



Things to Do While You're Waiting: Art Works!




It's happening again! You're running errands with your children, and suddenly you're stuck—in traffic, at the clinic, in the checkout line. Many parents find that playful learning activities can help reduce children's impatience when they have to wait.

Do you want to engage a waiting child's creativity? These activities can encourage creative expression and build fine motor skills at the same time.

-  **Seeing art:** Invite your child to talk about the art you see around you: public murals, billboards, magazine illustrations, framed prints. Ask, “What’s going on in this picture?” You can discuss the elements of design you notice—line, texture, color, shape, value, and space.

-  **The art of drawing:** Some families won’t leave home without paper and crayons! A small drawing pad or clipboard can be handy. So can a children’s art app on a mobile electronic device. You and your child can try many types of drawing. Use a variety of colors and drawing tools. Remember that children who are prone to motion sickness should not draw in a moving vehicle.
 - **Memory drawings:** Talk with your child about something you have done together. Each of you can then create a picture of what you recall.
 - **Fantasy drawings:** Dragons, giants, talking rocks—these are the stuff of imagination! Draw imaginary creatures or scenes, and tell stories about them.
 - **Observational drawings:** Take turns finding objects to draw—as big as a house or as small as a raisin. Draw exactly what you see and only what you see. Compare your finished drawings. Your child may notice something you missed!
 - **Cooperative drawings:** Draw a face shape, then take turns adding features: one draws the mouth, the other adds a nose, etc. Then try a house or a street scene.
 - **Vibration pictures:** In a moving vehicle, hold a pen or marker to a piece of paper—lightly, but enough to make a mark. Let your hand move slightly as the car vibrates. After a minute or two, see what sort of design you have. Then switch colors and draw again on the same paper.

-  **Making art:** Patterns, collages, and three-dimensional (3-D) designs can be challenging and fun.
 - **Stickers, stamps, and stencils** make it easy to create patterns or designs on paper.
 - **Crayon rubbings** of surfaces around you let your child explore texture.
 - **Your child can experiment with 3-D design**, even in a car seat. She or he can make sculptures with waxed yarn, pipe cleaners, or clean “found objects.”
 - **Forgot the art supplies?** Use your fingers to “paint” in the air or on the backs of each other’s hands.
 - **You might ask at the library for books** about origami, found-object sculptures, finger-crochet, and other art and craft activities.

Any opinions, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this tip sheet are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the Illinois State Board of Education.



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