

## The Work of Rhoda Kellogg

Rhoda Kellogg (1898-1987) was a psychologist and the director of a nursery school in San Francisco. From 1948 through 1966, she collected more than one million drawings made by children between two and eight years of age. Although most of these drawings were collected at the Golden Gate Kindergarten Association in San Francisco, the complete collection represents drawings from children around the world.

Kellogg developed a classification system that describes the development of graphic expression in young children. She restricted her focus to line formations. In doing so, she was able to compare and record each child's free choice of line constructions. Beginning with basic marks (or scribbles) through pictorial representations, children follow a predictable continuum of graphic development. This innate construct appears to be universal and supports her theory that formal design emerges before pictorialism.

Adults begin to influence children's work first at home then in school. Coloring books, picture books, television, newspapers, magazines, comics, and animated creatures all push the child's mind into adopting adult-devised schemas for the representation of objects. This is reinforced when teachers and parents praise children for accurately recording their environment and labeling it art. As children learn to please the adults in their lives, most of them abandon their inner creative voices for symbol combinations that adults perceive as realistic.

If left to their own devices and provided with appropriate materials, children will self-educate themselves artistically and develop a uniquely individual sense of aesthetics. As most children mature, some of their explorations will naturally become representational. This crossroad must be handled carefully as not to influence the child, but instead to support each child's individual artistic vision. It's important to remember that as teachers, we are here to help guide our students to reach their human potentials, and artistic expression is a natural part of everyone's potential.

Approximate Age	Stage	Characteristic	Notes
24 Months	Stage I Pattern	Basic Scribbles	Classified into 20 different types these marks appear to be spontaneous with or without eye control.
26-34 Months	Stage I Pattern	Placement Patterns	Require both seeing and the eye's guidance of the hand.
24-36 Months	Stage II Shape	Emergent Diagrams	Emergent Diagrams are formed when the total configuration implies a shape.

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24-36 Months	Stage II Shape	Diagrams	Definite shapes drawn in outline form.
36-48 Months	Stage III Design	Combines	Units of two diagrams.
36-48 Months	Stage III Design	Aggregates	Units of two or three diagrams.
36-48 Months	Stage III Design	Mandalas	Sanskrit word for circle. Child proceeds from mandalas, to suns, to humans. Mandaloid formations are perceived by children long before the first diagrams are made.
36-48 Months	Stage III Design	Suns	The sequence from mandala to sun is a prevailing sequence that appears only after the child has drawn complex aggregates. The sun and mandala provide stimulus for the child's first drawings of humans.
36-48 Months	Stage III Design	Radials	A formation with lines that radiate from a point or small area usually from the center. Early radials appear to be formed from a rhythmic motion, and do not require eye control. these forms can appear by 18 months in the form of placement patterns.
48 Months	Stage IV Pictorial	Humans	The first humans are made when the child joins the face aggregate with body parts that form a modified mandala.
48 Months	Stage IV Pictorial	Animals	Early animals resemble humans that are horizontal. Usually by this time children are influenced by pictures of animals books.

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Approximate Age	Stage	Characteristic	Notes
48 Months	Stage IV Pictorial	Buildings	Are drawn by combining diagrams in various ways, not by observing houses.
48 Months	Stage IV Pictorial	Vegetation	Early trees resemble armless humans.
48 Months	Stage IV Pictorial	Transportation	Children draw common formulas for boats and wheeled vehicles whether or not they have seen them. Pictorial labels for these formulas may not be used by the child until an adult uses them.
60 Months		Children copy schemas favored by society	Age five is often a time of crisis in child art. Kindergarten teachers seldom appreciate spontaneous art, and give children formulas to copy. Once formulas for objects which are "acceptable" to adults are learned, the child will make combinations of them into scenes.
72 Months			Most children stop all spontaneous art activity by the age of eight or so, those that go on usually study and practice the techniques to master various media.

### References

Kellogg, R. (1969) *Analyzing Children's Art*. Palo Alto, California: Mayfield Publishing Company

Rhoda Kellogg Child Art Collection. Retrieved January 18, 2013, from [www.early-pictures.ch](http://www.early-pictures.ch)