

Children's Creative Development

As your child scribbles with crayons, makes collages with buttons and feathers, and builds with all kinds of blocks, she develops ideas about the world and communicates her thoughts and feelings. As she grows, she thinks creatively and expresses her ideas and feelings visually.

Here's a look at how children develop creative-thinking skills.

A child may

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- * notice characteristics such as light and dark, colors, shapes, movement, textures, and patterns.
- * use all of his senses—and feelings—to interpret the world around him.
- * communicate through postures, gestures, facial expressions, cries, and other sounds, and—after the first year—in words and phrases.
- * explore new things and be drawn to materials and objects with bright colors and interesting textures.
- * see things in his own way—a combination of what's there and his own interpretation.

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- * enjoy scribbling but not distinguish between the drawing and the object she's drawing with, so the crayon will gallop across the paper as she draws a horse trotting.
- * not distinguish the paper from the world beyond—her marks may go off the sheet.
- * enjoy exploring new materials.
- * use her creations as vehicles for fantasies, stories, or symbolic play.
- * name her scribbling when adults ask what she has drawn, even though she didn't intend to draw anything in particular.
- * develop a sense of spatial relations.

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- * discover that she can place blocks or make marks on paper in a way that represents an object's features.
- * draw recognizable shapes, such as circles, ovals, rectangles, triangles, crosses, and combinations of these shapes.
- * begin creating with a specific intention—wanting to draw a man or build a firehouse.

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- * acquire a sense of ownership of his creations.
- * attempt to use graphic symbols to represent objects.
- * respond to an accidental slip of the marker or drips from the brush by incorporating them into the story or the drawing: "Then it began to rain—see the drops of purple rain? Then ..."
- * visually represent particular emotions, such as joy, sadness, and anger.

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- * learn to control the direction and length of a line he's drawing.
- * develop a personal style in his drawings and other creations.
- * draw more complex pictures—a sun in the sky above two girls and a flower in the ground.
- * make more realistic images, distinguishing between people and animals, males and females, adults and children.