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The Arts in STEM
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Art Autobiography

Recall

As far back as I can remember, I have always loved looking at things that were bright, colorful and interesting. I am not a particularly talented artist myself, but I have always enjoyed coloring and painting. As a young child, I remember being frustrated when I couldn't make my drawings look like the images I had in my mind, but I did enjoy learning about the techniques in art from my elementary art teacher. I've always loved visiting museums and the theatre or the ballet. I love music and literature and looking for beauty in everyday life. I remember my dad playing record and musical instruments for me when I was just a small girl.

My favorite class in high school was a combination History and Art course where we studied 4 cultures around the world through their art, in literature, visual arts, and music. It was taught in a seminar style and I remember thinking that it felt very advanced and "grown up" for a high school junior to have the opportunity to take such an enriching and thought-provoking course. I was so excited to register for an art history course during my freshman year in college. I was utterly disappointed then when I walked into a 400 person lecture hall and had to suffer through a "death by PowerPoint" lecture series all semester long. In my mind, these

beautiful art pieces being displayed furiously for moments at a time and weren't given in any context by which to understand the why and the how that might make them meaningful to me. I scraped by with a C in the course and never enrolled in another art history course again!

I was able to continue my interest in art as an educator, frequently finding opportunities for my students to create something in order to give depth to a concept or skill we were studying. I also enjoyed taking extra time to create visual aids for my classroom, often taking time to really consider the colors I chose and attempting to make a drawing or picking the perfect clip art for my PowerPoint presentation.

While I haven't created very many drawings or paintings that I've been particularly proud of, I did buy myself a beautiful camera and began trying to capture special moments or interesting scenes. I use my camera much less frequently now, as my kids take a lot of my attention in situations I might have enjoyed photographing in the past. I have found that most frequently, I'll just snap photos with my phone because of the ease and convenience of it.

Reflect

Taking a moment to reflect on my experience with art, it seems that I find the most enjoyment from art when I feel as though I can connect with it. The negative experience I had in my Art History 101 course was a result of feeling as though the artwork was too impersonal. When I've had the opportunity to walk through an art museum, I am not attracted to each and

every piece that hangs on the walls, but I always find a few that I gravitate to, that can elicit a reaction from me. The Art History course felt like being raced through a museum without an opportunity to slow down and examine the pieces that enticed me.

My personal experiences with creating art have been generally positive. I don't consider myself an "artist" regularly, but there are a few photos that I've taken that I believe to be very "good". I sometimes think about writing children's books and as I create the storylines in my mind, I see the image I'd want to represent my words, but I don't know how to accurately get them on to the paper. There are times when I feel frustrated by my inability to do so or envious of other's talents, but ultimately, I usually choose to be thankful for the talents I do have and applaud those who are able to create in different ways than I am able to. I know that I am a creative person and I enjoy using my creativity, however I can when those opportunities arise.

Connect

It is my opinion that "Art" is a representation of creativity. What makes something art is subjective and different for each individual. Art can be beautiful or not, thought provoking or not, intentional or not.

I am thankful for the many opportunities I've had to experience art. These experiences have been diverse and have left me with a thirst for more. I don't think I'll ever stop appreciating the beauty and the various forms I find art in the world around me.