

## ***Creation Celebration: Infusing the Creative Arts Throughout the Preschool Day*** **Presenter's Guide**

### **Time:**

3 hour workshop; 3 ½ hour workshop option

### **Objectives:**

In this workshop participants will:

- Develop a deeper understanding of how to use the *New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality (Expectations)* for the creative arts, the New Jersey Early Learning Assessment System for Literacy (NJELAS-L) and the Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R) in order to create a best practice environment for preschool creative arts programs.
- Acquire strategies for extending art concepts and introducing rich art vocabulary.
- Review methods for introducing materials from the art center to encourage and motivate children to make art throughout the classroom.

### **Materials Required:**

- Paint brushes of different sizes
- Individual watercolor pods
- Small paper cups for water
- Small squares of watercolor paper – 3 per participant
- Crayons for each participant
- Chalk for each participant
- Oil pastels for each participant
- Chart paper and markers
- Tables for participants

### **Preparation:**

- Prepare individual participant packets that include handouts and a set of art materials. (See materials required, above.)
- Provide a few examples of high quality preschool storybooks that can be used by a teacher to demonstrate examples of an author's/illustrator's use of different art media (watercolor, ink, oil, chalk, collage, fabric, multi-media, etc.). Examples are: *Little Blue and Little Yellow* by Leo Lionni, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear* by Eric Carle, *The Snowy Day* by Ezra Jack Keats, *Freight Train* by Donald Crews.
- Set up a table covered with brightly colored fabric(s). Exhibit the storybooks along with a sampling of the art materials to be used during workshop. Place the art materials in interesting and inviting containers.
- The display will encourage workshop participation and participant motivation to use the art materials. Example: Display crayons in a purple clay pot, brushes in a bright red metal can and oil pastels in a hand-painted container. Use a tablecloth in bright primary colors. Use complementary colors to add a natural, seasonal centerpiece composed of items such as gourds, shells, flowers, etc.

## Handouts to copy for Participant Packets:

- Agenda
- Early Childhood Educators on the Importance of the Creative Arts
- Creative Arts Vignette: Four Year Old Preschool Classroom
- Creative Arts Vignette Activity Worksheet
- *New Jersey Preschool Teaching and Learning Expectations: Standards of Quality (Expectations)* for Creative Arts: Art, Dramatic Play, Music and Movement
- New Jersey Early Learning Assessment System for Literacy(ELAS-L)
- Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale-Revised (ECERS-R): cover page and activities pages for music/movement, dramatic play and art. The ECERS-R may be accessed at: <http://www.fpg.unc.edu/~ecers/>

## Presenter's Agenda

### 1. Opening Activity: 10 minutes

The presenter asks participants to share memorable creative arts experiences they had during their early childhood years. Participants might respond with experiences such as building a super rocket, playing bride or making an impromptu lemonade stand. These examples are typical creative arts experiences one might hear in a group of three- or four-year olds. Discuss whether the participants' experience happened at home or school and what was learned from the experience.

The creative arts include individualized learning experiences in environments that stimulate creativity through music, dramatic play, dance and the visual arts. The creative arts can include an individualized or group approach to problem solving. For example, drawing is considered a creative problem solving experience. The creative arts are process rather than product oriented and encourage problem solving in new or inventive ways. The creative arts also encourage independence, self-motivation and self expression through concrete, hands-on experiences.

### 2. Welcome and Logistics: 5 minutes

The presenter introduces him/herself and tells a little about his/her background. The presenter reviews the agenda and workshop's essential messages.

### 3. Introducing the Topic: 45 minutes

**Activity #1:** The presenter gives an overview of the *Expectations* and facilitates the following discussion:

It is critical that we, as educators, place a high value on the creative arts if we are truly thinking about children in a holistic sense – the “whole child,” in terms of social-emotional development, physical development, academic development, and aesthetic development.

Think about the different areas described in the *Expectations*. Let’s chart some ways the creative arts can be used to foster development across all domains of learning.

Chart Examples:

- **Social/Emotional:** The creative arts channel outlets for feelings and emotions.
- **Fine Motor:** The creative arts refine and strengthen fine motor movements through drawing, painting, tearing paper, cutting with scissors, clay, etc.
- **Gross Motor:** The creative arts strengthen gross motor muscles through dance and movement, easel painting, manipulating clay, etc.
- **Cognitive:** The creative arts stimulate new vocabulary, new ways of communicating, creativity, encourage problem-solving, and innovation. The creative arts and problem-solving can easily be integrated into other areas such as math, science, social studies, social-emotional development, etc.

