

## **ART PROGRAM**

### **Elementary Art Program: Idie Weinsoff, Art Teacher**

#### **Kindergarten Overview and Goals:**

The kindergarten program strives to keep “play” and experimentation a big part of students’ first art experience. Students are provided with guidelines and are allowed a lot of latitude in discovering aspects of art.

- Teach children how to hold a pencil and how to use a paintbrush.
- Crayon rubbing of various textures to learn that texture is one of the Elements of Art, a concept explored in every grade level.
- Primary colors and how every other color can be made from these three.
- Learning how to look at art, and using the elements of art to create a composition, using a variety of lines and shapes.
- Handling of scissors and glue to create a collage.
- Focusing on color and shape, and how color can create mood.
- Students experiment with clay, and learn basic pinch pot and coil method.
- Students learn early on that the art room is really the Visual Problem Solving Room—where they make choices and decisions that will affect the outcome of a composition. What is a cool color? What is a warm color? Which do they want to convey a mood or emotion?

**First Grade Overview and Goals:** Students are introduced to the language of the visual arts and to the study of Art History. They are learning how to look at the world around them. Students come with a wide array of experiences. A goal is to make art a positive experience for every student, not just the ones who show an innate talent.

- Looking closely versus simply seeing, especially with the art of sketching.
- Continue to study the Elements of Art, focusing on line, color, shape, form, and texture.
- Students learn to use color to portray mood and emotion.
- Students develop art vocabulary.
- Students conduct a study of Jazz and an artist, Stuart Davis, who was influenced by Jazz music and by the city around him.
- Students explore a variety of media for their work (watercolor, ceramics, tempera, etc.), as well as projects in 2-D and 3-D.
- Patterns, symmetry and composition are a focus.

**Second Grade Overview and Goals:** Color is a motivating subject, and second graders really enjoy experimenting with it on their Gumball Machines. They practice making secondary colors using only primaries, and as they mix all the primaries they create a neutral grey to use for the base of the machine. Students continue to study warm and cool colors, and use this knowledge to create a composition that reflects a mood or emotion. They use watercolors to create an “Indian Paintbrush” flower, keeping their colors transparent. We compare this to the opacity of tempera. Other topics include:

- Looking at world architecture to create a beautiful Russian Night Scene, utilizing the Elements of Art and Principles of Design. They consider space and size, and how to place and overlap objects to create a pleasing composition.
- Working with clay, thinking about the way ceramic objects are viewed in the round.
- Students create “fantastical fish”, making choices of glazes and patterns.

- They create an oil pastel animal project as well as 3-D beasts made out of junk- and papier mache.
- At the end of the year students practice using the language of the discipline in a “critique” in which they choose and share one piece of art from their portfolios.

**Third Grade Overview and Goals:** Students are introduced to the Principles of Art with a focus on rhythm, or repeating shapes and colors. Movement, another Principle of Art, is also introduced and students apply this knowledge to many projects, including a chalk and glue study of flowers in a round format. The idea of movement and moving the eye around a composition is applied to their Barn study in oil pastel. Learning to create an opening for the eye to wander around the page is a sophisticated but important concept when designing a composition. They consider creating the illusion of space by utilizing one-point perspective and by including a foreground, middle ground, and background. Using these tips allows all students to attain a degree of success.

- Students continue to learn art history by studying Grant Wood and his unique depiction of rural America, as well as a favorite local artist, Tim Horn, who paints barns and structures in West Marin.
- Students continue to explore the Elements of Art when creating compositions. Third graders study their faces and learn some tricks of the trade to create believable self-portraits.
- They create Cardinals in the Snow, using different techniques of painting and collage on grey paper.
- They make “Petroglyphs” using Styrofoam “etching plates” replicating the symbols made by southwestern native peoples.
- They make a clay sculpture based on an organic form taking care to hollow out the form and make it visually pleasing from all vantage points.

**Fourth Grade Overview and Goals:** Fourth grade is filled with opportunities to demonstrate how art is connected to history, architecture, and science, and lessons are integrated into class studies in science and social studies.

- Students study birds (Amigos Alados) in their regular class, and so a few classes are devoted to the art of rendering birds. After practicing drawing birds, students create “Musantes,” or cigar box birds inspired by the painter, Ed Musante.
- Students create Mission collages using mathematical templates and rulers to complete an architectural rendering, and then building their missions with colored paper to look three-dimensional.
- Fourth graders create Wizards in clay. They use a combination of the slab method and simply building on with blobs of clay, forever scoring, slipping, and squeezing. They consider patterns and colors to make their wizard unique and attractive.

