

Mini Masters Program and Curriculum

OUR PROGRAM

Children at Mini Masters learn and explore through circle time, learning stations, table time, story time, snack time, art projects, guest visitors, museum walks, music, and movement activities. Verbal and artistic expression, problem solving, sharing, compassion, and being able to work in a group are key concepts integrated into our daily interactions and activities with the children.

Mixed-Age Classroom: In addition to having the benefits of the museum's unique learning environment, our physical space is self-contained and welcoming. The children are engaged and invested in their explorations, and their social and academic growth is enhanced by our multi-age classroom make-up of 2, 3 and 4 year olds. Verbal communication, learning to share, compassion, self-reliance and cooperation are benefits of our mixed-age classroom.

Our activities and projects are thoughtfully planned out so there is a meaningful connection to the children, their world, and their developmental stage. Each art project or craft is planned with learning in mind; to offer specific learning opportunities for each child such as scissor use, fine motor development, spatial awareness, pencil grip, individual expression, or following directions.

The teachers at Mini Masters individualize the learning activities based on the child's developmental readiness and interest. A 2 year old may be stringing beads, helping to develop fine motor control, while a 4 year old may be stringing beads with the goal of learning about patterning. A 2 or 3 year old might be feeling textured letters or numbers hidden in a sensory bin, whereas a 4 year old may be writing their letters or numbers in sand, shaving cream or on paper.

Art: As a program of The Academy Art Museum, we are continually surrounded by art. The children regularly visit the museum galleries on "museum walks". We talk about the art we see as it relates to a curriculum themes or as it relates to the process by which the art was created. The children may then recreate their own versions of what they saw on their gallery walk. Children at Mini Masters see the diversity of people and things in their world through the artwork they enjoy finding things as in each piece that related to their lives. The Mini Masters may visit the Museum artists at work in their studios, and these artists may visit us, bringing art projects for the children to create. Mini Masters seeks to provide an early enrichment experience in the arts, an appreciation for art and the process of

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art-making, allowing the children to express their individual observations, creations and interests.

Movement & Music: Our movement and music activities take place in our courtyard or Performing Arts (PA) room. This is a regular part of our day and will include free dancing, parachute, scarf and ball games, listening games, and singing. Circle time is also a daily time to sing and move. In addition, music class is held once a week with Mr. Ray Remesch, the Academy Art Museum's private music instructor, and once a month, the children will have the opportunity to listen to musicians rehearsing for the Museum's "Music at Noon" program.

Language & Numbers: Language and the alphabet are introduced by emphasizing the phoneme or "sound" that a letter makes. In this approach, the alphabet is not taught in ABC order. Instead, we introduce easiest sounds first and work up to more complex sounds. This phonemic introduction to letters is an excellent way to ensure reading readiness. We work on number and language concepts using hands-on, sensory-rich activities, such as tracing letters in sand, singing number and alphabet songs, and counting items around the room. Every task in which a child engages has an intentional learning goal for that child's developmental readiness.

For All Children and Their Families:

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), we will accept children, and their families, with special needs into our program. During enrollment, families must complete a Request for Accommodation Form and provide a copy of the child's IEP or ISFP. We will determine if reasonable accommodations can be made for the child **and if our program can serve the best interest of the child with special needs.**

Museum Magic Curriculum Themes

September: Me, Myself and I

October: Real and Pretend (Halloween)

November: Things That Change (Fall & Thanksgiving)

December: Winter & the Holidays

January: Let's Explore Winter

February: Communication (Valentine's Day)

March: Transportation & Spring (Easter)

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April/May: Ecology (Earth Day)