**Activity #2:** The presenter asks participants to take turns reading the handout: *Early Childhood Educators on the Importance of the Creative Arts in Children’s Lives*. The presenter asks participants to count off into groups of six. Each group is assigned one of the quotations. Each group chooses a reporter to present the main idea of the quotation to the large group.

### **Background Information on the Creative Arts:**

Remind participants that at the beginning of a school year preschoolers may need an introduction to art materials that are available for use in the art area. Throughout the year, children also need an introduction to new art materials and occasional reintroduction of existing materials in new and exciting ways. It is not enough to put crayons and paper out on the table in the art area and assume a child will take the initiative to use the crayons and paper. Teachers need to make sure a child is familiar with what is available in the art center (different types of paper, paste, tape, scissors, fabric, paint brushes and drawing utensils, etc.) and has a basic, simple introduction of how each material can be used to make art. At the same time, teachers need to allow, encourage and scaffold learning opportunities for new, creative and individual ways to use materials. With sufficient time to play and experiment with each new material and encouragement from the teacher, children build a basic understanding of what each material can do and how one art material is the same or different from other materials.

During a small-group introduction of art materials or during other teachable moments, teachers will have the chance to model new arts terminology, discuss

with children the attributes of art materials and compare and contrast art materials. Teachers should always model by actively participating in the creative arts process throughout the classroom. For example, when the children decide to create a train in dramatic play and go to the art center for materials and supplies, the teacher should work with the children on expanding and elaborating “making a train” ideas while modeling vocabulary for their project. Children should always be allowed and encouraged to use the art materials throughout the classroom to extend play.

As an example of scaffolding a learning experience in the creative arts, the presenter can share the following example with participants:

When a teacher is introducing working with potter’s clay there are simple procedures to prepare the clay for use. To enable a child to become independent with these procedures, the teacher will guide the child with increasing input from the child and decreasing input from the teacher until the child is ready to prepare the clay independently. For example, the child might observe and help the teacher take out a child-sized lump of clay from a plastic clay bag and place it on a rubber mat on the clay table. With help from the child, the teacher spritzes the clay once or twice with a spray bottle of water to soften the clay, pats the clay out, kneads it and repeats until the clay is soft enough for work. Once the clay is softened and kneaded, the clay is ready to be worked by the child. The child might be starting to explore clay or to make a representational object (bowl, pot, cave, animal, etc.). Gradually, the child assists the teacher with these procedures until the child is knowledgeable enough about the process to prepare the clay for use without input from the teacher.

This example describes one type of scaffolding. Scaffolding also includes many other methods which help a child learn and grow through interaction with the teacher during play activities.

#### **4. Using Select Art Materials: Part One** **30 Minutes**

**Activity #3, Working with Children and Media:** This activity demonstrates how teachers can scaffold the use of new art materials and art vocabulary as well as explore the use of new art techniques in their classrooms. Workshop participants are invited to partake in a creative arts experience using a variety of visual art media: watercolors, crayon, chalk, oil pastels and paper.

The presenter asks participants to take a watercolor paper square and a crayon and create any kind of design or drawing. The presenter encourages participants to

explore what a crayon can do by making marks on the watercolor paper. The presenter attempts to increase the participants' exploration and skill ability by asking questions to elaborate and extend the learning. "Describe the paper you are working on."

The presenter asks participants to give descriptive vocabulary for attributes of art materials. Examples of descriptive words might be bumpy, grooved, creamy, thick, etc. The presenter may offer additional descriptive vocabulary and ask leading questions to focus on attributes of art materials.

Next, the presenter may encourage discussion of the attributes specific to the crayon and crayon markings. "How does the crayon feel?" Answers may include "dry, slick, smooth, cool" etc. "What kind of mark does the crayon make on the paper?" Answers may include "bright, dark, light" etc. "Can you move the mark around by rubbing with your finger? Does the mark that you made smear?"

After discussion about the crayon, the presenter asks participants to take a second watercolor paper square and make a drawing with chalk. Participants repeat the same process, this time discovering how chalk interacts with watercolor paper. "How does the chalk feel?" Answers may include "dry, brittle, powdery, hard" etc. "How is it same or different from the crayon?" "What kind of mark does the chalk make on paper?" Answers may include "light, pastel, powdery" etc. The presenter continues to add rich and varied vocabulary for descriptions. "Can you mix two chalk marks of different colors?" Finally, the presenter asks participants to take a third watercolor paper square and make a new drawing using the oil pastel. "How does the oil pastel feel?" "How is the oil pastel like or different from the chalk and crayon?" "Can you mix colors with the oil pastels?"

