

# December



Art with Mrs. Richard

## What We Are Learning

**Art I** - say hello to the Grid Portrait Masters!  
In December, our middle schoolers are turning blank paper into stunning graphite portraits using the magic of grids (think: artist detective work). They're becoming pros at shading with real art pencils to create smooth values, rich textures, and faces that practically jump off the page.

**Art II** - deep thoughts + vibrant paint = pure awesomeness. Right now, these artists are exploring symbolism and learning the dreamy, opaque wonders of gouache paint. Their big project? A low-relief painting (think 3D-ish layers!) that tells a personal story about their culture, family, or a favorite memory.

## Upcoming Events

Art Contest

"My Future Workspace: Where Dreams Go to Work!"

Due: Friday, January 16, 2026.

## Important Reminders

Please make sure your child brings a pencil to school every day.

Art Club/Tutoring is on Wednesdays after school till 5:30.

A Permission slip is needed to attend.

## Talk About Learning

**Art I** - This Month We're Obsessed With: VALUE & TEXTURE (aka how to make a flat drawing look like it has real light, shadow, and "touchable" surfaces using just a pencil!)

Try This 5-Minute "Shading Challenge" Together

You'll need: a regular pencil, a piece of paper, any small object from around the house (an apple, a mug, a toy, a shoe... anything!)

Steps:

Put the object in front of a lamp or near a window so it has a strong light side and a dark shadow side.

Draw a simple outline of the object.

Ask your student: "Where is the lightest part? The darkest? Where's the shadow on the table?"

Take turns shading:

Press super light for the bright areas (highlight)

Press darker for the shadows

Use tiny circular motions or hatching lines to create "texture" (smooth for an apple, rough for a pinecone, fuzzy for a sweater, etc.)

**Art II** - This Month's Big Idea: "What symbols tell YOUR story?"

Your student is becoming a visual storyteller, turning personal memories, family traditions, and cultural pride into a vibrant, layered gouache painting.

One simple, powerful thing you can do this week:

Sit down together (over dinner, in the car, wherever the moment feels right) and ask your artist these three magic questions:

"What memory, person, or part of our culture did you decide to paint about?"

"Why did that one feel the most important to you right now?"

"Walk me through a couple of the symbols you're using. What do they mean to you?"

That's it. Just listen. No fixing, no suggestions unless they ask; just let them talk. These paintings are deeply personal, and when they get to share the "why" behind their symbols with you, it makes the whole project feel even more special (and usually leads to the best conversations and a few happy tears).

