

Art Guide for Art Volunteers

Note from Author:

*What is the **purpose** and **aim** of this guide?*

This manual's purpose is to assist fellow art volunteers in their efforts to spread the positivity and benefits of art to students of various ages. Specifically aimed to help high school students volunteering to teach art, this guide acknowledges the challenges volunteers may face when they begin to volunteer in non-profit organizations, local businesses, corporate settings, and other volunteer opportunities. Teaching art as a volunteer can be daunting, as verbally instructing is a completely different experience from actually doing it themselves. Thus, this manual offers a simple and repeatable curriculum that art volunteers can adopt to gain confidence in their roles.

The Art Guide for Art Volunteers (AGAV) seeks to become an indispensable resource for those in need. Its creation stemmed from personal challenges that we (the authors) encountered on our first volunteer art teaching experiences; with a deep passion for art and the desire to share its benefits, we faced the complex nature inherent in teaching the subject. Unlike more traditional subjects like math or english, which have abundant online resources and a clearer instructional path, art presents a more unique difficulty. Artistic skills develop at different ages, and the range of topics to cover can be random and overwhelming. Moreover, art isn't as integrated into everyday activities as other subjects, making it harder for some individuals to grasp its concepts; while a particular artistic concept may seem straightforward to one person, it can pose significant challenges for another. Our own experiences highlighted these challenges, thus prompting us to envision a comprehensive guide for art volunteers. As we observed fellow art volunteers struggling to effectively guide their students reinforced our determination to create this manual. We aim to use this guide as a tool to empower volunteers in their pursuit of sharing their passion for art with others.

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INITIAL

The very first steps.

Get to Know:

Before starting off with any form of art, it is important to first establish a connection with the students being taught. The success of the session hinges on the active participation and engagement of the students. Achieving this requires investing a significant amount of time in creating a bond between the volunteer and the student.

For volunteers, this period of connection-building offers invaluable insight into the interests of the students they'll be teaching. Whether it's the particular type of art they enjoy, such as doodles, paintings, or cartoons, or the color schemes they prefer, volunteers should make a mental or physical note of what resonates with their student. This allows the volunteer to tailor their teaching approach to the student's preferences.

By taking these steps, the student is more likely to find enjoyment in creating art. This positive association fosters a sense of enthusiasm and anticipation for future sessions, laying a solid foundation for future sessions.

But before, make sure you introduce yourself to the student. Make sure that you (the volunteer) is the one who initiates the talking and keeps it going! Especially if you are in a group, a recommended approach can be any sort of icebreaker activity. It can be as basic from asking them their name and where they're from to more complicated things like two truths and a lie.

Examples:

Style Example:

Consider a scenario where a student in the first session enjoys creating small doodles of various creatures. While these doodles may initially seem like idle sketches done out of boredom, they can be transformed into meaningful pieces of artwork. As the volunteer observes the student's drawing process, several key points should be kept in mind:

What are some famous artworks and artists with a similar style for inspiration?

What are some recurring themes that can be explored further in the future?

By keeping thoughts like these in mind, while observing the student's doodles, the volunteer can gain valuable insights into the student's artistic preferences, skills, and interests, which can inform future teaching strategies and activities. In this scenario, one possible artist and artwork to show the student is Keith Haring, an American pop artist from the 1980s. By showcasing Haring's artwork through platforms such as Google or Pinterest, the volunteer can inspire the student by demonstrating the potential that doodles have to become masterpieces. This exposure can evoke a sense of excitement and determination in the student, motivating them to pursue this art experience with enthusiasm.

EXAMPLE:

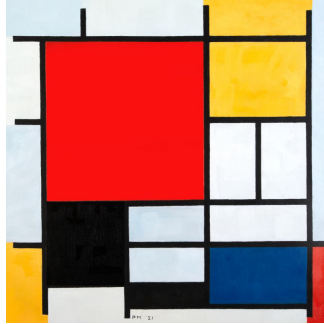
Student's Drawings:



Keith Haring's Art:



OTHER EXAMPLES:

Vibrant Color Use	Van Gogh: 
Geometric Patterns	Piet Mondrian: 
Minimalist Designs	Agnes Martin: 
Surreal Style	Salvador Dalí: 
Creepy Fantasy Creatures	H.R. Giger: 

Colors Example:

Another example is considering the colors that are being used. For example, if a student expresses interest in using the color blue, whether it's because it's their favorite color or for another simple reason, their enjoyment can serve as a starting point for future development. For instance, several ideas that can be explored include:

Introducing different shades of blue to establish the foundations of value.

