "babyish."

Put away the crayons and tempera, and treat this student to some grown-up art materials...a set of technical pens and a hardbound sketchbook, an acrylic or oil paint set with quality brushes and canvas. The child may be delighted to leave the "kid stuff" behind and head off into a new world of art explorations.

