

# Handprints



## Happy New Year!



Hello Co-op members,

January 16, 2012

I hope that you all enjoyed your holiday break and have returned to school well rested and full of enthusiasm. It is hard for me to believe that half the school year is over already. I want to thank all our volunteers who have given their talents to our fall and winter oriented events. A special thanks goes to Kathy Pantolin and her committee for a terrific Dad's Day and a special thanks to Priya King and Tiffany Rouech for their work at the Hometown Holidays celebration. And finally, thanks to our very creative dramatic play committee for another inspiring playscape in the 3's and 4's room. The Co-op is so fortunate to have such committed parents and is made great through your efforts.

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Coming up in the spring, we look forward to Picture Day for the children and our big Musical/Art Show/Auction extravaganza. There will be no school on President's Weekend (February 17-20) and no school on March 14. Please mark your calendar with these dates.

Now that snow is falling, please remember to send your child with boots, snow pants, hats and mittens or gloves for outdoor play. Also, don't forget to check the Lost and Found. It is overflowing with items. You may find things you didn't even know were lost!

As always, please contact us if you have any questions, concerns or suggestions.

Cooperatively Yours,  
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## Music Notes



The Young 5's and the 4's will soon begin the Winter semester of Music Together! Before long, we will be singing and dancing to the "Bells" collection. Music Together is a research based, comprehensive music program for all children birth-Kindergarten. Part of what makes MT so satisfying from a teaching perspective is that every semester's songs, components and activities have a purpose to optimize our child's development. After listening to your CD's at home you may wonder about the following:

**1. Why are there several songs only sung on nonsense syllables, such as "Doo" and "La?"**

These are referred to as "Songs Without Words" or SWOWS. Language is much more emphasized in our culture than music, so removing the need for processing language from a song allows for a solely musical experience for our children. This can help musical development catch up with language development. Normally, the two competences should develop simultaneously. Every lesson includes at least two SWOWS.

**Interesting Fact:** Research is now showing that singing and music help a child acquire language faster and better than simply an enriched language environment!

**2. What are those silly echo patterns that occur after some of the songs?**

You may have noticed the Rhythm and Tonal patterns that occur after several of the songs. Most simply, these are the building blocks of a song. Children can learn basic melodic and rhythmic structure of our music system by imitating these basic patterns and making up some of their own. Don't fast forward through these....the Rhythm and Tonal patterns are frequently the first things a child will sing accurately. Every lesson includes a set of Rhythm and Tonal patterns.

I look forward to beginning the "Bells" collection.

Happy New Year!!

Tara Vesprini



## Think About It: Critical Thinking

(From the Scholastic Parents website)

**Use these tips to encourage your child's critical thinking skills.**

Critical thinking has become a buzzword in education. In the past, the emphasis in classrooms has been on imparting information and content — the times tables or the capitals of the United States, for example. In recent years, however, there's been a shift toward teaching *critical thinking*, a skill that elevates thinking beyond memorization into the realm of analysis and logic.

Put another way, critical thinking is about knowing how to think, not what to think. Teachers use a number of techniques to help students learn critical thinking, starting as early as kindergarten and ramping up especially in 2nd grade and beyond. Below are a few of the methods educators employ; you can try them at home to help your child become a critical thinker.



- **Critical thinking: Ask open-ended questions.** Asking questions that don't have one right answer encourages children to respond creatively without being afraid of giving the wrong answer.
- **Critical thinking: Categorize and classify.** Classification plays an important role in critical thinking because it requires identification and sorting according to a rule, or set of rules, that kids must discover, understand, and apply. If you play classification games at home, be sure to follow up the activity with questions about the similarities and differences between the groups. You can sort everything from dirty laundry to Legos to produce to doll clothes to promote critical thinking.
- **Critical thinking: Work in groups.** In a group setting, students are exposed to the thought processes of their peers. Thus, they can begin to understand how others think and that there are multiple ways of approaching problems — not just one correct way.
- **Critical thinking: Make decisions.** Help your child consider pros and cons, but don't be afraid to let her make a wrong choice. Then evaluate the decision later. Ask your child, "How do you feel about your decision? What would you do differently next time?"
- **Critical thinking: Find patterns.** Whatever you're doing, whether it's going to the park or watching television, encourage your child to look for patterns or make connections for critical thinking practice. For example, relate a favorite television show to a real-life situation. Or, while driving in the car, have your child identify different shapes in roads signs and in the windows and roofs of passing houses.

