

HOW TO DRAW BOOKS FOR KIDS 6-8

What Your Child Is Really Asking

A parent's guide to talking about drawings



Written with Lourdes Relloso, clinical psychologist specialized in Brief Strategic Therapy
Aurora Minds

HOW TO DRAW BOOKS FOR KIDS 6-8

What Your Child Is Really Asking

A parent's guide to talking about drawings

Written with Lourdes Relloso, a clinical psychologist specialized in Brief Strategic Therapy who trains teachers in real classrooms.

When your child holds up a drawing and asks “Do you like it?”, they are rarely asking for a grade. Most of the time they are asking for something else: that you look, that you pay attention, a little affection. This guide helps you answer that.

The idea behind everything in this guide: a child should draw because it is fun. If they are having fun, it is healthy.

1 When they ask: “Do you like it?”

It is fine to say whether you like it or not. Warmth is good. Just do not stop at a yes or a no. Explain why, and use the moment to show that tastes are different.

TRY: I like this one best because it has a nose. Let’s ask Dad and Grandma which one they like. Maybe it is not the same one.

You can also ask for three versions and see which one each person likes most. Tastes are not the same as good or bad. It is like asking which food you like best: nobody is wrong.

Then ask the question that matters:

TRY: And do you like it? Did you have fun drawing it?

If you do not know what the drawing is, do not guess:

TRY: What is this, sweetheart?

2 Are they having fun?

This is the question that matters most. If your child likes drawing and has fun, it is healthy. If they do not enjoy it and draw only because an adult makes them, or because every kid does it, it is not.

TRY: Do you like drawing? Are you having fun?

If the answer is no, put the activity away and ask what they would like to do instead. If they ask for it again later, act normal. Do not say “Are you sure? The other day you said you did not like it.”

3 When they ask: “Am I good at drawing?” or “Is it as good as the book?”

If they ask now and then, answer, and encourage them to keep going.

TRY: When you enjoy something, you do it better. Keep going.

If they ask again and again to be approved, keep an eye on it (see “When to look closer”). If they compare their drawing to the one in the book:

TRY: Drawing is taking out what you have inside. It is not a photo. You are free to imagine it your way. Not better or worse. Your way.

4 When they ask for help

Help them. Helping does not mean doing it for them. Sometimes all they need is your voice, not you picking up the pencil. Start with what you like most about the drawing.

TRY: What do you like about it?

Maybe they only want to draw the ears, or the dog. That is fine. If an elephant comes out and they want to color it like a dog, that is fine too. They are exploring. Do not sit down with adult eyes. Look at what they see and what they are exploring.

If they say “I can’t do this, you do it”:

TRY: You can do something you already know how to do now and leave this one for later. If you need my help, I can try. I do not know if mine will turn out well either, but we will try together.

5 When it is not coming out and they want to scribble it out

Some things are really hard. It takes a lot of courage to put up with a drawing that does not work and try again.

TRY: Some things are very hard, but you can erase it as many times as you want. If you would like to do something else, we can come back to it later.

If they erase and try again many times, do not set a limit. If they do not ask to change and want to keep trying, let them keep trying.

TRY: You have tried so many times. You are very brave and determined.

If they say nothing, say nothing. Skip the “I did not like it that way either” and the “it was fine.” Wait and see how they react.

6 When they want to stop, or do not want to draw today

Take it normally. No guilt, no bribes. Do not mention it.

TRY: Perfect. What would you like to do now?

If they ask how many are left, take it to the positive:

TRY: Ten left! How great. You still have lots of drawings to enjoy.

If they say it as a complaint, they do not have to finish. They can draw whenever they feel like having fun drawing.

If they want to skip the steps and copy only the finished picture, that is fine. Some children need a reference and others do not. Let them try it their way first, then with the steps, and choose which one was easier.

7 When they compare themselves to someone else

There is no better or worse. Take the chance to explain that we all have different tastes and that none of them is right or wrong.

TRY: There is no better or worse. You two are different, so you each see it differently, just like you like different drawings and different foods.

If they want to show their drawing to a brother, sister or friend:

TRY: Sure. Tell them what you like about it first.

The other child may like something else. Ask what they like too.

8 When it is a repeat

Some characters come back in the book. It is not a chore. Ask, and let them choose:

TRY: Did you like it? Do you want to draw it again? A different way? With another color? Or would you rather move on to another one?

It is not required. It is fine to leave it undone.

If they say it is easy now:

TRY: Look at that. That is because you have been practicing a lot and you like what you are doing.

Skip “this is what is supposed to happen.” It is too absolute.

9 Scribbles count

A scribble is already expression. Changing a blank page feels good and gives a sense of power. Do not take that away. You can also scribble together in a notebook, and then ask each other which one you like best.

10 Go easy on correcting

If all they hear is “not like that, erase it,” they will probably stop drawing and lose the fun. Lines outside the box, or a drawing that looks different from the model? Say nothing unless they ask.

11 When to look closer

Hesitating when there are options is normal. What deserves attention is a pattern of insecurity that paralyzes: a child who cannot do anything without asking permission. They ask whether you are angry, whether they have to do it this way, “what if...?”. If that shows up in everything, drawing is not the problem.

Do not answer with “it is nothing, everything is fine.” It confirms that there is a difficulty. If they ask for security again and again, almost like a ritual, you can hand the question back, and only then:

TRY: What do you think?

If it is obvious and it paralyzes them, talk to a professional. That does not mean something is wrong. Keep watching.

12 Things to leave out

- Bribing (“finish and you get a toy”). It teaches negotiation, not enjoyment.
- Guilt (“some kids do not even have crayons”). It builds opposition, not motivation.
- Repeating the same explanation when they resist. It becomes a power struggle.
- Talking about them in front of others. A passing moment turns into a label.
- Labels (“she is not artistic,” “he is a perfectionist”). A label a child hears repeated tends to become true.

Is there a moment this guide does not cover? Write to us at hello@auroramindseditorial.com. Aurora Minds reads every message.

Published by Aurora Minds