

Philosophy for Children  
Lesson Plan: **Aesthetics**  
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Total time: 45 minutes

**Materials:**

- *Ish* book
- Pieces of paper with “mistakes” on them – smudges, rips, holes

**Objective:**

The objective of this lesson is to find beauty in our mistakes and to let go of perfectionism. Mistakes are often categorized as “ugly” or “bad,” but they are a part of our everyday experience. Despite this, making mistakes can lead to beautiful things – whether this is a mistake in making art or in daily life, there is beauty in making mistakes. We also want to point out whether or not more beautiful pieces of art require more skill and whether our students internalize this value when creating their own artwork.

**Introduction:**

1. Reshare names and greet the students

**Activity 1:**

1. Present paintings to the class
  - a. Some that are considered conventionally beautiful with lots of skill (Van Gogh, Monet)
  - b. Some that are more abstract / maybe not as beautiful and maybe less “skill” (Pollock, Rothko, Picasso)
2. Discuss what their opinions are of the painting
  - a. Which one do you think is a beautiful painting? Why? Does this make it a good piece of art?
  - b. For the ones you do not believe are beautiful, is it a bad piece of art?
  - c. For each of the paintings, how much skill do you think was necessary to paint that? Are the ones that have more skill, more beautiful?
    - i. Do you need to go to art school to be good at art? Do you need specific training or experience or can anyone be good at art?

**Activity 2:**

1. Read *Ish*
2. Guiding Questions
  - a. What was Ramon trying to do? What does “look right” mean?

- b. Does art have to “look right?”
- c. Even though Ramon felt his art was bad/ugly, what did his brother think? Has something like this ever happened to you?
- d. Do you ever feel like you have to make your drawings perfect?
- e. Do you ever make mistakes? How does this feel?

**Activity 3: (Bring Timer)**

1. Bring in paper with different mistakes (holes, tears, folds, etc.)
2. Have children try to create drawings or art out of the imperfect pieces of paper
3. Have them present what the imperfection on their paper was and how they made art out of it
  - a. What was wrong with your paper?
  - b. What did you do to make your art beautiful despite the imperfection?
  - c. Was it hard to make art from it?
  - d. Do you think your artwork is beautiful? Why or why not?
  - e. How could you have made your artwork more beautiful? Is it possible to make it perfect?







x





