



2017-18 Art Curriculum Report

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The art curriculum at Miquon is rich, diverse, and Progressive. It is intended to offer our children opportunities to access this universal human language of art; it is structured according to well-established principles of art education, and it adapted as needed to meet each child where they are. Perhaps most importantly, art at Miquon is a fun and engaging experience in which our young artists are supported in their explorations and personal expressions.

The curriculum is designed to allow our young artists to explore and create in a safe, nurturing environment. Technical skills are introduced in an age- and ability-appropriate manner as each child progresses through our program, and these skills are revisited and built-upon in each subsequent year. Individual artist studies and deep-dive investigations into art movements, coupled with contextualized discussion and exploration of art history contributes to an increasingly-broad understanding of both the “how” and the “why” of creating art.

The Art Room

Our art room is a diverse collection of spaces that are all utilized in different ways at different times. There is the regular class area, within which stories are read, discussions take place, and the majority of projects are introduced and created.

There is the Artists’ Loft, which has areas that might be used for drawing, or weaving, or meditation, or whatever activity the change of surroundings might encourage. The Artists’ Loft is the home of our Object Library, and is used as our primary display space. The Community Loom is situated beside a window that looks out onto our garden and meadow—this is a hub of activity that is enjoyed by any and all children from 1st to 6th grade. There are areas for sewing, block building, animal finger puppets, and sketch books. Our Peace Table and Peace Shelf (for overflow of special treasures to be shared) contains a few select and changing objects that might encourage a meditation, or maybe an investigation.

The outdoor spaces around the art room are enjoyed as extensions of the classroom as well: the treehouse often holds more than a handful of sketching journalists, and the (newly named by the children) Meditation Meadow is full of mindful drawers and industrious fairy house builders—as well as being frequently visited by all manner of birds, squirrels, chipmunks, and deer...and when we’re really lucky, a fox or two. Our expanding (and growing) garden is a

constant source of ever-changing inspiration as it is viewed through the seasons. It is home to dozens of different plants and flowers, and is where you'll find our collection of bird feeders—and the birds!

Our young artists often find a favorite grassy spot, or maybe a bench, or a tree stump...it is so important to each of our senses of creative and emotional well-being that we are comfortable in our surroundings—and this is designed intentionally as a foundational element of our Miquon art curriculum.

Art and Science Show

Every year our young artists have an opportunity to display their work in a gallery setting during our Miquon Art and Science Show. Preparing for this event is an important chance for children to look at their work objectively, and to choose the work that they hope to have displayed during the show. After their work has been chosen and hung, children are given the time to enjoy their art alongside that of all of their schoolmates from every group. This allows for much in the way of intra-group conversation and inspiration, as the children excitedly explore the efforts of each Miquon artist. Appropriate gallery language and behavior is discussed and observed.

Nursery

Nursery started the year very simply—with just a dot. The dot became a line: thick, thin, wavy, straight; lines became shapes; shapes needed colors, and so color mixing was explored. We worked with a variety of materials, and in both two and three dimensions. At this age, creating art is mostly about process rather than product: children are encouraged to explore and investigate, and to take risks in a safe and supportive environment. Our young artists nurture one another as they each develop their own unique artistic voice.

Kindergarten through Sixth Grade

Miquon artists from Kindergarten to Sixth Grade began the year developing their mindfulness as artists.

Each group was asked the same question: “What do you need from Miquon art this year so that you can feel able to be focused, creative, and safe to explore your ideas?” From Kindergarten to Second Grade, this took the form of group discussion, and from Third to Sixth Grade, each child was asked individually. Once our lists were compiled, we set out to implement the school-wide theme of “How To, and Why?” to develop a plan to incorporate the children’s ideas into our program. There was certainly a range of answers, but a “quiet,” and “peaceful” workspace was at the top of almost every list, which certainly supported our hope to become more mindful artists.

Each project throughout the year—even those based upon similar areas of study—was appropriately differentiated for age and ability of our young artists; furthermore, older students built on their knowledge and past art room experience to advance their work both conceptually and technically.

Every child—from Nursery through Sixth Grade—used the same format for several of their explorations (*i.e.*, they worked on the same size page), and this wonderful collection of their artistic thoughts and feelings was assembled into a book at the end of the year.