**The presenter then asks participants to set all three drawings aside for use during a later activity (Activity #5).**

The presenter should recap by stating that the activity demonstrated that oil pastel is hard like the crayon, with colors that are brighter than crayon and with color-mixing qualities that are like chalk. Participants should be reminded that, during the activity, they were exposed to new vocabulary, a discussion of attributes for each art material and experience in using art media.

The presenter should emphasize that, during the activity, crayon, chalk and oil pastel were introduced individually with discussions of qualities of each. Teachers can extend children's learning with questions and expansion of vocabulary by using the same method in their classrooms. Teachers can consistently introduce new "art" terminology (oil pastel, watercolor paper, watercolor pod, etc.) for art media. Teachers can also encourage conversations about the position of lines (top, bottom, over, under), the quality of lines (zigzag, diagonal, round, wavy) and line shapes (circle, square, crescent, etc.) in children's art, extending vocabulary and art language as appropriate when the child is ready.

The presenter can remind participants that the teacher usually introduces materials or methods in a small group or one-on-one, with informal exploration by children as a necessary and important first step. After an introduction to materials, a teacher may approach a child or a group of children making art, observe what the children are doing and then wait for them to initiate conversations with a question or comment. For example, a small group of children at the writing center are making “kitty” books and with fur fabrics from the art area fabric box. The teacher watches, smiles and waits for a child in the group to take the lead in talking about his/her work. The teacher uses this opportunity as a teachable moment and scaffolds learning for the children by extending vocabulary or technique through modeling or extending exploration of art concepts using focused questions. “The fabric you chose for your kitty is striped and so unusual! Why did you choose that fabric for illustrating your kitty book?”

Opportunities for teachers to use these methods occur in all areas of the creative arts. A child might be making “music” by exploring different sounds on a homemade musical instrument. The teacher smiles and listens to the sounds. The child might respond by identifying the sounds with descriptive words. The teacher can encourage the child in his/her interpretation and use the teachable moment to scaffold learning with additional rich vocabulary or appropriate music concept information. This may lead to further and/or more advanced investigation by the child. “I think I hear a definite pattern in your music. Can you tell me about your pattern?” The teacher should not impose an adult evaluation of the child’s work, but rather encourage and guide the child’s understanding of his/her own work while extending learning as appropriate for the individual child.

Teachers should also be aware of and take opportunities to elicit emotional responses from children as they paint, dance, make music and hear or see performances by dancers or musicians. Asking focused questions will add layers to the child’s learning and stimulate even more investigation by the child.

The final part of the art process is display. Teachers should engage children in deciding and describing how art should be displayed in the child’s classroom.

## **5. Assessment and the Creative Arts** **45 minutes**

**Activity #4:** The presenter passes out the Creative Arts Vignette and the creative arts section of the *Expectations*. Participants read the vignette. Working in groups, participants identify which creative arts *Expectations* are accomplished in the vignette. Participants should make notes in the margin of the vignette then report out to the whole group. During the report out, the presenter should use the Presenter’s Answer Key as a reference.

The presenter may choose to include the following extension for this activity or move to Using Select Art Materials-Part Two.

**Activity #4-Extension Option:** During this extension to Activity #4, participants will work in groups to identify ECERS-R and NJELAS-L indicators that are met within the context of the vignette. The presenter passes out the Creative Arts Vignette Activity Worksheet, ECERS-R and NJELAS-L. The presenter should give a brief description of the two assessment tools when introducing the activity:

Assessment tools such as ECERS-R and NJELAS-L, used in conjunction with a research-based curriculum, serve to provide a high-quality preschool teaching and learning environment in the creative arts.

- The New Jersey Early Learning Assessment System for Literacy (NJELAS-L) is a performance based assessment for language arts literacy that measures individual child development along a continuum.
- The Early Childhood Environment Rating Scale- Revised (ECERS-R) is a tool designed to assess preschool classroom quality.

The presenter divides participants into groups and assigns each group one section of the vignette to analyze. Groups assign recorders and reporters. Each group reports their findings to the whole group. The presenter should use the Presenter’s Answer Key as a reference during this discussion.

The presenter should summarize by reminding participants that creative arts experiences are purposefully and intentionally integrated throughout the curriculum, the classroom activity centers and the school day in ways that promote individual development and high quality teaching and learning environments.