It might be tempting to pass off the critical thinking buzz as just another fad in education. However, most teachers disagree. It's still important for your child to know his multiplication tables, but it's just as vital for him to know how and when to use them.

Debbie

## Quotes from our preschoolers...

### What is the best gift you have received?

"I got chocolate bars with marshmallows inside. They looked Santa. I also got a princess scooter." ~ Libby

"A pizza for Christmas and there were presents too!" ~ Iris

"A doggie that had a little doctor set then another one. One was fluffy, named Mackenzie. Jonah let me keep two of his baby bears that was blue." ~ Mia

"Polar Express train." ~ Christian

"A pillow pet. A bug it's red. I sleep with it." ~ Ellie

"Wuggle pets. You wind it up and the Wuggles come to life." ~ Brynara

"T-Rex. He talks. He roars and talks. And he walks. He's as big as an igloo." ~ Beckett

### What is a holiday tradition that your family enjoys?

"I like camping at Halloween. I make snowballs too." ~ Hailey

"Open presents. I went to Costco and got a lemonade. I went to Chicago. I watched Home Alone." ~ Emma

"We made cookies. But Daddy doesn't make cookies. He makes rum balls. I don't like them." ~ Tavi

"Cookies. Snowmans. We make them for Santa. I eat one, my brother eats one, and we give the rest to Santa." ~ Jacob

"We eat waffles and then open our presents." ~ Chala

"Opening gifts." ~ Kira

"Put up our Christmas tree." ~ Linus

Opening presents when Santa comes." ~ Josh



## Quotes continued...

**If you could do anything that you wanted in the snow, what would it be?**

“Make snowballs and paint them black. They would be cannonballs.” ~ Richard

“Make a house.” ~ Abe

“Make a snowman and make it rainbow colors.” ~ Lindsey

“I would build a snow kitty.” ~ Megan

“I would make a shirt out of snow.” ~ Jackson

“Make a huge, huge snow monster.” ~ Owen

“I would make a snow angel and a giant snowman.” ~ Ethan



## Fundraising Updates...

After our silhouettes event, we have raised almost \$2,600! Our silhouettes were a huge success, raising \$582 for our school. The artist was here for 1 1/2 days and her schedule was full. The feedback was excellent and everyone seems very happy with their silhouettes! What a timeless and beautiful piece of art. Thanks to those of you that helped those two days go very smoothly. Our fundraising goal is \$5,000 so onward we go.



Next up is our Annual Auction which takes place at our **Musical and Art Show on March 13**. The Ways and Means Committee has started soliciting donations and the money we raise from the auction will benefit our scholarship fund and our general operating expenses. If you have a talent or product you would like to donate to the auction, or know something or someone we should solicit, you can contact Nichole Warriner at ([nspangle@yahoo.com](mailto:nspangle@yahoo.com)) or 433-9384. The generosity of our membership continues to be amazing.

If anyone wanted a Co-op cookbook (sold at the General Membership Meeting), we found that we still have some. See Nichole Warriner if you would like to purchase one for \$5.00.

Nichole

Dear Parents,

Below is an article that discusses young children and their artistic development. I thought this would be especially appropriate with the 3's and 4's focusing on art and color during January and February, and with the upcoming art show for all in March (Tuesday, March 13). It is always helpful to be reminded that art is a process, not a product!

