

Noreen Casabar

My earliest art experiences that I remember would have to be in Kindergarten. I just recall lots of art lessons or rather what they considered art in those days as having to do cutting and pasting. Most of which we're pre-cut, so the end result was the same as everyone else. I do remember enjoying painting even though it wasn't quite a perfect painting of a flower or person, nonetheless, I found painting to be very peaceful and calming. It definitely kept me busy and interested in art but not enough to consider myself an artist.

However, I continued to take art classes in middle school and found myself comparing my art abilities to everyone in my class who clearly we're better at it than I was. Simple drawings that took me the whole class to complete; took them half that time. I remember how I wanted to have their artistic talents, I was so impressed. Thankfully, I had an awesome art teacher who saw all her students as equals, never comparing our work and appreciated us as individuals. I received positive feedback from her and she took her time to teach us about art and assured us that there were no wrong answers in art, something I remind my students to this day.

It wasn't until high school where I understood art had many forms. It was not just drawings or sketches or even painting but freely creating something with your hands. I took sewing and ceramics, which I truly enjoyed and frankly I was good at it. I went as far as being enrolled in advance sewing design and ceramics. My proudest moment in understanding my artistic ability was when I designed and made my own prom dress.

I remember not having a perfect sketch of my dress but I visioned what I wanted and how I wanted it to look and I did it!

I also loved ceramics. I loved the idea of taking a slab of wet clay and freely creating something with no specific purpose. Because I learned earlier in my life I wasn't great at drawing but I didn't feel it necessary to have a sketch of my projects. I simply visualized what I wanted and just went for it.

I would have to say high school was the best art experience for me. And reflecting back on those experiences whether good or bad allowed me to express myself, showcase my strength in the "art" world. It allowed me to appreciate my own creativity. If I hadn't been fortunate to have had a great art teacher, my art experiences would not have been as wonderful and fulfilling. My attitude towards art would have been spiteful and uninteresting. I would not have discovered my inner talents and not appreciate all forms of art. So when asked the question "are you an artist?" my response would be "I'm an artist at my own rights!"

My positive experience has made me successful in art. It allowed opening my eyes and appreciate all forms of art whether it may be dance, music, painting, sewing or even ceramics.

I think art is everywhere, it surrounds us on a daily basis. Art encompasses a diverse range of individual abilities and talents with no preconceived notions or judgment. It gives us an outlet to freely express our emotions, visions, and thoughts through multiple mediums. Art is something that is created with imagination and creativity that is something beautiful.

My positive art experiences are something I instill in my students to this day. I don't think I would be open to new experiences and not think outside the box. I want to give my students the opportunity to explore their inner creativity and appreciate them just as I have.