

My first recollection of art is probably drawing with crayons on coloring books and the backs of menus at restaurants. Of course there were times in school to take art with painting, drawing and gluing papers together. My mother was great with us three kids about always having art supplies around and since my sister and I were Brownie Girl Scouts, we were also 'crafty' with making ornaments, paper chains for the Christmas trees, hot pads on looms and batiking. In school I remember carving soap into a tulip, which later broke, but I was very proud to have actually created something that looked like what I had envisioned. About sixth grade, we had to paint a scene with wild animals in it like a zoo. I remember this in particular because I could get the trees and rocks and flowers, but not the animals. I painted an elephant, but just his head poking out from some plants because I just could not get his body to look correct. I could paint by number very well and enjoyed that medium and went onto 'painting' with paint tubes on velvet for a few years. Knitting was an art form that I still enjoy. An aunt taught me how to knit when I was sixteen or seventeen years old and I could follow a pattern to make scarves and gloves, but never really went further. But I did make a suggestion about putting loops on the gloves so I could hang them in my locker at school and my mother sent it into a knitting magazine and I received five dollars for the tip. Very cool then and now that I reflect upon it.

High School Art classes I do not really remember anything in particular. I know for History we had to do a diorama in a shoe box and in a Home & Careers class we made dresses and created a 'room' for our dream house. In college I stayed away from Art classes, since I really did not like them and did not think I had much talent in that direction. Looking back now, Art was really about coloring, painting, drawing and Music was not really 'art', since it was Music. I liked singing and took Chorus in High School and performed in concerts. I also liked to

be in plays and remember several that I had parts in, but again did not really think of this as 'Art'. Moving on to College, I had to take some kind of Art course for three credits for graduation and since Music was now an 'Art', I took three semesters of one credit/semester chorus classes. Now, after the fact I found out that I was supposed to take a three credit 'Art' course once. I had found a loophole that got fixed the following year, but I was granted approval for what I did, though the Music department was not really happy with me.

With my two daughters, I continued the 'regular' type of art but now included the musical and theatrical types to our lists. Both girls liked the theatrical, but behind the scenes. So they were Stage Managers, prompters and anything else that was behind the scenes. One daughter became very proficient with lighting and sound to the point that she still works in community theatre doing those jobs as an adult of thirty five. And we were all Girl Scouts, so had five or six different types of candle making and basket weaving along with sponge painting and hiking stick decorating. Even though I have never thought of myself as an artist, I became known in my Girl Scout District in Texas as the go to craft person. And I do not draw or paint well free hand. But I can show how to do some art. My daughters and I also knew all of the Girl Scout songs and were able to teach other girls and troops the songs. We made a CD one year as the District gift for the Annual Girl Scout celebration of Leader's Day in April

Looking back, even though I do not think of myself as an 'Art' person or teacher, I guess I really am one and I teach Chemistry too. In class when I need to sketch, not draw, something, I preface it with, "and this is why I teach Chemistry and not Art". I usually get a laugh and we move one. I am not afraid to try new things and in the last ten years have remembered how to knit and now do scarves, exclusively, because I do not need to follow a pattern--I just knit. And whenever I really think about it, art is in just about everything that I do. I

think it is funny how, for me, art has evolved from being drawing (yuck) and painting to include music, theatre and singing. Any way that people have of expressing themselves seems to be a form of art. We make ice cream and soap in the lab and today in the lab students were precipitating out potassium nitrate crystals as part of a solubility experiment. They were commenting on the crystals and crowing about how nice they looked and sparkly that they were. Thinking through with this assignment and remembering, fondly, my experiences with the different types and forms of Art, the definition for Art will be tough to make and include everything that it possibly could be. Earlier in this essay, I stated that Art is any way that people have of expressing themselves and I think I will stick with that.

For me, Art has grown and changed over the years and still is. Everything I do involves Art in some form or shape, whether it is teaching Chemistry, coaching my Robotics team or designing a pin to represent my theme for the year in an organization. I really do not see myself as any good at Art, but I always try and enjoy getting my students to express themselves through the Arts. So if I have to be an Art teacher, I would be the kind who does not actually do the art; just encourage and suggest and direct students in the ways and paths that they can go to keep them thinking about all of the possibilities that are out there that they can use to help explain, express and visualize the answers or reasons for our being.