



MKE Youth Artscape Student Artwork Submission Tips

Get your artwork ready for submission with these helpful tips!

PHOTOGRAPHING YOUR ARTWORK

Note: This year, MKE Youth Artscape is accepting 2D artwork only (paintings, drawings, prints, digital art, photography, etc.). We hope to include sculpture and 3D work in future exhibitions!

Quick Photography Guide:

Setup:

- Use natural daylight near a window (avoid direct sunlight)
- Position your phone/camera directly in front, parallel to the artwork
- Use a plain background (white, gray, or black wall)
- Clean your camera lens first

Camera Settings:

- Flash: OFF
- Grid lines: ON (helps keep shots straight)
- Highest resolution/quality setting
- Tap artwork on screen to focus

Composition:

- Fill the frame with your artwork (don't cut off edges)
- Make sure you're not casting a shadow
- Take multiple shots and choose the best one

Quality Check: Zoom in on your photo. Can you see details like brushstrokes or pencil marks? If it's blurry, retake it.

MEASURING YOUR ARTWORK

Format: Height x Width (in inches)

- Height = top to bottom
- Width = left to right
- Round to nearest half inch

Example: 8.5 x 11 inches

For Framed Work: Measure both separately

- Artwork: 8 x 10 inches
- Frame: 11 x 14 inches

WRITING YOUR ARTIST STATEMENT (50-150 words)

Think of this as telling the story behind your art. Answer 2-3 of these questions:

About Inspiration:

- What inspired you to create this?
- What does this artwork mean to you?

About Impact:

- What do you want viewers to feel or understand?
- What message are you sharing?

About Process:

- What medium/materials did you use and why?
- What challenges did you face or techniques did you try?

Example Statements:

Personal Experience: *"This self-portrait explores my relationship with social media and identity. I used collage and acrylic paint to show how I feel fragmented between my online and real-world selves. The bright colors represent the filtered version I share online, while darker areas underneath represent my authentic self. I want viewers to think about what we present to the world and what we keep hidden."*

Social Commentary: *"My photograph captures the contrast between nature and urban development in Milwaukee. I took this near the river where old industrial buildings meet new green spaces. The composition frames natural elements in the center, surrounded by concrete and steel, showing how nature persists in unexpected places."*

Emotional Expression: *"This abstract painting represents my experience with anxiety. Bold, chaotic brush strokes and a limited color palette convey overwhelming racing thoughts. Dark blues and grays reflect heaviness, while yellow bursts represent moments of hope and calm. Creating this was therapeutic and helped me process difficult emotions."*

Writing Tips:

DO:

- Write in your own voice
- Use specific details (colors, textures, feelings)
- Explain what's not obvious from looking

DON'T:

- Just describe what's visible ("This is a tree")
- Apologize for your work
- Be too vague ("This is about emotions" - which ones? why?)

Stuck? Imagine explaining your artwork to a curious friend. Write that down!

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST

Before You Submit:

- Photos are clear, well-lit, and in focus
 - File format: JPEG or PNG (5-10MB)
 - Measurements: Height x Width in inches
 - Artist statement: 50-150 words
 - All form fields completed
 - Parent/guardian info included
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NEED HELP?

Photography:

- Ask your art teacher about using classroom space
- Try different times of day for better light
- Most smartphone cameras work great!

Artist Statement:

- Talk it through with a teacher, friend, or family member
- There's no "wrong" answer about your own art

Technical Issues: Contact us at programming@tbey.org or 414-562-8239

YOU'VE GOT THIS!

We want to see YOUR unique perspective. Be authentic, follow these guidelines, and submit with confidence!

Good luck!