Courtney



## INDIANAPOLIS COUNCIL OF PRESCHOOL COOPERATIVES

### ***THIS IS ART?***

Excerpts from an article by Gloria Washington

"Mommy! Mommy! Look at my pretty picture," greets your three-year-old with outstretched hands. Taking the gift, you see that it is a large muddy sheet of paper. This is art? What shall I say? What should I do with it?

#### **THIS IS ART?**

This muddy sheet is a page in your child's story of his creative art development. Each time he has an art experience he adds another page until, one day, you discover your child's story has completely unfolded.

Saving some of his work will help you appreciate his growth. Together, you and he can make the book. Let him help choose and put together his story. As you turn the pages you will note the changes and realize the growth that was occurring.

At one through three years of age, he was at the scribble stage. You observe the difference even a few months make in his scribbles. As you turn the page to the next chapter, you find he is making circles and triangles. He is four and making many pictures and adding more and more pages.

One day, when he is about five or six, you recognize what he has drawn. Yes, all this is art!

#### **HOW DO I HELP MY CHILD?**

Buy your child her own large crayons, scissors and paste. Give her scraps of ribbon, fabric and paper. Give her a corner in the kitchen to do her busy work while you get dinner ready. Your child can converse with you at the same time she is exploring the combination of art materials in a creative way.

## *THIS IS ART? continued*

### WHAT DO I SAY?

When your child brings you a picture, there are times you won't have to say anything. Honest comments are best. For example: "Is this for me?" "You used bright red on this one." Let's put this on our refrigerator."

Never downgrade a child's art. Sometimes hard concentration and work have been put into a single picture, Please don't say: "What is it?" "Let's put this in the waste basket. We have plenty of pictures up now."

### NO ART PROJECT TODAY

Today there was no picture for Mommy. A little disappointed, you drive home. As you drive she tells you about the brick house she built with a friend. She will remember this experience but, she could not bring it home.

Art takes many forms; cutting, pasting, watching, painting, constructing. Each child develops in her own way. Each year your child will be exposed to many forms of art. Remember, each experience is a page in her developmental story.

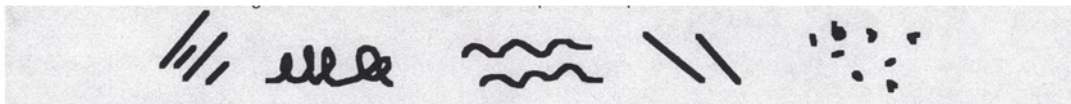
## INDIANAPOLIS COUNCIL OF PRESCHOOL COOPERATIVES

### STAGES OF CHILDREN'S ART

(Based on information found in The Psychology of Children's Art by Kellogg and O'Dell.)

#### Stage 1 - Scribbling (Roughly ages 2-3)

Includes some 20 basic scribbles, such as vertical lines, diagonals, circles, curves, dots, waves, etc. These "placement" patterns are learned by the age of three and are never forgotten. The most interesting aspect of the scribbling stage is that a child will begin to see possibilities in his art after he has begun. He doesn't start out with a picture or plan in mind.



#### Stage 2 - Outlines (Roughly ages 3-4)

She will remember all the implied shapes from the basic scribbles, and one day will outline a shape such as a square or oval. The child will not define her shape by calling it a letter or a house. The pleasure is in the accomplishment of outlining a basic shape.

Circles	Odd Shapes
Squares	X's
Rectangles	Crosses
Triangles	



Receptive adults should comment truthfully on the drawing such as, "I see some yellow triangles on your paper," rather than "that is a beautiful mountain."

## *THIS IS ART? continued*

### Stage 3 - Design (Roughly ages 3-5)

Combining basic outlines is design. When a 3-year-old discovers the power of outlining shapes, he very happily goes crazy combining and repeating these shapes into designs. Children find favorite combinations of designs, like a circle on top of a square. They like to repeat favorites, over and over, varying colors or size, etc. Children's art is very much alike in this stage.



