

Get Smart with Art

IMPORTANT POINTS TO REMEMBER

1. **Never remove prints from the building** under any circumstances. When removing a print from the flat file to take to a classroom, it must be signed out as to its location. The sign-out sheet is located on top of the print file cabinet. Please replace the print in the proper drawer and sign it back in.
2. **Do not remove file curriculum information from the building** unless you make your own copy of information from the file. When you are finished with your copy, you may want to add it to the file for the next person to use (instead of making their own copy). Please return originals back to the file IMMEDIATELY (same day).
3. **Make copies after 2:00** (any day) whenever possible. The aides leave at that time, and we are not interrupting their work.
4. **Start on Time!** Give yourself plenty of time to gather materials prior to teaching your class (at least 15 minutes). Every minute you are late cuts into your class time, as the students are on a schedule. Teachers appreciate starting on time. It takes time to pump paint into the trays that kids will share.
5. **End on Time.** Get permission in advance if you would like extra time. Sometimes classes are on a schedule and need to be somewhere else at the designated ending time.
6. **Never pour paint back into the original container** (it will smell like rotten eggs), so **use sparingly** from the start! When “pouring paint” into ice cube trays (to share between 4 to 6 students), and be sure to clean them well after use. Or save egg cartons to use and then throw away. Suggestion: use one drop of dishwashing liquid in each paint cup to help it wash out of clothes more easily.
7. Make sure we still have plenty of the type of supplies that you plan to use (one week prior). We tried to avoid this scenario whenever possible, but note if anyone else is teaching during the same day and time as you are (different grade) and verify that they are not using the same supplies that you are (or that there is plenty for both). **This is especially true if you and the teacher have had to reschedule your time!** MAKE SURE you let GSWA Coordinator know if you and the teacher want to change the lesson time. Also, for some of the “alternate” project options, there may be materials that you need to have Coordinator order for you.
8. Also note after your lesson if any supply shortage has been created. Let Coordinator know what needs to be ordered or replaced.
9. **Feel free to have kids sit on the floor** to view the print: getting out of their desks can improve the dynamics and their willingness to participate, plus they can usually get a better view.
10. If kids are not responding to your questions, remind them that “there is no wrong answer” experienced volunteers tell us that after that, you usually can’t get them to *stop* talking!

11. **Be familiar with the questions and the print.**...often, you may generate more interest by *not* saying the title of the print or artist when you first start, or by *not* showing your own project example before they begin their art project. Use your own judgment.
12. **Use the questions.** This is the heart of the program and the lessons mean nothing without them: the projects become “arts and crafts” without the lesson. You may not use every question but half to $\frac{3}{4}$ of the questions should be utilized. If you don’t have time for a project, ask the teacher if you can come back another day to do the project: don’t make time for the project at the expense of the lesson. Things you should be talking about: **movement, shapes, patterns, rhythms (repetition), feelings** the print evokes, **when/where** it could be, **horizon lines, time of day/year, noises** they could imagine hearing, **opinions** about whether they like something or **how it would look if it was different, warm vs cool colors, composition, effect of colors** the artist chose, **diagonal/vertical/horizontal**, the **style** (specifics) and examples, **whys** (why did he choose this subject? why did he paint it like that? why is this here? rhetorical questions to make them think about the print), **balance, what stands out, what do they see first?**
13. **Use your head.** Some facts about artists or prints may not be appropriate for the age group, or students in general. *Not everything has to be shared.* Some artists led controversial lives (alcohol or painkiller addiction before knowledge of such illness was available). Some artists did nudes, so be careful before you recommend a website----explore it fully to know what links are available: some parents could be offended. Other artists, in earlier centuries, used avenues such as art or fairy tales to make political statements or criticisms about the government or ruler of the era. Be familiar with the material beforehand and gauge the depth of what you will discuss.....
14. **Rescheduling policy. IMPORTANT:** We had a few cases where an art lesson had to be cancelled because of previously unannounced circumstances: a school assembly, snow day, etc. As long as the teacher and parent volunteer work out an agreeable alternate time, there is only one very important thing they need to consider when re-scheduling: **make sure that no other class is using the print at the time that you are thinking of rescheduling** your day, time, print/lesson, etc.....so make sure you tell the coordinator so she will know if someone is using the print on a day other than when the Master Schedule indicates (she will catch any overlaps or conflicts).
15. **Doing a project other than what is in the folder.....**please take a look at the other projects for the year and for the grades that follow. Sometimes people are eager to do a certain kind of project and may not realize that it exists for another project later in the year or for the following grade's lessons. In fact, for those lessons that follow, the project may be not only more appropriate but also the *only* real and fitting option. It is not that what is in the folder is sacred.....it is just that a lot of effort was made to not duplicate the projects so that you would be met with comments such as "...but we did that last year (or last lesson)..." and the kids and teachers end up feeling like our program is redundant/repetitive. Also, some of the lessons build on lessons that the kids will have had in the past, so that later, they will have a better understanding on how to create a more complicated lesson. This may not be particularly obvious as you are wondering why a particular project has been chosen to go with a particular print. The real "guts" of the lesson is really the appreciation of the art work and the style. We appreciate the eagerness of everyone to get so involved, and welcome additional projects---we just want to suggest that you look at the other lessons and projects that will be coming your way, to make your job easier in the long run. Also, don't try to “make” a project “fit” the lesson instead of the other way around (square peg in a round hole). Tip: if you got the project out of Family Fun magazine (or similar), it probably does not belong in this program.

