

## Observation Tool:

# Visual Artists at Work

### Part 1. Observe your students working as artists!

### Take notes here

What choices are students making about their **body & space**? Notice how kids...

- move & physicalize while making visual art, or are still.
- work standing up, sitting down, turned toward or away from others.
- work in spaces that are chaotic, tidy, expansive or contained.

What can I learn from the **sound making** in the room? Notice how kids...

- talk or make sounds with each other and/or to themselves.
- talk about their artwork, story ideas or other topics that interest them.
- might be energized by the sounds in the room, or might need quiet.
- respond to soundscapes or music.

How are the kids **engaging their senses**? Notice how kids...

- might hum, make noises to themselves or make sounds with the art materials.
- For example: Enjoying the sound of ripping paper.
- might be engaged in their immediate sensory experience.
- For example: Enjoying the sensation of making dots.

How are my students **engaging with others**? Notice how kids...

- collaborate with a friend or group of peers, or work alone.
- discuss their work with peers and/or teachers.
- look at their peers' work and show their work to others.
- seek help or support from peers or teachers.

How are the kids using their independent art making **time**? Notice how kids...

- make decisions/choices quickly or slowly.
- take time before starting, finish early or want more time.

What seems to be their **process or flow**? Notice how kids...

- play with the materials to get ideas, or execute a plan for a product that they already have in their mind.
- take risks, or worry about perfection.

What surprised me about how I noticed my students were working?

What have I learned about my students as artists through observing how they choose to work?

# Visual Artists at Work

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## Part 2. Reflect on the choices your students are making as they engage in the artistic process.

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## Look for activities to support their work process & offer new ways of working.

**IF** they are using material exploration as inspiration or as a resource for developing their work...



**THEN** check out more [Explore & Describe Visual Arts lessons](#) to build on and support this way of working.

**IF** they are using their personal experiences, knowledge and/or identities as inspiration or a resource for developing their work...



**THEN** look for more opportunities to have kids apply their art making skills to creating work that expresses & connects to topics that are important or familiar to them.

**IF** they are using their body as inspiration or as a resource for developing their work...



**THEN** use the [Quick Pose Warm up](#) for embodying visual arts vocabulary to build on and support this way of working. Also check out [Drawing with Chris!](#)

**IF** they are using their peers as inspiration or as a resource for developing their work...



**THEN** encourage this way of working by trying peer reflections like Gallery walk or Turn and Talk.

**IF** they are using you or other adults in the room as inspiration or as a resource for developing their work...



**THEN** check out the [Notice, Describe & Ask](#) page and [Artist's Work Process](#) page for ideas on how to support student autonomy.

**IF** they are using visual resources or references as inspiration or as a resource for developing their work...



**THEN** consider posting real life photos (as opposed to representations made by adult artists) as inspiration and reference.

**IF** you would like to encourage new ways of working...



**THEN** share this video with your kids- [Tips for Frustrated Young Artists from Rooster](#).

**IF** you would like to encourage them to add more details...



**THEN** try a [5-Senses Journey](#) to a setting or a character [Quick Pose Warm](#).

**IF** you would like to encourage them to develop their ideas further...



**THEN** check out the [Notice, Describe & Ask](#) page and the [3 Phase Artistic Process](#) page for ideas on how to support students in revising their work.