



# Get Smart with the Arts!

## Meet Pinkalicious and Peterrific

Premiering on PBS KIDS in February 2018, the show PINKALICIOUS & PETERRIFIC™ empowers children to think and express themselves creatively. Pinkalicious sees the world just a little bit differently than most—and not just because she loves everything pink! She is resourceful, resilient, and creative, and able to solve problems and find the joy in everyday activities. Peter (better known as Peterrific) brings along his own fun ideas and sense of humor.


Like most children, Pinkalicious and Peterrific especially love the arts. The series, based on a comprehensive arts curriculum, is a terrific way to inspire young viewers to discover and engage in their own artistic talents and interests.

## Did you know?

Did you know that ordinary arts activities can improve children's school skills and "smarts"? Simple activities—done solo or in groups—such as singing, playing instruments, dancing, make-believe play, and painting or drawing can help children be better at math, science, and literacy. In fact, a student who is engaged in the arts is four times *more* likely to be recognized for academic achievement and four times *less* likely to drop out of school later.

Today's focus on academic subjects, even in preschool and early elementary grades, has often lessened the time that children in school have for what some think of as "extras," including the arts.





Yet art activities not only help children learn, they also provide wonderful opportunities to build self-confidence and self-expression. And because children have different styles of learning, the arts provide opportunities for children to succeed and excel, further improving their self-esteem.

## What are the “arts”?


There are four areas in which young children typically experience the arts:

- **Dance** — moving to words, music, and rhythms; plus all types of dance (ballet, jazz, hip-hop, modern, tap, folk, and so on)
- **Drama/Theatre** — imaginary and make-believe play, puppetry, creating characters and acting out stories
- **Music** — singing, playing instruments, creating songs, clapping and other rhythm games
- **Visual arts** — painting, drawing, sculpting, collage, printmaking, and crafts

All children are artistic in their own way. Most children love to tell and retell stories—the first step in dramatic play. Whether it’s singing a well-loved song in circle time, making and playing homemade instruments, or listening to a wide variety of music, children naturally respond to music. From scribbles to squiggles to finger painting, and from collages to making clay or sand sculptures, children love to get messy with art materials. Very young children use their bodies to move through space, explore their world, and express feelings and ideas through dance, from swaying and wiggling to twirling and leaping.

## How can the arts be used to help kids learn?

One of the best things about integrating the arts into a child’s day is that art activities are such great fun. The arts can be done at little or no cost, inside or outside, as part of a regular routine, or at a special time. Here are just some of the academic benefits of using the arts with young children:

- **Math skills:** Visual arts activities help kids recognize patterns, shapes, sizes, as well as improving their graphing abilities and spatial relationships. Dancing, singing, and playing musical instruments also help children recognize patterns and learn about counting.
  - **Science skills:** Art adventures, just like hands-on science, invite kids to make decisions, explore and experiment, and solve problems. While engaging in the arts, kids—like scientists—are encouraged to take risks and be innovative.
  - **Language and literacy skills:** The arts offer many opportunities to learn new vocabulary, gain subject knowledge, and communicate with others. Whether creating short skits or made-up stories, performing, or presenting their work to others, children improve and expand their reading, speaking, writing, and vocabulary expertise.
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- **Social and emotional skills:** When engaging in the arts, kids learn such lifelong skills as collaboration, decision-making, and sharing. They also learn ways to creatively express their emotions. The arts can be a way to build a sense of community, bringing people together to create something or perform. Because the arts celebrate and incorporate many cultures, a variety of art activities encourage an appreciation of diversity.

## How can you help?

You don't need to be an expert to help children participate in the arts. Whether you are a teacher, librarian, afterschool educator, parent, or grandparent, you can support children's artistic experiences easily and inexpensively. Try some of these ideas:

- **Make up stories.** Use homemade costumes and props to act out stories or draw pictures to make the words come alive. Create your own storybook together.
- **Beautify your surroundings.** Spruce up a park, a blank wall, or an ugly appliance with kids' drawings, collages, or murals. Invite your friends and neighbors to join in!
- **Listen to all kinds of music.** Feel the beat. Have a dance party! Add scarfs or wands. Draw how music makes you feel. Sing your favorite song on the way to school, waiting for the bus, or just before bed.
- **Attend a museum, local arts exhibit, or concert.** Check your local library and look online for free passes and neighborhood happenings.
- **Read a book about art or artists.** Talk about the art that was created and what inspired the artist. Encourage children to think of themselves as artists and congratulate them on their creativity.



And remember....have fun...  
no matter what you do!

PINKALICIOUS & PETERIFIC™  
is produced by WGBH Boston and Sixteen South.



Funding for PINKALICIOUS & PETERIFIC™  
is provided by public television viewers.  
Produced with the participation of Northern  
Ireland Screen. Corporate funding is provided  
by Kiddie Academy® and Homer.



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