### **Using Select Art Materials: Part Two** **30 minutes**

**Activity #5, Watercolor Wash:** The presenter asks participants to turn their attention to the three drawings created during Activity #3 and explains that, using their artwork created with watercolor paper, crayons, chalk, and oil pastel, participants will have an opportunity to extend the on the experience by learning about watercolor “wash.”

The presenter passes out a watercolor pod, water and different sized brushes to each participant. Using the artwork created with crayon during Activity #3 and the watercolor pods, participants dip their brushes in water, then brush the watercolor over the entire paper. This creates a “wash” over the crayon drawing. After an initial period of exploration, the presenter engages participants in a discussion about the experience. “What do you see?” “What does the color look like?” The

participants might answer, “Watery, light, pastel.” The presenter asks “Does the crayon mark spread or blur?”

Next, the presenter asks participants to wash watercolor over the artwork created with chalk during Activity #3. The presenter should use the same discussion questions as above, asking participants to notice the similarities and differences between washing over watercolor and washing over crayon. The presenter should reinforce and extend language with art terminology and vocabulary.

Last, the presenter asks participants to wash watercolor over the artwork created with oil pastels during Activity #3. The presenter proceeds with the same questions. The presenter can also initiate discussion about the amount of water on the brush and the amount of color on the page. Participants can be encouraged to notice the amount of stroking on the watercolor pod and the color on the page. The presenter should reinforce findings, descriptions and technique vocabulary. The presenter can extend discussion about the types of lines made by the watercolor and brushes – “curve, arc, straight, circle” etc. The presenter can note that this method involves use of multimedia (defined as two or more art materials; in this case, oil pastel and watercolor).

With young children, this project can easily extend over several days. First, the children have ample time to explore the crayon and the use of water color in separate experiences. Then when a child makes a crayon drawing they are proud of, the teacher may introduce the use of washing watercolor over the crayon drawing for a new special effect. On third and subsequent days, other media can be added (fabric, wire, string, paper, etc.) as dictated by children’s interests and the teacher’s observations of his/her class.

## **6. Closure and Next Steps**

### **15 Minutes:**

The presenter asks participants to take a few minutes for personal reflection about the materials and processes explored during the workshop.

The presenter reminds participants of the workshop’s essential messages:

- Children need ample time for free exploration of the creative arts and art materials.
- After ample free exploration by the children, teachers must intentionally model and scaffold specific techniques for the creative arts and the use of art materials.
- Teacher must also model using art materials in inventive ways.
- Children must be encouraged to use art materials in all indoor and outdoor classroom areas.

- Teachers need to support, encourage, and model creativity, problem solving and inventive thinking in all interactions with children, in all content areas and in all areas of the classroom.

The presenter asks participants to choose one idea to try in their classrooms. Participants will turn to a neighbor and the pair will discuss their ideas.

The session might also end with participants sharing their artwork with the whole group and discussing their approaches to making art. Presenters create space for participants to hang their art work in order to reinforce the concept that the final display of art work by the person who created the art is part of the total experience of “art making.”

### **Extended Activity Option: Primary Colors (red, blue and yellow) and Secondary Colors (mixture of two primary colors).**

**30 minutes**

#### **Background:**

Choose a high quality preschool storybook such as author and illustrator Leo Lionni’s *Little Blue and Little Yellow*. The presenter reads the story to the workshop participants. Next, the presenter engages participants in a creative arts activity based on techniques such as watercolor, cut-outs and collage as used by Lionni.

#### **Activity:**

Provide blue and yellow (or yellow and red, or red and blue) tissue paper of various sizes at the participants’ tables. Provide a very watery glue mixture (1 part glue to 6 parts water) in small containers with small paint brushes.

Invite participants to experiment with tearing or cutting tissue paper and painting the torn or cut pieces on white background paper with the glue mixture. If the tissue paper pieces overlap, participants will experience two primary colors mixing to make a secondary color.

When finished, participants may be asked by the presenter to describe their experience, using the new vocabulary “primary” and “secondary” colors. Participants can also brainstorm other areas in the classroom where preschoolers would have the opportunity to mix primary colors and create secondary colors. Suggest that other favorite classroom books, such as Donald Crews *Freight Train* or Eric Carle’s *Very Hungry Caterpillar* could be the springboard for additional classroom art activities. Pass out a selection of preschool books to small groups and let the group create activities based on the art methods used in the book’s illustrations. Each group chooses a recorder and reporter to share ideas.