Introducing the color orange to introduce the concept of complementary colors.

There's no limit to what the student can learn, especially if they're new to the field of art. Volunteers are encouraged to utilize even the most basic concepts they've learned to teach. Additionally, showcasing examples from the internet is highly recommended, as providing ideas can motivate the student, especially when they're feeling stuck. Therefore, by starting with something the student enjoys, they can remain motivated and dedicated to the art lesson.

Introduce Varieties:

Once the volunteer has discovered what the student is particularly fond of, it is important not to limit their exploration to just their familiar preferences. After establishing a sense of connection and motivation, it becomes vital to introduce them to new materials, styles, and techniques before progressing further. While there's a chance that these new introductions may not immediately appeal to the student, there's also an equal chance that they may discover a newfound passion.

Allocating a portion of the session time for students to explore the variety that art offers is essential. This allows them to broaden their artistic horizons and potentially uncover new interests.

Possible materials and techniques for experimentation include:

- Painting with acrylic paint
 - Provide and introduce the student to the medium of acrylic paint. For this step, let them paint whatever they desire but remember to teach them the foundations. (i.e. acrylic paint dries fast so it's easier to layer paint)
- Painting with watercolors
 - To paint with watercolors, start by wetting your brush and lightly dipping it into the paint, then apply it to the paper, using more water for lighter shades and less for deeper colors. Experiment with blending and layering to achieve various effects and textures.
- Exploring palette knife painting techniques

- Provide the student the materials of acrylic paint and a palette knife. Instead of creating an object, person, etc., let them just use it to create texture. This can be random strokes or maybe all in one direction; whatever the student enjoys doing.
- Learning to draw digitally
 - See whether the student is comfortable (if available!) using an apple pencil to draw on Procreate. If the volunteer has extensive knowledge on this medium, encourage them to take advantage of the various tools that digital drawings provide such as undo, eye droppers, and more.
- Experimenting with colored pencils
 - As colored pencils are popular art mediums that most students should be familiar with, see their skill levels with the pencils. Remember to teach them some fundamental rules such as using repetitive, circular motions when coloring to create a smoother look.
- Trying out copic markers
 - When trying out copic markers, observe their understanding in colors and the blending properties of the medium (due to alcohol-based ink). Encourage layering to create gradients, and experimenting with different paper types for optimal results. If there is skill using this medium, see if they are interested in any type of fashion design by drawing out a human figure and letting them draw out clothes.

The possibilities are truly endless, and by encouraging students to explore different mediums and techniques, they can unlock their creativity and expand their artistic skill set. Therefore, once their specific preferences have been identified within the time constraints, it's time to proceed with the lesson plan.

Identifying Strengths:

During introductory stages, it's important to observe the strengths and weaknesses of the students. Identifying their strengths is particularly significant as it correlates with what they enjoy creating, which can be valuable for their development. In addition, note that strengths can come in various forms, not solely visual traits. For example, if a student enjoys mixing paint and exhibits physical strength, consider introducing palette knife applications—which combines the two characteristics.

Lesson

Making a lesson plan.

The following information is an example lesson plan that can adjust for an individual's liking.

Preparations:

There are several points to keep in mind before creating a lesson plan as an art volunteer. As aforementioned, always try to alter the sessions to fit the interests of the students. Allowing them to create work they enjoy keeps them engaged, a vital factor into the success of any program. In addition, be mindful of time constraints. Depending on circumstances, some volunteers can encounter either too much time or too little (See *Priorities* for list of priorities). Lastly, there are more complications with leading multiple students rather than one or two. However, volunteers should still try to keep the previous points in mind, even if generalization is needed and can not accommodate all.

