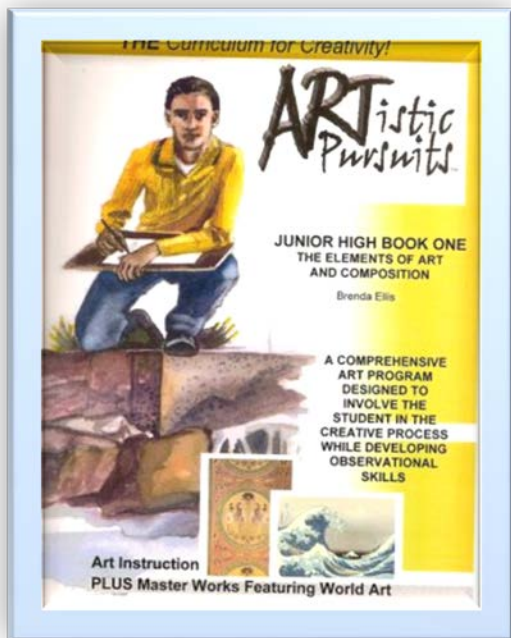




REVIEWS BY MEREDITH!

ARTISTIC PURSUITS

Another art curriculum to review! [ARTistic Pursuits Junior High Book Two Color and Composition](#) arrived in my mailbox with its companion, [ARTistic Pursuits Junior High Book One The Elements of Art and Composition](#). Teaching art intimidates me, so it was with a little anxiety that I perused these two non-consumable art curriculum books. I understand the principles of art and design and can explain the elements of art. It's when we actually use media that I get a little nervous. My renditions never look like the pictures in the book.

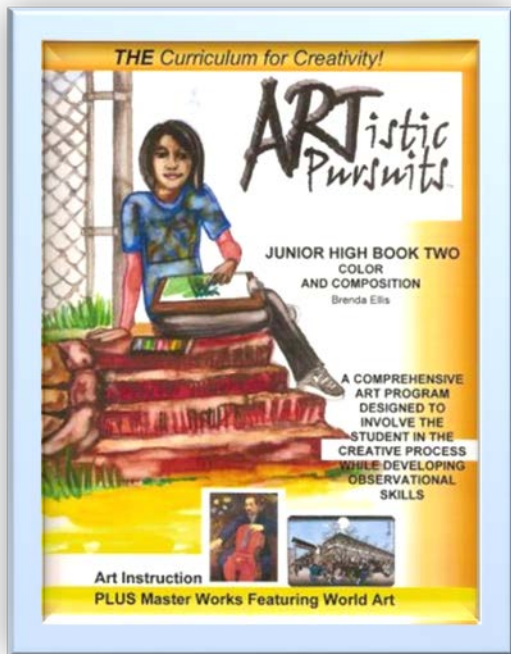


What a pleasant surprise awaited me! [ARTistic Pursuits Junior High Book One: The Elements of Art and Composition](#) by [Brenda Ellis](#) covers the elements of art and basic composition. There are four parts to each unit. The unit begins with an explanation that introduces the vocabulary of art to your students. Little by little this "art talk" finds its way in your

child's vocabulary. Next is our art appreciation/history section. There is an interesting mix of Western and Eastern art. Though I prefer Western art, I have enjoyed learning more about Eastern culture! Next is the actual art project in two parts. There is the quick sketch and the more challenging project. Materials and their use are explained in clear detail when the project is assigned.

For the teacher, everything is laid out clearly. It is easy to understand the lessons and easy to teach. For the student, the book is attractive, easy on the eyes. Children will have no problem reading on their own if you want them to do the class more independently. For the first semester, the focus is on drawing (with good materials!) with one sculpture assignment. The elements of art (*space, line, texture, shape, form, value, and 3-D lines*) are addressed in drawing assignments that are fun! For the first assignment (*space*), the student writes his signature in the corner of the paper. Then, he signs his name, attempting to fill an entire sheet of paper. For the art appreciation/history section, an Eastern art masterpiece, Portrait of the Elephant, Del Bedal, Chasing His Attendant is studied from the perspective of how space is used. They show an outline of the picture on a vertical canvas (*different use of space*) and it just doesn't work! This shows your child the importance of space in art. The second semester introduces ink drawings too. Your junior high student will study balance, symmetry, perspective, proportion, and rhythm.

My children all like [ARTistic Pursuits Junior High Book Two: Color and Composition](#) better because it is filled with lovely color pictures of assignments and famous artworks. The use of color (*my favorite element of art!*) is taught in the same format: an introductory lesson, an art appreciation/history lesson, an explanation of techniques, and, finally, the actual art project. For this book, pastels, charcoals, crayons, and oil pastels are used. Your child will learn about hue, primary & secondary colors, monochrome, complementary colors, neutrals, warm & cool colors, balance, parallel rhythm, space, depth, viewpoint, and emphasis. I really liked this lovely book!



The lesson on monochrome color schemes is a great example of how clear and cohesive the lessons are. The unit starts with a lesson on tinting (*make colors lighter*) and shading (*making colors darker*). We look at Claude Monet's *Waterloo Bridge, London Pastel*, a work done in shades of blue and white on brown paper. The brown paper makes the white and blue colors stand out--it is a lovely picture! We are given a quick introduction to Claude Monet and Impressionistic art. This is just a taste and may lead many homeschoolers to dig deeper into the artist or his style of creating. Our art project is to draw a monochromatic picture using only one color with white to tint and black to shade. We also learn to make a dry wash. This lesson was easy to understand and fun to do--just like all the others in this book.

When God gave directions for the building of the temple, he was specific about the colors, materials, and decorations.

"Make a curtain of blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and finely twisted linen, with cherubim worked into it by a finely skilled craftsman." (Exodus 26:31 NIV)

Art matters to God. Skilled creativity is a blessing to Him, our offering of worship. He is delighted by beauty and is the Ultimate Artist. This curriculum is one way that we can introduce our children to the wonderful world of creating art. While not overtly Christian, there was nothing offensive in any way in ARTistic Pursuits. It is a wholesome and thorough curriculum. Though the Bible is quoted once or twice, so is Aristotle. If God had been brought in as the Perfect Artist and His Word weaved throughout the lessons, it would be absolutely perfect! Brenda has done an excellent job in putting this curriculum together!

[ARTistic Pursuits Junior High Book One: The Elements of Art and Composition](#) and [ARTistic Pursuits Junior High Book Two: Color and Composition](#) are [available for \\$42.95 each](#) on Brenda and Daniel's website, **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.** We will use this curriculum this summer together as a family from sixth grade to adult because it is such good basic art education. If I had younger children, I would not hesitate to use it with upper elementary children too!

If it is in your heart to pursue art, starting with the basics, you will enjoy what Brenda has put together from her family to yours! Happy creating!