**Fifth Grade Overview and Goals:** Fifth graders are introduced to the Principles of design, and continue to learn about the Elements of Art when looking at art and making choices about their projects. They become true Visual Problem Solvers by experimenting with new materials and moving in new directions.

- Students study perspective, beginning with one-point perspective, and progressing toward two-point perspective.
- Pueblo Story tellers are a new project that aligns with the study of Native Americans. Students can keep these simple or really challenge themselves adding figures and detail.
- Mudcloths highlight the beauty of one form of folk art from Ghana and other African countries and is a way to integrate a unit on the colonies in early America, and the plight of the Africans whose forced labor kept the southern colonies humming.
- “Twisteez Wire” is a Calder’s Circus project. Students watch excerpts from the film on the Circus and then work to create figures in this new medium. Students find a new value for tossed away objects. Calder remarked on the sacredness of giving an old object a new function.
- Students make a spectacular Aboriginal Dreaming- an animal portrait consisting of patterns and colors. Students challenge themselves to create symmetrical patterns and textures, taking time to focus on the rendering of the animal.
- Students review the Principles of Art as they share chosen pieces from their portfolios, using the “language of the discipline” of visual arts.

**Eighth Grade Overview and Goals:** Eighth grade is the culmination of the Ross School art journey. Hopefully, mistakes became learning experiences, and basic art principles became part of the students’ repertoire. An overarching goal is for all students to develop a love and appreciation for the fine arts.

- Eighth graders continue to experiment with new materials, challenging themselves to find a variety of opportunities from “speedy-kut” black and white prints to the more tricky reduction print. Computer-generated art as well as pencil value studies are part of the eighth grade experience.
- Students are challenged to choose a public space and design a sculpture that will add spark to the area. They make a model of their sculpture using a medium of their choice.
- Students take on the role of a critic and comment on a current film, using the language of the visual arts.
- Using the technology of the *Pro-Create* program, students explore ways to “sketch” and “paint” learning the basics as well as special effects to enhance their compositions.
- Complex Color Wheels challenge students to use compasses, rulers, and templates to create their own color wheel, including secondary and tertiary colors in addition to tints and shades of all colors.
- Scratchboard art forces the student to think in reverse- making light marks on black instead of black on white.
- Students engage in a final critique session at the end of the year, using the language of the arts to support the choices they made on a specific piece from their portfolio.
- **Students are introduced to the local art community and encouraged to visit a local “Open Studio” in hopes of instilling a continued love of the arts.**

## **Middle School Art Program: Helene Clarke, MS Art Teacher**

### **Overview:**

The Ross Middle School Art Program endeavors to build upon the K-5 art program increasing independent expression and bridging the gap between elementary and high school.

Students are encouraged to express their ideas conceptually and creatively, and use the vocabulary of the visual arts to express their observations during mini critiques or 'check ins' at the beginning of each class. Many students discover or develop a high level of skill, artistic expression, or craftsmanship in a particular medium such as ceramics or photography. Children who may not have excelled in academics can find their niche and blossom.

**Program Goals:** The goal of middle school art is to have students articulate a new voice using the element of art and principles of design and to give an opportunity to expand their creativity by switching their thinking to the creative right side of the brain. Specific grade-level goals are outlined in the yearlong plan. A standards-based program aligned with the Visual Arts Content Standards for California includes the following:

- The Elements of Art and Principles of Design form the basis of all art projects The Elements of art are: line, space, form, color, texture and value. The Principles of Design are: balance, proportion, rhythm, emphasis and unity.
- Every art project begins as a concept or idea either from the past or something yet to be conceived.
- The intention of each project is to teach new skills using materials such as pencils, pen and ink, tempera, clay, watercolor, photography or found objects.
- Concepts taught are designed to guide students to think critically and 'out side the box thinking' is always encouraged.
- Embedded in each assignment is an opportunity for students to rigorously explore a new concept, think about life through a different lens and articulate the purpose of their choices.
- Peer to peer learning is encouraged through any given assignment.
- Product and process are of equal importance to the learner and respect and appreciation for all forms of art helps to develop communication skills and builds self-esteem.