Before the first lesson (prior to meeting the students), there are several steps to take. Most importantly, create a draft for a lesson plan beforehand (See *Lesson Plan Example* for example). Once meeting the students, it is recommended to change certain parts, or even all, to accommodate. If time allows, create a Google Slideshow or Powerpoint to provide a visual demonstration. Gather resources, inspiration, and anything that is found or thought of as it can be a time-saver in the future.

In addition, when thinking of what lessons to teach (once basics have been established), have a goal/final artwork that accumulates everything the student has learned. This will be a visual demonstration that showcases their skill and development (e.g. a graphite piece combining different types of shading, perspective, and value).

Lesson Plan Structure:

Session #:

Title	N/A
Activity	N/A
Age Group	N/A
Learning Objective	N/A
Materials	N/A
Time Allotted	N/A
Image Examples	N/A

Lesson Plan Structure Template

Lesson Plan Example:

Session 1:

Title	Lesson #1:Hand Paintings
Activity	By using only their hand and paint, students will utilize the shape of their hand to create anything that comes to imagination. In addition, to make the activity more interesting, it will be encouraged to use different hand positions to create something new. This can range from various creations such as turkey, fish, giraffe, etc. If there is extra time, the students can write their wants and thoughts inside the images.
Age Group	Younger Age Groups (~Elementary)
Learning Objective	By introducing students to hand painting, they discover that art can be created using anything at hand. Fancy materials are not necessary; all they need is their hand, paper, and paint. This not only teaches them that art can be made right at home but also fosters a spirit of experimentation as they explore various hand positions and compositions to find their preferred style. Moreover, hand painting sparks creativity by revealing that a single hand can create various unique images.
Materials	Paper and acrylic paint
Time Allotted	One 40 minute class

Image Examples	
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How to Brainstorm:

An essential step to learn before any techniques or projects, is knowing how to brainstorm ideas. It establishes a foundation that allows students to demonstrate their creativity and design original projects for the future. Although a student may have an idea already in mind, this is an overall lesson that assists creating their own unique artworks.

Session 1:

Title	Brainstorming
Activity	<i>REFER BELOW</i>
Age Group	All
Learning Objective	Learning how to brainstorm for a project to cultivate creativity, originality, and self-expression.
Materials	Pencil and paper
Time Allotted	30-50 minute class
Image Examples	<i>REFER BELOW</i>

First, provide students with a piece of paper and pencil and tell them to start writing. Mention how it can be on anything: ideas, thoughts, interests, or even the very things they see. Approximately, this would take around 5 minutes but if they struggle, provide them some guidance by asking them about what they like and try to note some vocabulary that can be taken from there (e.g. if a student says they are interested in “space,” you can write down “stars,” “planets,” “aliens,” “rocketship,” etc.). Once a list has been provided, instruct or sit down with the student, and tell them to circle around 3 words they find the most interesting. This is a vital

step because this will help establish their first theme. Once it has been selected, the next step is to start drawing (See *Brainstorm List* for example).

With the selected words, have the students create 4 boxes on another piece of paper. Have them write the words they chose at the very top and have them start creating sketches combining the words into an artwork (e.g. let's assume that a student chose the words “aliens,” “buildings,” and “whales.” Possible ideas that can be created combining these words includes a dystopian cityscape with alien civilizations on the sidewalks and whales mimicking birds or a dystopian cityscape designed for whale-looking aliens (See *Brainstorm List Themes* for example)) These 4 boxes should try to be different ideas. Once this has been completed, sit down next to the student and choose one idea that has the most potential and help them fix any mistakes. Once one has been chosen, help them create another 4 boxes with the same idea, but different compositions. This will help narrow down their idea to the best. If time allows, help them choose one of those 4 compositions and let them start creating a more detailed version.

BRAINSTORMING ACTIVITY SLIDESHOW

Introducing Basics:

Before starting off with any form of project, introduce the basics of sketching with pencils. Since pencils are a common tool, they offer a comfortable and familiar starting point compared to starting something entirely new. Understanding the fundamentals of using a pencil, lays the groundwork for further exploration and development.

