

The First-Draft Gallery

CREATIVE MAKING

SKILL: CREATIVE CONFIDENCE

60 MINUTES

RECOMMENDED AGE RANGE

Ages 6 to 12. This matches the age range in the Crayola and Talker Research survey, and the window where kids are most willing to make things and most ready to learn that their choices, not their polish, are the thing.

WHAT YOU NEED

Paper, a few sheets per person

Crayons, markers, or colored pens

Scissors, tape, and glue

Found materials (cardboard scraps, twist ties, fabric bits)

A 25-minute timer

One shared theme everyone agrees on at the start

ACTIVITY STEPS

- 01 Pick one shared theme together. Easy starter: an animal that does not exist. Anything goes. Each person says their commitment out loud before anyone starts making.
- 02 Set the timer for 25 minutes. Everyone makes their own version. No critiquing, no peeking over shoulders, and no screens in the room. Mess is fine. Mess is the point.
- 03 When the timer ends, line up every version side by side on the same flat surface. Include the parents' versions, especially the rough ones. Stand back and look at them all together first.
- 04 Take turns being the creator. Each creator walks the family through three choices they made along the way. The family is not allowed to say "I love it." Only questions about choices: why this color, what did you almost do instead, what did you keep.
- 05 Close by asking each maker what one choice they would experiment with if they did this again next weekend. Write it on the back of their piece. No promise to redo. Just label the next decision.

THE DEEPER LESSON

The Crayola and Talker Research survey behind this issue found kids want grown-ups to praise their effort and decisions, not their finished work. AI can already finish anything. The part the machine cannot do is decide, in your kid's voice, which choices were worth keeping in and which were worth cutting out.

CONVERSATION STARTER

If a computer could finish your drawing for you in one second, which of your decisions would you still want to keep yours?

Raised Nimble

You cannot out-compete AI. But you can out-human it.

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