

Art and a child's personality By Karen Whiting

Children have different temperaments like being outgoing and talkative or introverted and quiet. Their personality means they approach art differently. Understanding what motivates each and their unique outlook can help make art time go smoother. Here are some tips to understand the four main temperaments and how to help them enjoy craft time.

Social interactor (aka socializer, playful otter, popular sanguine)

The **popular/sanguine** personality is talkative, loud, and expressive. They consider people and fun more important than time. Calendars and deadlines may be lost or never checked.

Art tips:

- This child thinks of art as party time and tends to be loud
- Dives right in, often without listening to directions
- Prefers to do art with other people
- Notices the color and beauty in what others make
- Serves as a cheerleader for everyone
- Not so good at follow up like letting things dry or clean up
- Incentives like playtime, inviting a friend to for art time, or an art show helps them follow through
- Popular/sanguine Bible women: Miriam and Elizabeth
- Helpful verse: *A word aptly spoken is like apples of gold in settings of silver.* Proverbs 25:11

Powerful director (aka mobilizer, lion, powerful choleric)

The **powerful/choleric** personalities are busy people who like facts, control, and leadership. They like to keep on schedule and are more interested in success than people.

Art tips:

- They take charge and boss others as to how each person should do the project
- They like learning something new and listen so they will do it right
- They set goals for artwork too and consider projects as challenges
- They work fast but may not focus on the details
- They organize their thoughts fast, set a goal, and get to work
- An art show for them should have awards/recognition
- Remind them that art is not right or wrong, but an expression of beauty and to appreciate everyone's art
- Powerful/choleric Bible women: Martha and Lydia
- Helpful verse: *Kind words are like honey-enjoyable and healthful.* Proverbs 16:24

Thoughtful analyzer (aka analyzer, beaver, perfect melancholy) personality is quiet, detailed, and reserved. This person thinks a lot and strives for perfection.

Art tips

- They tend to be artistic but work slowly and carefully, and prefer quiet
- They want time to think and plan before they start (time limits can help)
- They may be afraid to work around others and may hoard supplies (prefer their own)
- Can get bogged down in details that waste time.

- They analyze every stroke/cut and may be too self-critical
- They are sensitive and take criticism too seriously/need to forgive those who hurt their feelings
- Perfect/melancholy Bible women: Dorcas and Esther
- Helpful verse: *Now may the Lord of peace himself give you peace at all times and in every way. The Lord be with all of you.* 2 Thessalonians 3:16

Friendly supporter (aka stabilizer, mobilizer, golden retriever, phlegmatic) personalities are well-balanced, quiet, and easy-going people with a great sense of humor. They like to keep peace at home and work and follow others in being on time or late.

Time tips:

- Tend to procrastinate, so give them incentives (relaxing time, snack when done)
- They like comfort and may prefer working on the floor, stretched out
- They are diplomatic as they share their thoughts on the work of others
- They like the friendship atmosphere of group projects
- Good sense of humor, so promote mixing humor into their art
- Peacemaker Bible women: Mary, sister of Martha and Priscilla
- Helpful verse: *Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says.* James 1:22

With a little thought as to what will motivate your child and encouragement in their weaker areas, art can be a great time to inspire imaginations and develop small motor skills.