Sphere Example:

Session 2:

Title	Draw a Sphere
Activity	<i>REFER BELOW</i>
Age Group	All
Learning Objective	Understanding the basics of shading
Materials	Pencil and paper
Time Allotted	30-50 minute class

A common lesson taught involves sketching and shading a sphere, as it provides essential foundational skills necessary to comprehend more complex topics (e.g. drawing in 3D and understanding light). To begin this lesson, it is recommended to start with a demonstration, while making sure to point out and label the different "layers" (See "Sphere Demonstration Image" for example). Following the demonstration, guide students through the process step by step, ensuring they grasp each stage thoroughly before proceeding to the next.

1. Draw a sphere
2. Identify the light source
3. Mark the different layers
4. Create the midtone
5. Shade in different values

Once this activity has been completed, a follow-up activity can be established to reinforce the concepts learned and to further develop shading skills. This involves introducing four different shading techniques: blending, cross-hatching, hatching, and stippling. Explain how each technique works (e.g. stippling is creating values through repetitive, small dots) while evaluating their comprehension and skill.

[SPHERE ACTIVITY SLIDESHOW](#)

Understanding Color:

Color is one of the major elements within an artwork. For a beginner, it is important to understand the use of colors

Color Harmony

Color harmony refers to a combination of colors that is visually appealing. It is essential to understand this concept in order to convey intended emotions and create a sense of balance in an artwork. (See *EXPRESSING WITH COLOR ACTIVITY SLIDESHOW* for better visual understanding)

Complementary Harmony

Complementary colors are pairs of colors that are directly opposite each other on the color wheel. Examples include red and green, blue and orange, or yellow and purple. This color harmony creates strong contrast and can be highly vibrant and eye-catching. When using complementary colors to create harmony, it is often suggested to use one color as the dominant hue and the other as an accent in order to maintain balance and prevent overwhelming the composition.

Analogous Harmony

This harmony refers to a combination of colors that are adjacent to each other on the color wheel. Examples include red, red-orange, and orange. This type of color combination conveys a sense of unity because the colors are closely related. Because analogous color harmony can often be found in nature, such as sunset or ocean scenes, it is often soothing and pleasing to the eye.

Monochromatic Harmony

Monochromatic color schemes include variations of a single color through different saturation, concentration of a color, or values, lightness or darkness of a color. This harmony is characterized by its simplicity as it focuses solely on one color to create a unified palette. It is important to note that using a single color can often limit the ability to create visual depth and contrast. Despite this potential limitation, monochromatic harmony has the powerful ability to convey a sense of calmness and sophistication due to its inherent simplicity.

Neutral Harmony

Most of the time, neutral colors, including gray, white, black, brown can be combined with any other colors to create a harmonious palette. They serve to make other colors stand out to create a sophisticated and understated look. However, while neutral colors create a solid foundation, relying on them solely can create an overly subdued or dull appearance.

Learning these color harmonies can be effective to beginners in understanding the effects and cohesive combinations of colors. However, it is important to acknowledge that art is ultimately subjective, and there are no strict rules or formulas that define correct or incorrect use of color. Artists often break conventional color combinations or theories in order to create unique visual experiences and evoke specific emotions. Moreover, the perception and interpretation of colors can vary due to various factors such as cultural influences, personal experiences, and more. Therefore, while learning about color harmonies provides a solid foundation, it is important to approach them as a tool rather than a strict set of rules that can limit students' creativity.

Color Psychology

Colors have the power to evoke certain emotions. It is important to understand their effects to evoke desired responses from the viewers and enhance the overall impact of an artwork. Here is a table demonstrating common colors that convey certain emotions and concepts:

Color	Associated Emotions and Themes
Red	Passion, Excitement, Love, Violence, Anger, Intensity
Orange	Warmth, Enthusiasm, Joyfulness, Sensuality, Social
Yellow	Joy, Happiness, Energy, Hope, Frustration, Anxiety
Green	Freshness, Stability, Calmness, Comfort, Envy
Blue	Calmness, Serenity, Trust, Intelligence, Sadness
Purple	Royalty, Luxury, Creativity
Pink	Affection, Romance, Sweetness, Playfulness
Brown	Stability, Earthiness, Reliability, Comfort
Gray	Neutral, Practicality, Balance
Black	Power, Sophistication, Darkness, Death, Fear

Notice how the meanings and emotions associated with colors are multifaceted and sometimes contradictory. For example, the color red is associated with both love and violence. It is important to note that factors such as color intensity and the context in which colors are used within the artwork play a significant role in how colors are perceived.

