

Cluster Class FAQ Sheet

Art with Kristin

(Grades 4-8)



What is my child learning?

The art curriculum for the upper grades is designed to engage students in meaningful activities that reinforce positive self-esteem, individual expression, personal growth, collaborative work, civic responsibility, and a greater acknowledgement of the world and its wonders.

The topics covered over the 5 year art sequence include:

- Elements of Art
- Principles of Design
- Types of Art
- Media Exploration
- Design
- Technology and Art
- Careers in the arts
- Art & Community
- Art & Social Issues
- Art based on Beliefs
- Business and Art
- Art and Mass Media
- Art History
- Artist Studies
- Art Movements
- Art Criticism
- Art Portfolio Development

How often do you see my child?

Each fourth and fifth grade class has art twice a week for 45 minute periods. Sixth, seventh and eighth grade has art once a week for 1 ½ hours.

What are the routines and expectations of your class?

Each art class begins with a mini-lesson. This is where project expectations, class discussions, demonstrations or new material is introduced. Mini-lessons are followed by studio time. This is when students plan out and work on projects independently, in partnerships or within groups. All materials in the art room are organized for easy accessibility, which helps foster student independence. Students maintain year long portfolios where they keep current and past work so that each art piece can be preserved for future art portfolios, which are often important when applying to high schools.

Our class structure is based on 3 categories:

The first is in-class work, which includes drafts or thumbnail sketches, completed art projects, written artist statements and presentations. The second category has the large focus on participation and perseverance. This is in the form of group discussions or table talks as well as showing effort and craftsmanship while being able to meet deadlines. Lastly, out of class assignments will also be given. Students will be keeping sketchbooks which homework assignments will be completed in. These assignments align with the related units we are learning in the classroom.

How is my child graded in your class? Do you give tests? How do you assess my child's learning?

Grading is based on a combination of assessment techniques based on the [National Art Education Association](#). These include the use of rubrics, checklists, self-assessments, artist statements, exit tickets, small group discussions and with many others.

Completed Artwork (40%): Originality of concept and visual design of artwork (balance, color, composition, and space); applying classroom concepts to artwork; and craftsmanship of artwork (planning, effort, technique, accuracy, neatness, and presentation).

Attitude and Effort (40%): Behavior in the art studio, observing safety, class/critique participation, sketchbook notes, handouts,, completing artwork and assignments on-time, and clean up.

Supporting Materials (20%): written reflections, project responses, quizzes and sketchbook homework assignments

How can I reach out/communicate with you regarding my child's progress or behavior?

I can be reached through my email, KHuetter@sprucestreetnyc.org.

How important is this class and how does it connect to the school's curriculum?

Creating, interpreting, and taking risks are all important building blocks in students education that are enhanced in the art room. Art has the inherent power and ability to heal, motivate and enhance. It has been proven repeatedly and recently acknowledged that children who engage early on in art and music perform better in school, test better and have stronger problem solving skills.

In recent years, many schools removed art and music from their curriculum. To their dismay, test scores did not increase, but actually dropped in many cases; children of the digital age are at a loss when it comes to real work that connects the head to the hands. Practitioners are preaching the merits of returning art to the curriculum and are focusing on integrating art within core subjects to reinforce kinesthetic learning with hands on projects that make lessons more memorable.

What can I do to promote learning and further support your class at home?

It is always encouraged to let each child explore art at home in a way that is of interest to them! Asking questions about the art they are currently working is a great way to reinforce skills and knowledge at home and to grasp a sense of what type of art is most interesting for them.

How do the cluster teachers collaborate throughout the year?

Cluster teachers are always in communication with one another throughout the year about curriculum, students, activities and events. We are constantly in communication to discuss our classes and to share information helpful to student enrichment.

