

Chalkboard Art: Gateway to Learning

Teachers do multiple chalkboard drawings for their classes, often 3 x 4 feet in size and in full color, for every Lesson Block. And while the students do learn artistic techniques and develop an observant eye for details, they also note that this piece of art was made for them. In the same vein, whenever a teacher brings a poem, song, script or story that she or he has written for a class, it affects the class in a significant way. By this the children may sense that their teacher really cares about them; that they have gone through all this work just for them. This has long lasting significance for the long-term emotional health of the children.

Beyond that, and perhaps equally significant for the teacher, is the idea that visual pictures, not unlike verbal pictures, connect with the inner life of the elementary-aged student like a seed. All of the arts have special significance for this age group and can serve as a tool to create and deepen true interest in a topic, that years later can be nourished into a deep understanding and a potential career path.

In elementary school, the arts play a pivotal role, whether music, drama, dance, speech, handwork, modeling, painting, drawing or any other artistic medium. In this stage, the emotional life of the child is nourished and the concepts, or the seeds that are planted alongside find fertile soil.

Every teacher then, while employing the arts in his or her teaching, is always wondering how a picture will help the child develop not only a healthy emotional life, but offer moral picture-seeds that will blossom within them as adults.

By Rick Betz

Students' perspectives

"It inspires me to work hard on my drawing and school in general because I see how much work teachers do for me."

"When I walk in and see a beautiful board drawing, something makes me want to learn about it."

"It is such a nice surprise when you walk into the room and there is a new picture on the board. It makes you think, I want to draw like that."

"When learning a subject it is one thing to be told about it, but when there is a beautiful drawing to go with the lecture, it opens up a new dimension of understanding."

"When I see that my teacher has worked so hard on a board drawing for my class it makes me feel happy and grateful...I appreciate how they teach us in a creative way. I love to be able to incorporate creativity into my learning."

"When I walk into the classroom I love seeing board drawings. It fills me with excitement and wonder. It shows me what I can accomplish if I work for it."

"Attentiveness, asking questions, and wanting to learn more, can come from one masterpiece board drawing."

Facing page: Side by side examples of chalkboard art created by the teacher (left), and student's work inspired by that art (right).

