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# The Artful Parent: Simple Ways To Fill Your Family's Life With Art And Creativity--Includes Over 60 Art Projects For Children Ages 1 To 8



## Synopsis

Bring out your children's creativity and imagination with more than 60 kids' art activities from the creator of [www.ArtfulParent.com](http://www.ArtfulParent.com). Art making is a wonderfully fun way for young children to tap into their imagination, deepen their creativity, and explore new materials, all while strengthening their fine motor skills and developing self-confidence. The Artful Parent has all the tools and information you need to encourage your children's creativity through art. You'll learn how to set up an art space, how to talk to children about their artwork, how to choose the best art supplies (without breaking the bank), how to repurpose and organize the piles of art created, and even how to use kids' art activities to soften everyday transitions. The more than sixty engaging kids' arts and crafts projects included here are accessible and developmentally appropriate for one- to eight-year-olds, and they're a far cry from the cookie-cutter crafts many of us did in school as kids. From bubble prints to musical chairs art, these kids art activities allow children to explore art materials, techniques, and ideas as they grow more creative every day. With activities for downtimes, action art for releasing energy, and recipes for making your own art materials, this book is your guide for raising an artful family.

## Book Information

Paperback: 304 pages

Publisher: Roost Books (April 9, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1590309642

ISBN-13: 978-1590309643

Product Dimensions: 7 x 0.7 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.7 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 157 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #77,813 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #68 in Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Crafts & Hobbies > Crafts for Children #89 in Books > Parenting & Relationships > Family Activities #360 in Books > Self-Help > Creativity

## Customer Reviews

Jean Van Hulle, mother of two, lives with her family in the mountains of western North Carolina. She has been writing about children's art and creativity on her blog, The Artful Parent, since 2008. A graduate of Wellesley College with a major in art history and studio art, Jean worked in various art and nonprofit fields before devoting her time to writing and raising kids. She loves to

share process-oriented art, seasonal crafts, and joyful learning opportunities with her own daughters and through her children's art groups, her magazine articles, and on her blog. To see what artful adventures her family is up to, visit [www.ArtfulParent.com](http://www.ArtfulParent.com).

I have three young children. When I had just one toddler, it was easy to pull out a pad of paper and encourage my daughter to draw with me. With three though? I just feel guilty that I'm sitting with the kids coloring and making a mess instead of doing something else. This book addresses this- it's an inspiring reminder to put a value on art with my children, backed up by the many reasons why open ended, developmentally appropriate art exploration is important for my kids. The author has long been an inspiration for me through her blog, but I love how well she speaks to me in this book. A lot of the ideas in the book have been mentioned in her blog over the years, but many are expanded upon and tied in with developmental phases in the book. None of it was earth shattering to me, but art with children has been an interest of mine for years now, and I have read a lot on the topic. What makes this book special? Well, I appreciate that the author has a laid back attitude about art. I like that she is a busy mother like me. I appreciate the projects she suggests and more specifically the suggestions she makes for making time and space for art in the home. It's a very practical approach and the voice of experience shines through for me.

I am a studio educator at a museum and parent of young children, and I'm excited to say I've found a book that I'll be referencing for a long time to come. Being already firmly rooted in the "process over product" camp when it comes to approaching artmaking with kids, I ordered this book out of curiosity. I wondered whether it would reveal something new or end up at the bottom of a pile of books I had high hopes for but probably wouldn't read. Since I didn't yet know her approach well enough before reading her book, I didn't know what to expect. To my surprise, Van't Hul found a friendly and approachable way to ignite NEW excitement about what I already believe. After reading the book I felt encouraged as a parent in my effort to fill my own family's life with art and creativity. Though only a few of her project ideas in the book were new to me, I found myself thinking of ideas I could try in my home and at work right away. So, this book works for me exactly as I want it to, and as I think it was designed: helping me re-see ways for me to be a supporter, co-learner and facilitator of learning and fun with my children and students.

The Artful Parent is not just a book full of potential art projects that you can do with your kids. The Artful Parent is a thoughtful exploration into how to create an environment that is easier to offer art

projects and creative sessions for your children- from how children view art projects to setting up the space in your home to make it easy to access projects for your creative offspring. There are also art projects within the book. What I really enjoy about Jean Van't Hul's projects is that from start to end, they are easy to accomplish. If you sift through Pinterest or the endless blogs of fanciful (and complicated) projects, you don't always get what you set out for. The projects are too complicated and end up frustrating the caregiver and the child. The projects that you find in *The Artful Parent*, as well as Van't Hul's blog and eBooks, are well thought out, easy to execute and keep my child (a boy) interested in doing and learning more.

Art in my home consisted of free access to crayola crayons, printer paper, and maybe scissors, with a project, using different mediums, thrown in occasionally that would end up leaving my children frustrated when they couldn't create exactly what was in the picture or replicate a pre-made sample. What a blessing it was to stumble upon the author's blog, *The Artful Parent*. How I offered art to my children changed dramatically. I love books. Having all the inspiration, how to, creative ideas, and more in a book I can flip through is wonderful. Most of the ideas for making art in this book are open ended so my kids are excited or at least content with the results of their making. As a homeschooling mom, I have collected an assortment of art supplies over the years and never really made use of them. *The Artful Parent* has inspired me to make our resources accessible and find real enjoyment in the process. Wonderful!

Not exactly tipping the scales here ...one of the highest rated books on . Yet, not overrated. Jean hits all of my buttons in terms of what I look for in a pedagogical approach to creative activity for kids. It's a human approach where exploration and experience in use of simple methods, graphic tools and materials weave together in moments of playful and spontaneous creative process and activity. The guidance in the book is both practical (hands-on examples) and theoretical. There is appropriate depth and context from a number of sources and educational expert contributors. What are your kids doing? With this book, you come away with a foundation and a set of recipes for doing, making, and taking action - with your kids. Jean gives us a framework for better supporting their creative instincts by giving them work space, materials, guidance, and encouragement as curious explorers. And the great thing is that this adventurous approach for supporting our kids offers so much to us as adults. I think Jean may agree with me that we could learn from our children that to be human is to play and explore.

I love this book! I bought it for the projects, but enjoyed the chapters on the why and how of making art with kids just as much. I have done several of the projects with my daughters and with our toddler book-and-art club, and we have lots more to grow into. (My older daughter was 2.5 when I bought it and we have been using it for inspiration for about six months.) Also, I was a children's librarian before I started staying home with my girls, so the feature from Caldecott winner Susan Marie Swanson (plus all the other features) was an extra fun surprise. The milky fireworks and plaster treasure keeper were particular hits. Our only flop is that we've never gotten the bubble prints to actually make prints, but we'll keep experimenting!

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