

## *The Young Shakespearians*

### **CRITIQUE WITH KINDNESS**

**Identify a goal before responding.** Ask yourself: *Do I want to acknowledge positive behavior, problem-solving skills, promote a sense of pride, expand the child's thinking, or simply let a child know that I see him? Use comments and reflections that are in line with your goals. This also applies to responding to a child's questions such as "do you like it?" and "Is it pretty?"*

**Attend to details:** Say "I see" or "I notice" followed by a description of the art. "I notice you used a lot of green", "I see that you used different types of materials to make this", "I see you mixed a lot of different shades of blue."

**Invite Self-Reflection:** Use phrases like "Tell me more about this", "What's going on here?", "How did you make this part over here?" (avoid phrases like: "what is it?")

**Comment on effort:** "You spent a long time on this!", "You were struggling with how to attach this but you kept trying and you figured it out!", "This is very complicated/intricate."

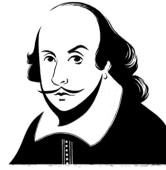
**Invite story-telling: Invite children to elaborate on their art by asking them to tell a story about it. "Where do you think they might be going?", "What might she be thinking/feeling?"**

**Say "thank you."** Model appreciation by saying "thank you". Reinforce your relationship and interest in the child's expression by saying "Thank you for sharing. I really like hearing about your ideas", "Thank you for telling me more about this."

**Give nonverbal feedback.** A gentle pat on the back, a smile, a long pause looking at an art piece, or a nod tells a child "I see what you've done! I notice you!" This may be particularly useful for English-as-a-second-language learners.

**Use mirroring.** When a child smiles, smile back and say "Look what you did!" or "You look really proud of yourself." If a child looks unhappy, mirror the expression and comment, "You look unhappy/frustrated/upset. Tell me about it." This also teaches attending to and labeling feelings.

***"If I Can Do Shakespeare, I Can Do Anything!"***  
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**Celebrate & share work.** Invite children to hang or display their art. Make time for children to share their work with their classmates. Share photos that demonstrate children's efforts (display photos or include in e-mails or newsletters home). Involve children in selecting photos, "Would you help me choose some photos for our weekly newsletter. I'd like your families to see how you all worked together to make the Fall leaf display."

**Encourage expansion.** Suggest expanding on an idea. "Now that you've finished your drawing, I wonder what it would look like if you actually built it out of something. What materials would you need?", "If you were to title this piece, what would you call it?"

**Respond to "is it pretty?" / "do you like it?" with goals in mind:** "What do you think? Do you like it?", "What's *your* favorite part?", "I like these details over here", "I think the colors you used make it very bright. I feel happy when I look at it. What about you?", "It sounds like you are really proud of this one", "I find *this* part right here interesting to look at", "Personally, I liked the one you did yesterday that you spent more time on. What about you, though. Do you like this one?" (Sometimes after responses like these, a child will still insist on a straight "yes or no" answer. In this case, it's fine to let him know that you like it and why.)