

Activity Idea

Surrealism for Kids

Three Art Activities about Surrealism

Recommended for Ages 8+

What is Surrealism?

- Surrealism is an abstract art movement.
- It was started in the 1920s by writer Andre Breton.
- Images are based on fantasy and the world of dreams.
- There are generally two types of surrealism. The first type is inspired by dreams. The second is called “automatism” which is art that is made without planning ahead or thinking about it, even while you are doing it.

What does Surrealism look like?

Surrealist art can be mixed media. Mixed media means you use more than one material to create your art - paint on a canvas, a statue, or a combination of both.

Activity #1: Automatism

Automatism is the second type of Surrealist art, and it is one you can do from home. It is doodling and automatic drawing, putting down on paper whatever images come into your mind.

Supplies:

- Paper
- Crayons, pencil, pen, markers, colored pencils, whatever art supplies you have on hand.
- Timer

Set your timer for 5 minutes. Do not look at your paper but begin drawing. Distract yourself with calming music or a quick internet video. Avoid looking at your paper but keep drawing until the 5 minutes are up.

Activity #2: Draw a Surreal Creature

Leonora Carrington was a surrealist artist who created paintings and drawings based on her dreams, memories, and imagination. In this activity you pick cards representing an object, an

animal or a plant and create a made-up character by drawing a combination of what you have picked.

Supplies:

- Paper
- Ruler
- Crayons, pencil, pen, markers, colored pencils, whatever art supplies you have on hand.
- Scissors
- Bag or hat

First, on a clean sheet of paper use your ruler to create a series of boxes - four down the long side of the paper and three across the short side. Inside each square draw some animals, plants, and objects. Cut out the squares. Mix the cards up in a bag or hat. Pick 3 cards from the hat. Draw a wild new creature combining the three drawings on the cards. Pick more cards, add more to your drawing, and color its in.

Activity # 3: Make Your Own Salvador Dali clock

Who was Salvador Dali?

Salvador Dalí was born on May 11, 1904, in Spain. From an early age, Dalí was encouraged to practice his art, and he would eventually go on to study at an academy in Madrid. In the 1920s, he went to Paris and began interacting with other artists like Picasso, Magritte and Miró, and that led to Dalí's first Surrealist phase. He is perhaps best known for his 1931 painting *The Persistence of Memory*, showing melting clocks in a landscape setting. Dalí died in his hometown in 1989.

Supplies:

- Paper plate
- Marker or other art coloring supplies

Draw a gold or yellow edge on a paper plate. Draw 2 clock arms and a circle in the center. Draw wavy numbers on the edge of the plate just before the gold edge. You do not want the numbers to look perfect - make them look squiggly and misshapen on purpose, as if they are melting like ice cream in the hot sun. Once you have made your clock, bend it to a wavy shape to simulate a melting clock.