

The *ArtSpace* Museum

Art museums provide the environment for a wealth of experiences for children of all ages. Through the use of *ArtSpace*, children who are unable to walk through a museum can explore art from their computers. *ArtSpace* is a series of places where art can be viewed (in a museum with many galleries) or where art is made (in studios). *ArtSpace* provides a field trip simulation without the bus travel, the frantic search for a restroom, or the never-ending walk through the long corridors. *ArtSpace* can also be used for preliminary museum experiences prior to an actual field trip to a museum to prepare children and staff for what they are likely to experience. In addition, it can be used as a follow-up activity after the field trip. Categories for *ArtSpace* images include Collage, Lines, Music, Pottery, Sculpture, People, Cultural Diversity, Native American, Farms, Food and Eating, Transportation, Animals, Birds, Flowers and Plants, Trees and Forests, Water, and Weather and Seasons.

Teacher's Role

Display reproductions of adult artists' and children's work in the computer area and other areas around the classroom. Before the activity, attach a switch interface to the computer. This could be a switch input box, Discover:Kenx, or IntelliKeys. Attach a switch to the input box. Position the monitor at the child's eye level and move the keyboard aside to prevent distractions. Preview *ArtSpace* prior to the activity to become familiar with the options. Open *ArtSpace*, select Simple Switch as input under "Preferences," and have the screen ready for the children to use.



ArtSpace

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Outcomes

When participating in this activity, children will . . .

- Become aware that their actions cause certain events to happen. They will become aware that pressing the switch is causing the actions on the screen. Children will attend to the task at hand, activating the switch while focusing on the images and actions displayed on the monitor.
- Observe the images and actions, hear the music and sounds, and figure out that their switch actions control the actions on the screen. They will increase their attention span while actively exploring the museum. Children will collect information about the different functions of the museums in *ArtSpace*.
- Examine the features of *ArtSpace*. They will propose explanations such as "If I press the switch on the artwork, it will get larger, play music, and sometimes show a movie." Children will take turns making choices while activating the program.

- Use the knowledge gained from this experience when looking at other artwork. They will use the sequencing skills learned through *ArtSpace* in other learning situations. Children will develop increased knowledge of patterns and symbols.

Activity

Materials

- Computer, System 7.x., 4000K of free RAM memory
- CD-ROM drive and 14" color monitor or larger
- *ArtSpace*
- Switch, Switch interface, Discover:Kenx, or IntelliKeys

Procedure

Encourage children to make selections by activating the switch. Model activating the switch and making choices. Physically assist children to do the same if necessary. Children can choose one of two galleries: (1) "The Adult Gallery" or (2) "The Children's Gallery." In "The Adult Gallery," they will see works of art made by adults, some of them famous, some whose importance to the art world is yet to be recognized. "The Children's Gallery" contains artwork from preschool and elementary school children. Both galleries contain examples of two- and three-dimensional artworks. See video clips of various artists discussing their work or explaining a process such as an adult explaining printmaking or bronze pouring or children demonstrating finger-painting or collage making. Listen to people's comments about each picture, sculpture, or image and use them to generate discussions with children. Ask questions such as, "Can you tell me what that painting is?" "What did the artist say about the drawing?" "Where would you like to go now?" Children can choose to go to another gallery room, go back to the lobby for more choices, or to exit the program. Encourage children to take turns when selecting images by passing the switch around the group.

Adaptations

Select Scanning as input under "Preferences." Children can explore how scanning works, become familiar with the progression of the scanning pattern, and take note of how objects are highlighted. Once children understand scanning, this option will give them more control as they tour the museum. *ArtSpace* can also be customized for use with Key Largo.