

Different Strokes: Painting with Natural Materials

Artsy Thursday! – Week of the Young Child

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“Painting with young children not only helps their creative development but it also stimulates their brain. Stimulating children's brain can also help other areas of their development... Most children enjoy a good, messy painting experience. This will allow them to freely express themselves and develop their creativity.” – Early Years Careers (www.earlyyearscares.com)

10 Reasons Why Preschoolers Need to Paint

- 1. Painting exercises your child's brain.** Creative activities like painting, use a different part of the brain than reading and or math. The right side of the brain is our creative half and responsible for visual skills and understanding what we see through our eyes (which is still developing at the preschool age). Creative play and painting activities help exercise your child's “right” brain leading to an overall healthy brain development.
- 2. Your child learns how to express their own feelings** by transforming their own ideas and feelings onto paper.
- 3. Painting builds self-esteem.** By providing open-ended painting activities your child there is no right or wrong way to paint. The emphasis is on the process, so every child feels successful no matter their skill level or developmental stage.
- 4. Your child learns how to make decisions and problem solve.** As your child works and paints, they make choices about their own artwork.
- 5. Painting helps relieve stress.** Just like adults, preschoolers get stressed too. Painting is one way your child can de-stress and a healthy way to express their feelings.
- 6. Painting helps develop muscle control.** Working with a brush or small tool helps develop fine motor skills (small muscle control). While working on large sheets of paper or at the easel helps develop large muscle control (Gross Motor skills). Painting also helps develop your child's hand eye coordination.
- 7. Painting is a sensory experience.** Your child is building a knowledge base of different sensory experiences, like how it feels to touch the paper with finger painting or how it feels to move the brush with your arm across the paper. Sensory experiences are important because they help your child explore and understand the world around them.
- 8. Painting provides opportunity for your child to experience cause and effect.** While painting, your child is also experimenting and thinking like a scientist. Allow your child to mix colors together to try new combinations and explore with the paint and color.
- 9. Painting helps develop verbal language.** Oftentimes, preschoolers can't wait to share with you about their painting. Be sure not to guess what you think your child has painted but rather ask your child, “tell me about your painting.” By asking open-ended questions it will help stretch and grow your child's thinking and verbal skills.
- 10. Your child will build self-confidence.** Your child will take pride and accomplishment in their painting (even if it looks like scribble scabble to you).

Natural paintbrushes and other ideas:





Other materials for paintbrushes:



Ideas for paintbrush shapes:

