

Messes, Mistakes, and Masterpieces



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Messes, Mistakes, and Masterpieces

Studio Management Philosophy

An art studio is a place of creativity and creation. Each artist sits before a blank canvas and has the opportunity to imagine and create a masterpiece from scratch. Creating is hard work and takes more than memorizing and learning formulas. Rather, art is full of exploration and finding unique solutions to unique problems. No single work of art is ever repeatable. Creating a masterpiece involves taking a risk and being vulnerable. Each artist will make messes, make mistakes, and in the end make a masterpiece. In order for an artist to feel comfortable enough to have fun, make a mess and make big mistakes, they must feel a sense of safety, acceptance, positivity, respect, and freedom to explore!

Studio management is vital to the studio atmosphere I envision. I want my studio to feel comfortable and consistent. I want the studio to be a place where artists feel like they can explore themselves. My desire to know my artists all individually is what inspires me to have a family-like atmosphere in our studio. A place where artists can imagine, investigate, create, and analyze without fear is a safe place. It means the artists all work on acceptance of self and others by exemplifying positivity through their words and actions. As a family of artists, the number one priority is that we respect each other and the supplies. Respect looks like cleaning messes, owning up to mistakes, and creating masterpieces! The goal is that if the studio is a safe family-like environment, then artists will feel free and motivated to learn. It's *okay* to make messes and mistakes because it's part of learning, growing, and knowing each other!

Creating a consistent studio atmosphere is not just a vision, but is rooted in studio management. That is why I have a plan for the first few days of school to introduce my artists to the ways that the studio will run. In the prevention plan one can find the procedures set in place to run a class from handing in work to sharpening a pencil. There is also an intervention plan in subsequent pages that discusses the many ways I can intervene with low studio impact to help adjust the studio atmosphere from becoming chaotic and off-track. It is my job to keep the studio safe, engaging, and connected to the homes that the artists come from. I later discuss why the family-to-school connections are so important and how I plan to implement these connections. Studio management is compiled of many parts and requires all the artists to take responsibility for their messes, mistakes, and masterpieces by following the procedures set in place by me.

It is invaluable that artists are able to make messes freely and without judgment as long as they follow the class procedures to respect their space and clean. It is vital that every artist feels like an artist and can imagine, create, and make mistakes without guilt! Naming mistakes as learning opportunities rather than "error" encourages others to accept mistakes as a positive experience. If we create a stable studio, our family will be capable of creating masterpieces.



First Days

A productive art studio is a positive place that fosters both growth and art skills! For many students my classroom (our art studio) will be the last formal visual arts class they take. As the educator, it is my job to create and provide students a safe place to learn and grow. While I have an entire year to accomplish these objectives, during the first days it is my challenge to build a positive foundation to my art class. No artist can work or create on weak foundation. It is of vital importance to make sure the first days of school leave the students curious, engaged, and confident yet challenged. Through setting up a series of simple goals to implement during the first few days, I can ensure my artists will begin on a solid foundation for growing and developing art skills.

Create An Exciting Environment

- Provide a well-lit room with both natural and artificial light
- Organize a wall space for a gallery-feel display of old students' art
- Set up tables with ample work room clumped around classroom
- Build a library of art magazines, books, and informational texts
- Display a plethora of both 3-D art and 2-D art with many colors
- Display a few pieces of my own finished works and works-in-progress on walls
- Create a safety zone where safety material is always kept

Mold A Welcoming Atmosphere

- Greet students at the door
- Call the students, "artists"
- Allow students time to fill out an "Artist Statement"
- Let students get to know each other by allowing them to sit anywhere during the first week
- Be positive and encouraging through words and actions, yet confident

Display Value Of Respect

- Remain calm and respectful in all situations, no matter how crazy
- Always use manners (please, thank you, you're welcome)
- Really listen to each student when they speak through eye-contact and appropriate body language
- Smile often but show that respect is serious
- Speak with a confident voice, though not intimidating



Inspire Positive Learning

- Show a slideshow of the semester's art projects
- Allow students to write down certain themes they wish to explore
- Share a picture of my own art from junior high to exemplify growth
- Give a photograph of a famous work of art for the students to write down one (achievable) goal they have for themselves for the year on it
- Show them mistakes in my own work to illustrate how mistakes help us grow
- Discuss how critique is good for growth and not to be afraid of it

Illustrate Studio Policies

- Use a humorous and informative slideshow to describe class policies
- Have a poster of the most positive and vital class "rules"
- Call *rules* "Techniques", students need good technique to be a good artist

Sketch Out Studio Procedures

- Have a simple and engaging slideshow of "how to's" for studio procedures
- Give a handout reference sheet for students
- Hand out a dirty paint brush, a dirty rag, pencil shavings, misc. art supplies, and scrap paper to 5 random students and have the class help each student put their objects in their respective places (recycle bin, marker drawer, etc.)
- Have simple and student designed posters by the areas where supplies go with directions and visuals

Explore Student Responsibilities

- Use a strong voice when explaining the expectations
- Act out what I would do when I have to hand in late homework (and other responsibilities)
- Ask students why they think it is important to be respectful
- Make the studio feel like the students' studio so they become responsible for it and their own art naturally
- Encourage students to make this year the biggest year of growth

Support Student Engagement

- Ask questions frequently to track understanding
- Use "No Opt Out"
- Use "Stretch It"
- Allow time for student input to talk about things of interest to the students
- Capture attention and hold it by allowing the students to do most of the talking



Prevention Plan

In every studio, there are messes. Sometimes it's just a misplaced container of paint, other times it's the complexities of sharing a studio with other artists (25 artists /S a crowd). Without procedures and an organized storage space for both supplies and artwork, the studio would quickly look like a tornado had ripped through the center. However, with general preventative policies and procedures in place, our studio can be like a comfortable and creative getaway for all artists.

Studio Norm/Motto

Being an ARTIST means our studio is full of positivity and students trying their best. It means we strive to inspire each other and we respect one another. We try our best because even when our risks fail, we welcome the learning opportunity! This will motto will be hung up in the front of the classroom and will be explained on the second day of school.



Studio-Running Procedures

Having a way for our studio to run is vital to keeping things organized and predictable in my class. It cuts back on wasted time, which provides more time for us all to create!

Taking Attendance

- I will provide a "Do-Now" for the students to do upon entering the room, so while they know right away to get to work I can take attendance quietly and seamlessly.

School Announcements

- Students are to remain quiet during the announcements, which should not be difficult since they need to be quiet by the time the second bell rings. This is important because some students will need to hear what is broadcasted to the school.

Entering the Room

- Students will come in, take what they need out of their backpack (part of the "Do-Now") and get to work immediately on the "Do-Now" on the board/screen. Students can talk until the bell, but once the bell rings for class to begin they must get to work quietly and individually.

Leaving the Room

- When class is over, students are to remain at their desks until the bell rings so the doorway is not crowded, but they may talk with their neighbors.

Going to the Bathroom

- Students will use a hand signal to ask to use the bathroom. They will make the sign-language sign for "R" I will nod their direction if I allow them to leave, I will have a pass by the door for the students to take.

Going to the Nurse

- An individual pass can be given out to a student to go to the nurse if they really do feel like they can no longer function in class.

Sharpening Pencils

- In an art studio this will likely be an issue a lot and to avoid traffic at the pencil sharpeners, I will not only have a few sharpeners throughout the room, but students will have an assigned sharpener depending on where they are seated and are welcome to get up on their own and go. However, if someone is at their assigned sharpener they're to wait at their seat.

Lending Pencils

- Pencils can be "borrowed" from a pencil jar if students need. I will keep ten sharpened pencils in that jar and ten must be there at the end of the class.

Storing Personal Items

- Backpacks can be kept at the door (depending on the size of the classroom) or under their desk/chairs if the classroom is smaller. Personal art supplies can be kept in the classroom by class period, similar to a cubby.

Cleaning Desks

- Time will be reserved at the end of each class to clean the studio. Supplied need to be returned and the tables and desks need to be wiped clean by those sitting at the table.



Lesson-Running Procedures

In order to have a studio that is supportive to instruction and teaching, there are necessary routines that should be put in place. These procedures help the behind-scenes work run more smoothly.

Daily Agenda

- I plan to write the daily agenda on the board, a rough outline so students know what to expect.

Opening Routine

- Students will enter the room and on the screen will be the "Do-Now" with also a list of the materials I would like each student to have out and ready at the beginning of class. By the time the bell rings, student would ideally be starting the "Do-Now" at their seats with all their materials ready for the day (excluding major art supplies like paint, canvas, and clay).

Distributing/Collecting Supplies

- Projects with little supplies (pencil, paper, eraser, pen) I will assign certain students to pass out/pick up the supplies. For projects with major supply set up/clean up (paint, clay, and sculpture projects), I will call on tables at a time to get their supplies or put them away.

Confusion Sign

- If a student is unclear with the instructions I've given then can raise their hand with a "peace sign" to ask for me to repeat it a *second* time.

Finished Early?

- When students finish early I will provide multiple choices for these students. 1. They can work on extra credit projects I have ready. 2. They can work on another art project/free art time (but it must be towards a project, not just doodling). 3. They can work on "Gallery Management" which is a project I will present to the class at the beginning of the year. Students must verbally tell me what they'd like to work on.

Gallery Management Project

- I will put on four shows throughout the school year (after each quarter). Each show will need a flyer (advertisement), a theme, a title, artist labels and statements, a brochure, proper matting and framing of artwork, and a display set up. Each student that helps with the gallery show will get their name on the flyer and brochure as a "Museum Curator." If no students choose to work on this option I will do a toned-down version of this.

Turning in Artwork

- Each class will have their own "In Box" to submit their artwork. They must have their name, class period, and a title on the back of their pieces

Returning Artwork

- Grades and comments will be recorded on scrap paper/sticky note for them and I will have students pick up their work from an "Out Box" for their specific class

Absent Artists

- If a student is absent I will have a box where they can pick up the forms/directions they missed the day (or days) prior class specific. In order to get an extension on the deadline the artist him or herself needs to take responsibility and come talk to me. This increases teacher-student relationship and informs me as to why the student needs an extension



Interaction Procedures

Speaking in the studio is always okay, however, there are times when it needs to be quieter or even silent in order to hear another peer or myself speak. These procedures will help to ensure that students are respectful

Signal to capture attention

- I will be purchasing a Singing Bowl for my studio. With this instrument you can keep the noise going until all the students are quiet and listening, and without much time students will know to be quiet right away.
- If I need to quickly grab their attention I will ring a triangle.
- When appropriate (after small group discussion) I will use the "if you can hear me clap once, if you can hear my clap twice, if you can hear me hands on your head, okay now hands in your lap... Thank you"
- I can turn off one bank of lights to quiet them down, grab their attention, and turn the lights back on
- With junior high I can say, "One! Two!" And have the students say "Eyes on you!" In high school I'd instead count and assume that by five, if they were still talking we'd have to stay later as a class to make up for lost time. I would also have my hand in the air counting to five.

Signal to capture attention during a lecture/lesson

- Sometimes students will be squirrely and without having to constantly hush students I will simply stop speaking until students listen or begin to speak very quietly. Of course there are instances when I will need to be loud to reel them back in.

During a lesson

- Students are to SLANT during a demonstration/lecture Note taking is permitted only so long as it is on-task. Students are otherwise to remain quiet and respectful of the speaker.

Speaking during independent work

- Artists are absolutely allowed to talk during work time, however if it becomes too loud or too off topic I will give the students two warnings before they must remain silent for the remainder of the class. However, I am assuming I will rarely have to do this.

Speaking during small-groups

- Discussion is to be purposeful and students must remain on topic at all times. If students are off task they get one warning before they have to work alone.



Effective Teacher Discourse

Having a bank of phrases I can say and practice will help me as a teacher to stay both positive and specific rather than blanket, 'good job!' statements. Below is a list of a few statements I can use in my class:

- *Here are your choices, now you can choose*
- *You are the only one who can make things happen for you*
- *I like to break things down into steps so I can see my process*
- *Look back over your work and notice what you did to improve it.*
- *I can see you head spinning with ideas and questions*
- *Figure out what you want to know and then explore it on your own*
- *It's OK to make mistakes because it shows me that you've tried something challenging!*
- *I'm glad you pushed yourself to continue on your own even when it felt difficult.*
- *We are a like a family of artists*
- *Help each other succeed in class because you don't gain anything by keeping solutions to yourself.*
- *This is a great example of what makes our studio such an awesome place to work!*

Relieving Energy

Taking brain breaks and getting out pent up energy can be very helpful so some students. In an art class where we sit for much of the class working on art it is important to shake up the routine and our legs a bit.

Stretch break

- This would look like each student standing up and touching their toes, reaching high in the air, and shaking it out and quietly talking to each other for one minute. I would put up a timer on the screen/board and by the time it showed "000" students have to be sitting again.

Yoga

- Knowing some yoga moves would help my students feel like they are taking a break for yoga, which has connotations of being peaceful and stretching.

Musical Chairs

- We will not literally play musical chairs, but for this break I would put on a higher-energy song (only about 1-2 minutes) and let students walk around the studio looking at other students' artwork. I would use the same song for each time we did this.

Coconut (jr. high only)

- The COCONUT Stretch would be something that the student would have to do as a class. The students and I could all call out together the letters as we did each stretch.

Brain-break

- This book of strategies to do something physical and generally non-disruptive would be a good way to break up certain classes with new activities.



Intervention Plan

Having an intervention plan is a concrete way to deal with behavioral issues in the art studio. The hope is that the prevention plan will hamper the amount of issues we have in the studio, however, if I am not ready to take action on mild to severe issues in the studio the safety (physically, emotionally, and mentally) of my artists is at stake. It is hard to work in an environment that feels disrupted and critical. The goal of the intervention plan is less of a demerit and consequential system, but a set of actions to help students change their behavior and make positive choices. The ultimate goal is to come along side and help, rather than to punish and penalize students in my class. The follow strategies aim to establish concrete and ready-ways to intervene when needed.

General Guidelines

These blanket guidelines cover the way every single intervention strategies would be carried out. These guidelines truly are the way that teacher's should be teaching, it's a way of being all the time, but specifically important to remember during behavioral issues.

Stay Calm and Positive

- Take deep breaths
- Reframe the negative behaviors into a positive light
- Practice patience
- Don't let one student ruin your day
- Add levity to situations

Assume the Best

- Your students *all* want to learn
- Review the policy
- Reteach the procedure

Preserve Dignity

- Reframe the student's behavior
- Take privately or with anonymity
- Separate the student from the misbehavior
- Encourage students to make choices/be responsible
- Save your own dignity by staying calm

Move on

- Minimize disruptions with non-verbal cues
- Be quick to respond and even faster to move on (not allowing a discussion)
- One-word focus statements (names)



Appropriate Responses

Some misbehavior is mild and non-disruptive like a student not getting out a certain supply. However, some behavior involves students making the environment feel tense and unsafe like when a student uses an X-acto-knife as a threatening weapon I need to be sure my response is appropriate to the misbehavior.

Minor Misbehaviors

Insignificant misbehaviors are small and only affect the student who is misbehaving. Some examples are: forgetting a supply, chewing gum, making a side-comment, coming to class late once, accidentally spilling paint, doodling during instruction, zoning out/looking out the window, etc.

- Ignoring; Sometimes ignoring behavior lets students see that the misbehavior is okay, so this should rarely be the response.
- Using Proximity; Standing close or moving towards a student while giving instruction refocuses students and increased positive behavior.
- Non-verbal Cues; A look or hand motion is sometimes all a student needs to check their behavior and stop misbehaving.
- Quick Verbal Cues; Saying a student's name or calling on a student will grab their attention and stop the doodling/zoning out with a minor reprimand.
- Narrate Positive Behavior; Commenting on the average popular of students and the work they are accomplishing or the behaviors they're doing is a good way to adjust minor misbehaviors.
- Speedy Correction; in private if the problem is common and in public if it isn't reoccurring and can be fixed with a word or two.

