

Art Autobiography
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When time allows I enjoy making, building, and creating eclectic projects. The love of art all began in first grade when Ms. Wooten allowed me to help glue tissue paper squares on a cardboard snowman for the backdrop of our classroom Christmas play. My friend and I would take these two inch squares of white tissue paper and dip the center into liquid glue and stick them closely together on the cardboard snowman so that the tissue paper stuck out all over and looked like ruffly frills. It was one of my favorite memories of elementary school. With first graders allowed to create such a project my next year was not so grand. My second grade teacher, Ms. Cruse, had every color bottle of glitter imaginable on the shelf above our cubbies. The sad part is that we were never allowed to use it. I would get my lunchbox and backpack each day and always look at the beautiful glitter. Why wouldn't she let us use it? Didn't she know I was a master at glue and tissue paper? Imagine what beautiful creations I could make with magenta glitter? Another great memory I have is using my dad's Phillips screwdriver and hitting it with a hammer to tap designs into a scrap piece of a board. It probably isn't a surprise that I tapped out "Ms. Wooten" on a wooden board using the star design of a screwdriver and hammer to give a nameplate to my beloved teacher. Much of my other art created in school was made using paper plates. Each holiday it seems we made some type of holiday symbol or character using paper plates. Edible art was tasty fun in fifth grade with Ms. Fulkerson. We made cornflake Christmas wreaths with green food coloring, cornflakes, marshmallows, and red hots for the holly on the wreaths, then ate them. Delicious. My favorite product I created was in my undergraduate Elementary Art class. Our assignment was to create something using only one piece of wire and the wire had to remain unbroken. I took a reel of wire and formed an

elephant, with trunk in the air and ears flared, standing on a ball. I just saw a circus elephant in my mind and formed it. I was very proud of it and was actually surprised that I had actually completed it. My wire "circus elephant" still sits on top of my kitchen cabinets. As a classroom teacher I encouraged my students to think outside the box when crafting. I offered all the colors of glitter and tissue paper and then asked them to sweep and clear the aftermath. Students loved my classroom.

From experiences with screwdrivers and wood, wire, paper plates, and the use of other art supplies that might not be found in the art department, I feel that I have had good experiences with different types of art besides just marker or crayon drawings. These experiences were a result of teachers and family offering resources and allowing me to make the art with creative freedom and not a cookie cutter design. I feel confident in declaring myself successful as an artist in my own realm; my home and classroom. I have recently started making art for my flower garden. This summer I used an old timing chain gear to hang my strands of beads to make my own garden art. I've also started painting Christmas themes and snowmen on some old barn lumber that's been stacked in my garage for quite some time. I think that the opportunity of creating in my younger years has given me the mindset that I can and should create my own projects. I enjoy creating art for my home and garden and classroom. My personal goal is to evolve into a distinguished potter with my wheel and clay that I will one day learn how to form. One day....

What is art? Art is an idea that takes physical form. Art could be 2-Dimensional, 3-Dimensional, mirrored, full of flavor, aromatic, squishy, or dominating in stature like the Washington Monument. My past experiences have gifted me with the understanding that art is doing and I am encouraged to do more. As my own children are leaving home for their university I have decided that it will be therapeutic to create when I am home in my empty nest. I should probably mold a clay nest as a symbol for all of my ideas that I will turn into physical form.