Color Mixing

As a beginner, it is important to learn the specific color combinations that form basic hues in order to achieve the intended colors effectively. Here is a table demonstrating fundamental color mixing:

Color Mixing	Resulting Color
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Red + Yellow	Orange
Blue + Yellow	Green
Red + Blue	Purple
Black + White	Gray
White + Red	Pink
Red + Black	Brown

The resulting color, however, can depend on the proportions of each color used in the mix. Therefore, for more advanced artists, it is important to develop an artistic sense, an intuition for knowing how much of each color to blend, rather than solely relying on the formulas.

Expressing with Color Example:

Session 3:

Title	Expressing with Color
Activity	<i>REFER BELOW</i>
Age Group	All
Learning Objective	Learning how to express and communicate oneself through colors
Materials	Paper, pencil, colored pencils/paint/any coloring materials
Time Allotted	50 minute class
Image Examples	<i>REFER BELOW</i>

In this activity, students will select an emotion such as anger, love, sadness. They will sketch a specific moment in their lives that evoked that emotion. For example, a student choosing happiness might sketch a scene of them enjoying time with their friends or receiving a desired gift. After sketching, students will color their scenes using colors that evoke the chosen emotion. (red and pink for love, blue for sadness, yellow for anxiety, etc.)

Additionally, students will choose one of the color harmonies demonstrated earlier. They must use only the colors that evoke their chosen emotion and adhere to the selected color harmony throughout their artwork. For instance, a student who chose sadness as their emotion and

monochromatic harmony as their color harmony will only use variations of blue to color their scene.

EXPRESSING WITH COLOR ACTIVITY

SLIDESHOW

Understanding Composition:

A basic understanding of composition is crucial for creating any type of artwork. Composition sets the foundation for a piece and unifies its elements. For both beginners and advanced students, most compositions will often utilize the Rule of Thirds. This guideline involves placing two evenly spaced horizontal lines and two evenly spaced vertical lines across the canvas. The main subject / focal point of the piece should be positioned at one of the intersecting points.

Although primarily used in photography, the Rule of Thirds can also be applied to drawings, paintings, and other forms of visual art.

Rule of Thirds Example:

Session 4:

Title	Rule of Thirds
Activity	<i>REFER BELOW</i>
Age Group	All
Learning Objective	Understanding the Rule of Thirds to enhance composition and planning
Materials	Phone, paper, pencil, and rulers (optional colored materials)
Time Allotted	50 minute class
Image Examples	<i>REFER BELOW</i>

For this activity, students will practice teaching the Rule of Thirds by learning to take pictures according to this rule and drawing them on paper. To begin, have the students take out their

phones and enable the grid feature in their camera settings. Although this is not necessary, it will make the explanation easier for the volunteer and help students understand and see the grid firsthand. Once this is set up (if possible), have the students go outside or explore the classroom to take multiple pictures following the Rule of Thirds. If location is a limitation, prepare in advance by bringing a collection of materials (e.g., paper clips, books, toys). This way, students can arrange these materials at their tables to create their own compositions to photograph.

After the photography part of the activity is complete, and each student has a picture following the rule, provide them with paper, pencils, and rulers to draw their pictures. Using the ruler, evenly mark two dots spaced proportionally on each side of the paper (ensure the paper orientation matches the picture, e.g., vertical picture with vertical paper). Then, have the students draw their photos, using the images as references. It may also be helpful to teach them to copy the image by focusing on what is in each section and accurately reproducing it.

RULE OF THIRDS ACTIVITY SLIDESHOW

Understanding Perspective:

When first trying to teach students perspective, introduce them to three specific perspectives that can be learned: bird eye's view, man's eye view, and worm's eye view. *Note that this will utilize previous information in the sample lesson plan as it will utilize basic shading, color, and composition for this session.*

Although a bit more complicated, there are also horizon lines and vanishing points. Horizontal line represents the horizon and the viewer's eye level within the scene. Vanishing point is a point where parallel lines appear to meet and converge in the distance, which creates a sense of depth in the scene. Depending on the number of vanishing points used, perspectives vary: One-point perspective is a scene composed of a single vanishing point. Two-point perspective uses two vanishing points on the horizontal line. Three-point perspective is two-point perspective with an additional vanishing point below or above the horizontal line, for extreme views looking up or down.