More Serious Misbehaviors

Misbehaviors that fall under the "slightly serious" category usually affect other students and contribute to a negative studio environment. Examples are: daily complaining about class, texting in class, talking during class, interrupting, rushing through assignments, Often late to class, consistently not handling supplies appropriately, etc.

- Narrate Positive Behavior; Commenting on the average popular of students and the work they are accomplishing or the behaviors they're doing is a good way to adjust minor misbehaviors.
- Enforce Responsibility; Help students choose the right option by showing them concrete ways to be responsible, but their future seemingly in their hands.
- Private Correction; In conversation or in a little note, tell the student what you notice and what you're like to see change and then ask them to make a choice.
- New Routine; Help student readjust how they focus, take notes, and handle supplies- create a new routine for them to follow.
- Problem Solve; Walk students through the process of problems solving by looking at the issue, the possible "formulas" to get to the one solution.
- Quick Public Correction; While publically calling out a student can be hazardous, if this student is misbehaving often, making a quick public correction can make them feel self-conscious enough to change their behavior.



Chronic Misbehaviors

These behaviors cannot be tolerated because they jeopardize other students' learning and can sometimes be harmful to the classroom safety. Examples are: refusing to do work, stealing from the studio, daily calling out, name-calling, bullying, disrespecting peers and teacher, threatening others, etc.

- Private Discussion; Rather than a private comment to the student, chronic and serious behaviors need to be addressed with a conversation between the teacher and student.
- Quick Public Correction; While publically calling out a student can be hazardous, if this student is misbehaving often, making a quick public correction can make them feel self-conscious enough to change their behavior.
- Consequences Ready; Have consequences ready for students who *always* call out like writing a journal entry about why they continue to call out and how they will practice better behaviors or if they always mistreat supplies, demand that the student sharpen all the charcoal pencils to practice correct treatment.
- Logical Responses; If a student is bullying other do not make student stay in during lunch to do extra work, instead address the student privately and then sent the student to the counselors office
- Choices; Give students choices in their consequence and how to behave properly so they feel that their life is their responsibility.
- Establish Positive Relationship; After each consequence reset the relationship as if nothing has hindered it and show **love** and **support** to the student.

General Consequences

The following is a list of general consequences that can be used to help change behavior in students. Some consequences will not be appropriate from some behaviors, but these will in general be a grab bag of repercussions to use. This is an important list to have in order to be prepared to give students choices.

- Behavior Contract; A contract students need to fill out which allows them to reflect on their behavior and how they can change it in the future to be signed by student, teacher, and parent.
- Emails and Calls Home; This works for good and poor behavior. If the behavior is only slightly serious a call home to the student will suffice, if the issue is chronic a call home to parents may be warranted
- Notes to Students; Writing notes to students about what I notice they do correctly and incorrectly and asking to see a positive behavior switch before
- Do Over; Instead of *demanding* students to "try again" I will rephrase the statement to say, "Okay Georgia, I noticed you didn't clean your paint brush like you were supposed to, I'll give you one more chance to do that the right way! Thank you!" It accomplishes the same thing without it coming off as childish and demanding
- Refocus Desk/Chair; A desk or chair near the back of the room for the student to calm down and think about how to make a better choice. If problems persist I will ask the student to sit "with" me while working on projects to make sure tasks are being accomplished

Behavioral Contract

A contract will be used only for chronic or serious misbehaviors and will require student, parent, and teacher involvement. This is aimed at self-reflection and behavior change, not punishment.

YOU ARE IN CONTROL OF YOUR LIFE

Name: _____

Period: _____

Date: _____

How are you feeling today? What is your attitude like? _____

How did you behave today that was inappropriate? _____

Why did I behave this way? _____

Next Time...

Next time I misbehave my consequence will be... _____

In the future I will be an ARTIST by:

- A- Having an attitude of positivity
- R- Respecting myself, others, and all supplies
- T- Taking appropriate risks, knowing that some mistakes are okay
- I- Seeking to inspire others
- S- Setting achievable goals
- T- Trying my best

How???

