



Artist Trading Cards

By Janis Doukakis

“Art is a process, not a product. Where art is concerned, it is the process of creating—exploring, discovering, and experimenting, that has the greatest value. Through self-expression and creativity, children’s skills will develop naturally, and their ability to create will soar.” —MaryAnn F. Kohl

Objective:

Students will experiment with a variety of exciting materials and ideas to create their own Artist Trading Cards to trade and collect.

National Core Arts Standards

Creating- #1, 2, 3

Presenting/Producing- #5, 6

Responding- #7, 8, 9

Connecting- #11

<http://www.nationalartsstandards.org/>

Materials:

Gel Sticks/Metallic Gel Sticks

Connector Paint Box/brush

Jumbo Beeswax Crayons

DuoTip Washable markers

Oil Pastels

Watercolor Pad 9x12

Construction Paper Pad 9x12

www.greatartstartshere.com

www.fabercastell.com



Kids Love Trading Cards

Artist Trading Cards, (ATCs), are fun, miniature pieces of art that are created and traded with other artists. Just like the classic baseball trading card, they measure 2-1/2 x 3-1/2 inches.

They can be organized in a standard trading card sleeve, or collected in a shoe box. ATCs are an excellent way to share one's own art, and collect the art of others.

Why Make ATCs?

The small format of this art seems less intimidating for students to begin, allowing them to really get creative and experiment with a variety of interesting techniques and materials in a quick and exciting way.

The idea behind **trading** the cards is for students to become exposed to the different styles and ideas of other students, and to share and collect in an interesting and social forum. Creating ATCs encourages creativity and improves artistic skills in a fun way.

Teachers can also tie into school curriculum by choosing a theme for students to focus on. **Science**, as in nature, could include animals, insects, sea life, dinosaurs, etc.

Social Studies could include places, cultures and holidays.

Literature might include images from a story. Or, how about having some fun with themes like pets, candy, musical instruments, colors, or cartoon characters? The ideas are endless!

History

In 1997, an artist in Switzerland named M. Vanci Stirnemann created an exhibit of 1,200 handmade Artist Trading Cards. He invited anyone who wanted one of his cards to create one of their own to trade. They later had the first Artist Trading Card event in Zurich, Switzerland. Since then, the idea grew in popularity, and thousands of cards have been traded all around the world.

It's Easy To Begin

ATCs are best made from any kind of colored or drawing paper glued on card stock, watercolor paper, or my favorite, recycled material like the sides of cereal boxes. If you plan to make a lot of cards, a paper cutter could come in handy, or let kids trace around a card template and cut out their own. Rubber stamps, colored pencils, markers, pastels, stickers, collage materials, watercolors, Gel Sticks and crayons are all great supplies to start with. Encourage students to experiment by trying different styles and techniques; how about painting fabric, paper weaving, crayon resist or collage?



The Swap

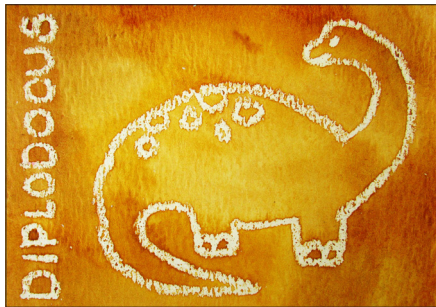
After the class has made some ATCs, have some fun by allowing students to trade cards with their classmates. Once the idea catches on, teachers can arrange for students to trade with other classrooms, and later, coordinate with other schools, setting up exciting face to face swapping events with other student artists. Even connecting and swapping with groups of students internationally can be arranged through the mail. By the end of a few trading events, students will have created an exciting miniature art collection of many ATCs.

Interacting with other students through swapping ATCs can be very exciting and inspirational. Most of all, they offer a fun way to be creative with a variety simple art materials.



Collage with Gel Sticks

Color background with Gel Sticks in a scribbly style with desired colors. Lightly paint over with a wet brush. Dry. Create an image with colored paper and an old book page or sheet of music.



Crayon resist with Gel Sticks

Draw an image with a crayon. Lightly color over it with chosen Gel Stick colors. Paint over color with a wet brush to achieve a desired effect. Crayon drawing resists color, and shows through.



Fabric and watercolor

Paint an 8 x 8 in. piece of muslin with concentrated watercolors. Dry. Fit painted muslin into a 6-1/2 in. embroidery hoop. Cut a simple image out of felt, and glue into position. With a contrasting color of embroidery thread, sew a running stitch around image. Add embroidered details and a google eye if desired. Remove from the hoop and trim 1/2 in. larger than the trading card base. Finish by pulling the fabric tightly over four sides of the base, and glue down.



Collage with magazine scrap

Cut out a fun image and make a black and white line drawing scene around it.



Markers

Draw and simply color with markers.



Collage

Create mini collages with colored paper and old book pages or sheet music. Add google eyes if you like.



Weaving with paper

Fold ATC in half to measure 2.5 x 1.75 in. Cut four slits on the fold, and open the card up again. Weave approx. six 1/2 in. strips of any kind of paper through the slits and trim edges.



Crayons

Simply draw and color with crayons!



Watercolor and colored paper

Paint a piece of watercolor paper in an abstract way with desired colors. Let colors bleed together; sprinkle with salt to achieve interesting effects. Dry. Draw and cut out letters or image—maybe a heart. Fit design onto a 2-1/4 x 3-1/4 in. piece of colored paper. Center that onto a 2-1/2 x 3-1/2 in. white ATC background. Use a hole punch for the stamp edge effect. Nice **Valentine** idea.



Pastel on colored paper

Draw and color with pastels. Let a little of the colored paper show through.



Metallic Gel Sticks on black paper

Color an image onto a dark background with Gel Sticks in desired colors. Brush gently with a wet brush to achieve a desired effect.



Black DuoTip Marker

Create an abstract line doodle, and fill with a variety of fun, repetitive patterns.