



Your happiest day

Introduction

Children draw for lots of reasons. They may simply draw to enjoy the pleasure that making marks gives. Or they may draw to intentionally show people how they feel and think about events and people in their lives. Some children may draw to create a realistic picture whereas others may be drawing purely to express themselves.

Sometimes children find it easier to communicate their ideas and feelings by drawing rather than through direct conversation. Drawings can be used to generate a conversation about how they are thinking and feeling about what is happening in their lives.

This activity is a good way to talk your child about positive aspects of their life by asking them about the specific features that their drawing contains.

You'll need

A sheet of plain paper, at least A4 size and preferably bigger.

Pencils.

A selection of coloured crayons or felt tip pens.

Activity

Ask your child to imagine their happiest day and to draw it. Let them know that they can include any features that they wish and try not to suggest ideas to them as they are drawing.

When your child has finished, ask them to tell you about their drawing and how they showed their happiest day.

Your child may refer to the following specific features of the drawing.

Figure size

Object size

Colour

Figure placement

Facial details

Activities

The explanation

As the way a drawing looks is a result of many factors, it is difficult to say just how a child will show their feelings in a drawing. However, research has identified some ways in which children tend to show happiness and liking through their art work. The most common way is by showing smiling figures which are usually engaged in an activity that the child views as happy. These figures tend to become more detailed and to be portrayed more commonly in action towards middle and late childhood. It is also quite usual for children to draw things that they like in more subtle ways to represent happiness. For example, children may draw objects that they like on a fairly large scale compared to ones that they do not like. Some children may use their favourite colours to show that they feel positively about a topic and select less liked colours to portray less liked objects. It is also quite common for some children to show liking and happiness by drawing figures quite closely together and to show some figures saying happy things.

Each child will bring their own imagination and drawing skills to the task. You may find it interesting to compare your child's drawings of their happiest day at different ages and see how their thoughts, feelings and drawing skills are changing.