Bird Eye's View

This perspective refers to a viewpoint that is from directly above, as if seen by a bird flying overhead. It provides a broad view of a scene, showing everything laid out like a bigger picture.

Bird eye's view gives a sense of having a complete view and understanding of the scene or environment. This perspective often feels organized, structured, and in control.

Man's Eye View

This perspective, also known as eye level view, refers to a viewpoint where the observer sees the scene at the same level as their eyes, assuming the observer is standing up. Man's eye view is what we typically experience in our daily lives, where objects are seen at eye level or slightly above or below. Because this perspective feels natural to viewers, it creates a sense of familiarity and comfort, making it easy for viewers to relate to the scene.

Worm's Eye View

This perspective refers to a viewpoint where the observer is looking up at the scene from the ground, similar to how a worm might see the world. This creates a dramatic and unusual angle compared to eye level perspectives. Worm's eye view can evoke specific emotions in viewers. It may create feelings of awe, inspiration, or even intimidation, depending on what is depicted and how it is portrayed.

Understanding Perspective Example:

Session 5:

Title	Basics of Perspective
Activity	<i>REFER BELOW</i>
Age Group	All
Learning Objective	
Materials	
Time Allotted	50 minute class
Image Examples	<i>REFER BELOW</i>

In this activity, students will choose a daily object and portray it from three different perspectives: Bird eye's view, Man eye's view, and Worm's eye view. For example, if a student picks a cup, they could depict its top, side, and bottom to represent these perspectives. After getting used to these perspectives, students will explore one-point, two-points, and three-points perspectives. They will start by drawing a horizontal line on their paper and vanishing points

according to the perspective they are depicting. Using these vanishing points as a guide, students will show how a square is affected by each perspective.

BASICS OF PERSPECTIVE ACTIVITY SLIDESHOW

Impact

What do you do afterwards?

Social Media

With the growing integration of media into society and its essential role in people's lives, making sure young artists are well aware of social media's advantages are essential for their success. Social media not only showcases an artist's progress and skills but also helps them grow their platform through connections with like-minded individuals. It is a simple way one can grow and is a powerful tool for self-promotion. The possibilities are endless!

Set Up Instagram:

Instagram is famous for its platform supporting artists of all skill sets, from beginners to masters. Setting up an account is a simple process! If time allows, consider organizing a lesson focused on leveraging the app's benefits. Ensure that each student creates a separate account specifically for posting their artwork. This approach keeps their personal lives distinct from their art, although it remains their choice.

In addition, make sure to add captions with relevant hashtags. Hashtags are essential for getting students' artwork seen on Instagram, providing an opportunity to showcase their hard work to others interested in art. The hashtags don't need to be too specific; broad ones can be effective. Suggested hashtags include, but are not limited to: #Art, #Artist, #Artwork, #ArtistsOnInstagram, #ArtLife, #Creative, and #ArtisticCommunity.

Caption Example:



“Expressive Study on human figures.
Sketchbook, colored pencils, and graphite pencils.
January 23rd 2022

#Art, #Artist, #Artwork, #ArtistsOnInstagram, #ArtLife, #Creative
#ArtisticCommunity #HumanStudies #ColoredPencils”

Competitions

The best part about being a student is the countless number of art competitions that are open. Although it may seem intimidating to the students, encourage them to search for and apply to free art competitions to submit artworks they have created. Although this may be targeted more towards students who allocate more time and effort into their work, as long as it is free, there is no risk involved and it is a great way to teach the students to search for and look out for opportunities where they can get money and scholarships.

Here is a list of free art contests:

- <https://free-art-contests.com/>
- <https://www.callforentries.com/category/art/competitions-and-contests/>
- <https://www.samanthasbell.com/art-contests-for-kids/>
- <https://intercompetition.com/art>
- <https://www.infodesigners.eu/free-art-competitions/1>