16. **Using the Library(s):** Added dimension....use art to encourage reading: go to our school library and see what books are available on your artist, especially books written FOR CHILDREN. You may be surprised at the number of books available right under the same roof----and the students will be too! Check the books out from your school library for an hour to take into the classroom (*use them to show other works that the same artist has done*), so that at the end of the lesson, you can give the students a "visual" of what books are in the school library that they can check out if they want to get more of what you are teaching them. Our library has a tracking system for what types of books are checked out, and if they have a high demand for certain types of books, they will try to get more of those types. You never know how art might enhance reading, or a child's interest to pick up a book.....Obviously, there are also great books at the O'Fallon Public Library too, although not all kids use this resource. But if they know what is there & available to them, they may make the trip.
17. **Web Links:** There are great links on the website that would enhance the lesson (and make it more interesting to the kids). In some cases, they are even games they can play or other prints that they can look at by the same artist. Sometimes I make a handout so they can look them up at home, and sometimes I reserve the computer lab and let them explore the site under my direction.
18. **Suggest related projects** for teachers (that the students would do before or after the lesson): poetry, stories, etc.
19. **Inspiration:** There are many great books at the O'Fallon City Library.
20. **No siblings** should be present for the lesson.
21. For nervous volunteers:
Q: *"I am nervous that I will stink at teaching, either run over the time limit or the opposite, run out of things to say. Ahh, more appreciation for the job those real teachers have to do, day in and day out!"*
A: *"Try not to look at it as "teaching", but as **sharing**. The kids don't really care much about what you say, they're much more interested in what you've brought for them to see! You will find that they'll do most of the talking. You are there to help direct them in what they are seeing. If you just act like you are having fun (even if you aren't!), then they will have fun regardless of what you do or say!"*
22. Most importantly: **find a substitute** well in advance if you can't teach your class.
23. **Please email any comments** or suggestions or helpful hints that you want to pass on to other volunteers. Let the Coordinator know of any concerns or problems you encounter in the classroom, during the lesson, the content of the lesson, or supplies. We appreciate any and all feedback on how it's going (good or bad).....it helps us improve the program.
24. **Have a good time** with this work. The teachers and students really enjoy the program! Thanks for all your help! **The appreciation of art is a great gift that we are giving the children of our school that will be with them all their lives.**