I will have an attitude of positivity by: _____

I will respect myself, others, and supplies by: _____

One appropriate risk I can take is: _____

I will inspire others by: _____

One achievable goal I have is: _____

I will try my best by: _____

Student Signature

Teacher Signature

Parent/Guardian Signature

Family School Connections

I can't think of a studio without outside connections. We as artists want our families to see what we create, accomplish, and talk about. That is why the connections between home and school are so vital- they keep what we do at the studio relevant and purposeful! These connections become a conversation between artist and world. Opening these lines of communications also allows feedback from home and can only increase the success of projects and the environment of the studio. This is why I plan to be proactive in my connections going back home. I want my studio to be an open studio.

Gallery Website

This gallery website will be kept updated at least once a week with project schedules and due dates as well as monthly gallery updates where students' work is posted online professionally.

Weekly Phone Calls

At the end of each week (or on one specific day of the week) I will pick at random one or two students to call at home to thank them for their effort and creativity in class. I will find something positive to say and this will work with dual purposes since I will unfortunately have to call with negative feedback from time to time. This will therefore diminish the stereotype that phone calls home are bad.

Monthly Newsletter

While we will have a website, it will be important for there to be a monthly substitute for homes without internet access or in homes where a computer isn't always accessible. The monthly newsletter will also have a schedule of due dates for the future, past accomplishments, and a description of what we're doing in class.

Parent Feedback

In addition to the monthly newsletter, I will send home a simple form that allows parents to send in their requests/suggestions/feedback to me monthly. This gives those vocal parents a chance to get their voice in and it would provide me a perfect avenue for me to email or call them in response to talk about their feedback (which makes parents feel like it's two-way and not one-way).

Progress Reports

After each quarter, when grades are sent out to parents I will send home clear and concise feedback for students and parents to explain what the students are doing well, how they can improve, and why I am thankful for them in my studio. This encourages the hard workers to work harder and those who put little effort in that they do in fact bring something to the class (motivation to work harder).

Introductory Letter to Parents/Guardians

At the beginning of each semester, I will send home a letter to the "Art Mentors" introducing myself, the course, and letting them know of all the ways I will be in touch with them. This letter home makes the initial contact with families and serves as the "handshake" between home and school.

Welcome to Mrs. Limkeman's Art Studio



Dear Art Mentors,

Welcome to the world of being an art mentor! Your son or daughter is now an artist in training, and each artist needs an art mentor—that's you! I call you mentors not based on artistic ability, but because you are your child's primary support. Your "mentorship" is vital to their learning not just in my studio, but also in other courses. Research shows that the key predictor to a student's success in school is parent/guardian involvement (this includes art class)! Education is important for your child so encourage them when they feel stuck. Remind them that, "Hard days are the best, because that's when champions are made" —Gabby Douglas. I am so excited to be working with your young artists!

A bit about myself: Since I was six years old I desired to be an artist. I remember drawing crayon-colored animals and selling them on my front lawn for a quarter. I grew up in a small Vermont village and graduated in May 2014 from Westmont College with my art degree. I have substitute taught, coached junior high and high school lacrosse teams, and served as a teacher's assistant in multiple art classrooms. When I'm not teaching or painting, I enjoy hiking, beach volleyball, lacrosse, and reading.

Let me reiterate my excitement to teach your son or daughter! Your artist is at the perfect age to be discovering his or herself. I am so thrilled to be a part of that time! I love teenagers because those years are full of exploration of self and of the world. As Thomas Merton once said, "Art enables us to FIND ourselves and LOSE ourselves at the same time." My goal is that our art studio will be a place where we can all learn, make mistakes, grow, find and lose ourselves each day. I will post the artists' work on our class online gallery (samanthalimkemanweebly.com) for your viewing. I will also be posting bi-weekly newsletters from our studio online! Thank you for being a mentor to your emerging artist. This is going to be a wonderful year!



Excitedly,

Mrs. Limkeman
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