



Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

**Dr. Eric Jackman Institute of Child Study Laboratory School
Visual Arts Program, 2022-2023**

Early Years and Primary Grades

Philosophy

Children are born artists, and their time in Art should be a joyful process of discovery, self-expression, and the broadening of ideas and techniques. Hands-on experience is emphasized in the studio each year, and what may otherwise be seen as mistakes are instead looked at as creative opportunities. Each project is designed to further our students' understanding of different elements of art and design and their applications. Studio time is planned with an eye to the individual nature of each student group and their developmental readiness.

In keeping with our constructivist approach, student ideas play an essential role in the direction of our projects, and creative problem-solving skills are among the most valued. Inquiry topics explored within the grade classroom will be incorporated in our art wherever possible. Inquiry and knowledge-building pedagogy are also employed, and are fundamental to our process. It is of primary importance to promote a stress-free, supportive, and celebratory environment in our Art studio.

Class Routine

As with all classrooms, students in the Art Studio learn and practice creating and communicating responsibly and respectfully in a collaborative space. Classes will often begin with a brief story, activity, or discussion before students embark on their exploration of technique and media. Wherever possible, there will be a choice of materials offered, allowing the students to express feelings and ideas through different media, and set the direction for their own mastery journeys. If students finish early, they will either continue to the next stage of the project, proceed to a more open-ended exploration of media at hand, or enjoy one of the many art-themed books or activities in the reading area. Each class has a developmentally appropriate clean-up routine. Students wear masks and sanitize hands at the beginning and the end of each class, and reduced numbers at each table allow for social distancing in the work space.

Overview of Early Years and Primary Art Classes

Nursery students enjoy Art in their classroom twice a week for 30 minutes. There, I set up an exploration at one of the tables, and the students can choose to explore when they are ready. Our JK and the SK students come to the Art Studio once a week for 45 minutes. In early years classes, our goal is continued discovery and age-appropriate mastery of different techniques and artistic vocabulary.

Classes in Grades 1, 2, and 3 visit once a week for one hour. In these grades, the students continue exploring new skills and improve upon techniques previously practiced. There is increased independence in project direction, choice of media, and room responsibilities.

In all Early Years and Primary classes we explore different elements of art and principles of design throughout the year while working in collage, drawing, painting, sculpture, construction, and printmaking.

Students are encouraged to express themselves through their creations. It is hoped that their time spent engaged in their art will inspire connections between themselves and their friends, their family, and their wider world. In order to facilitate these connections, the Art curriculum prioritizes BIPOC artists and art from diverse and marginalized communities around the world, examining their great diversity and very important contributions to our landscape, and emphasizing that everyone has a place, and belongs, in the Art Studio.

The Early Years and Primary classes have begun studying line, colour, and shape through printmaking, painting, and drawing, and beginning lessons in colour theory. At the beginning of our learning journey, I find myself very excited when wondering what this year will hold for our students.

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Junior Grades

Philosophy

Children are born artists, and their time in Art should be a joyful process of discovery, self-expression, and the broadening of ideas and techniques. Hands-on experience continues to be emphasized in the junior years, and what may otherwise be seen as mistakes are instead looked at as creative opportunities and chances to grow. Each project aims to further the students' understanding of the different elements of art and design, and their applications.

In keeping with our constructivist approach, student ideas play an essential role in the direction of our projects, and creative problem-solving is among the most important skills developed. Inquiry topics explored within the grade classroom are incorporated in our art wherever possible. Inquiry pedagogy and the knowledge-building principles are also employed, and are fundamental to our process. It is of primary importance to promote a stress-free, supportive, and celebratory environment in our Art studio.

Class Routine

As in all classrooms, students in the Art Studio practice working and communicating responsibly and respectfully in a collaborative space. Classes will often begin with a story, activity, or discussion before students embark on their own journey with the chosen media and techniques. Whenever possible, students will be given a choice in media, allowing them to explore elements and principles within areas they wish to achieve mastery. If students finish their class challenge early, they will either continue to the next stage of the project, proceed to a more open-ended exploration of media at hand, continue with an ongoing personal project, or enjoy one of the many art-themed books, puzzles, or games in the reading area. Each class has a developmentally appropriate clean-up routine. Students wear masks and sanitize hands at the beginning and the end of each class, and reduced numbers at each table allow for social distancing in the work space.

Overview of Junior Grade Art Classes

The students in Grades 4, 5, and 6 come to the art studio in half-groups for an hour each week. Throughout the year we will be furthering our understanding of the elements and principles of art in activities that will include collage, drawing, painting, sculpture, construction, printmaking, and photography. New materials and techniques, and contextual links to a variety of artists will inform these explorations. Environmental and social justice themes are regularly explored in the Art Studio, as students continue to make sense of the world around them in a variety of ways. As we notice more and more of what exists around us, we will employ the artist's way of seeing to enable us to examine things more closely and deeply. We will also continue to be mindful of how our art supplies are sourced, and strive to reduce our impact on our natural world.

As well as the curriculum-informed skills and techniques that are explored in the junior grades, the Art program prioritizes BIPOC artists and art from diverse and marginalized communities around the world, examining their great diversity and very important contributions to our landscape. We strive to ensure that everyone feels included and reflected in the Art Studio.

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