### Stage 4 - Mandates, Suns, and Radials (Roughly ages 3-5)

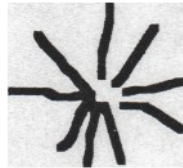
Mandala - a large area is divided into even parts.



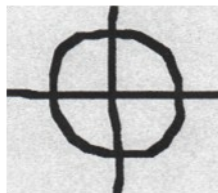
Sun - radiating lines touch or cross an outlined shape.



Radial - lines radiate from a central point.



Drawing mandalas is one of the oldest art forms in human history. They are found in prehistoric drawings and on the wall of caves. Three-year-olds learn to divide outlines. Soon the center lines disappear, leaving only the radials

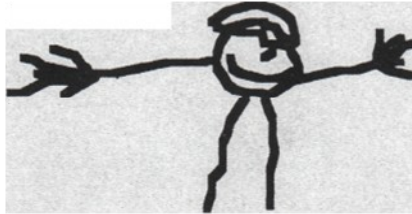


When a child has conquered the radial sun lines, she has progressed into a very exciting art process the drawing of people.

## *THIS IS ART? continued*

### **Stage 5 - People** (Roughly ages 4-5)

Around the age of four, children begin to concentrate on drawing people. From the sun, comes the face. The face is usually huge. Rays come out of all sides of a person. Children try to find a balance. They are **not yet interested in human likeness** (nor should the adult pressure along these lines) but rather in pleasing designs. Hats are often added to give balance, not because they are representative of people.



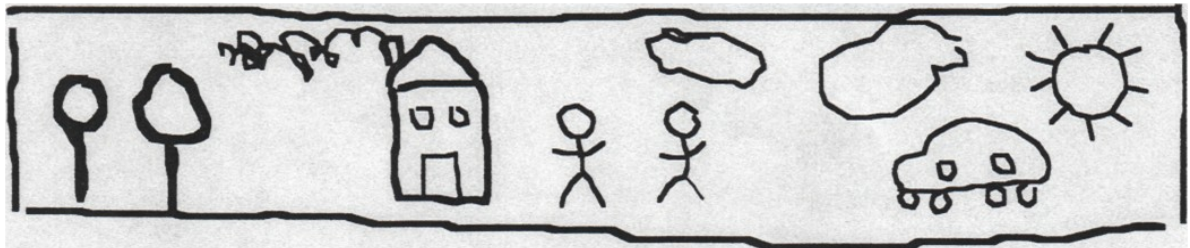
### **Stage 6 - Almost Pictures** (Roughly ages 4-6)

Animal drawings are modified humans. The animal has two ears on top of the sun-head and stands on two legs (radials). Flowers are circle on stems, trees are circles on rectangles. Cars are house on wheels, etc. Labels are often supplied by eager adults. Left alone, children will draw representationally when they are ready. Children all over the world draw alike through this stage. Cultural differences are not a factor until the next stage.



### **Stage 7 - Pictorial** (Roughly ages 5-7)

The pictures tell a story. Collections of objects appear; it is still the child's world and may not be entirely realistic (like 4 suns in the sky) but is representative of what the child wants to show. Control of crayons and paint is much more improved.



About the age of seven, many children lose interest in art because adults prod them to be neater or more accurate. Remember the magic of color and imagination a child brings to his paper. Purple trees and wild looking flowers are real art. Keep the doors open. Accept what you see. Rather than say "But cows don't have wings," say "I see you've drawn wings. Wow!"

Date and keep samples of these stages. What a lovely collection of your child's art development.

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### **PLAY. LEARN. GROW.**

*At Chelsea Children's Cooperative Preschool, we believe it is our responsibility to provide multifaceted opportunities for preschoolers to explore, experiment, and grow in a safe, nurturing, and age appropriate arena. Valuing the family as a unit as well as the individuality and worth of each of its members is our philosophy and practical approach to preschool education.*