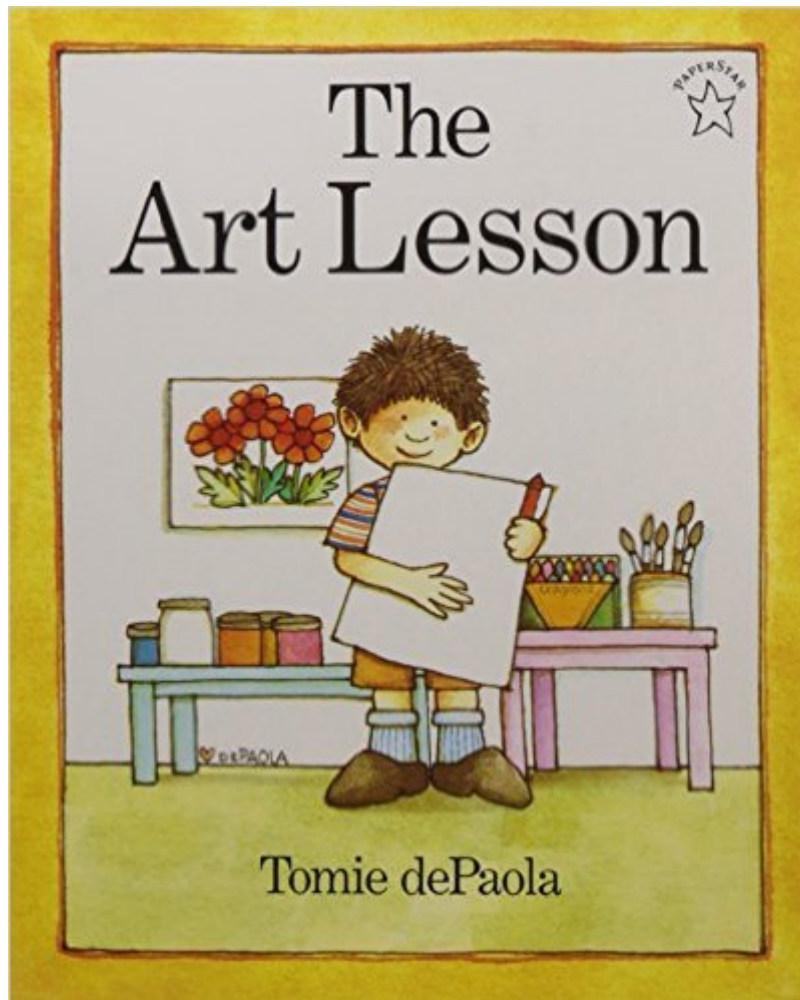


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# The Art Lesson (Paperstar Book)



## Synopsis

Tommy knows he wants to be an artist when he grows up. He can't wait to get to school and have real art lessons. When Tommy gets to school and finds out that the art lessons are full of "rules", he is surprised and dismayed. How the wise art teacher finds a way to give Tommy the freedom to create and stay within the "rules" makes a wonderfully perceptive picture book about growing up and keeping one's individuality. Tomie dePaola is the author and illustrator of many beloved books for children, including the Caldecott Honor Book *Strega Nona*. Fans of all ages will be pleased to hear that *The Art Lesson* is, in fact, based on the artist's own experiences growing up, and offers a welcome glimpse into his past. This bright picture book is as covered with drawings as the walls of Tommy's parents' and grandparents' houses, and sends an inspirational message to budding artists and individualists. Break out the crayons!

## Book Information

Series: Paperstar Book

Paperback: 32 pages

Publisher: Puffin Books; Reprint edition (December 21, 2001)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0698115724

ISBN-13: 978-0698115729

Product Dimensions: 8 x 0.1 x 10 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars [See all reviews](#) (56 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #15,942 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #63 in [Books > Children's Books > Arts, Music & Photography > Art](#) #274 in [Books > Children's Books > Growing Up & Facts of Life > Friendship, Social Skills & School Life > School](#) #449 in [Books > Children's Books > Activities, Crafts & Games > Activity Books](#)

Age Range: 4 - 8 years

Grade Level: Preschool - 3

## Customer Reviews

Shh ... wanna hear a secret? Well, here it is: This is NOT just a children's book. Enthralled by the book and eager to share the joys of reading aloud with an older group, I shared this book with my ninth-graders back in 1991. To this day, it is one of the most cherished memories some of them have. At least one student went on to write children's books of her own. What more can an English

teacher ask? Tomie DePaola's charming story has realistic language -- he talks the way kids think -- and emotions to which anyone can relate. He tells the story of Tommy, who more than anything looked forward to first grade, when he would finally get REAL ART LESSONS and start on the road to becoming an artist like his beloved cousins. Things get off to a rocky start, but the solution is as satisfying as any you'll read. The book offers a great lesson on how to be yourself and dream big. P.S. One more secret: If you like this book, you'll love Emma's Rug by Allen Say. Artists of all kinds, unite!

Do you want to read a terrific book with fantastic illustrations? If you said yes, then *The Art Lesson* is the book for you. We enjoyed reading a book where the child really grows up doing what he has always wanted to do. This is a story about a child who loves to draw. His teacher only gives him one piece of paper and won't let him use his birthday crayons. But still this can't stop him from drawing. Read *The Art Lesson* to find out how he solves his problem.

When Tommy wants to become an artist, he tries everything he can to be the best artist. When Tommy's older brother goes to school and has art class Tommy can't wait till he gets art lessons. Tommy really wants to draw, and that is what he spends most of his time doing. When Tommy finally gets to go to art lessons, he wants to draw what he wants, not what the teacher tells him. So the teacher tell him once he draws what she wants him to he can draw anything he wants, and he sure did. I think that it is really great that Tommy never gave up drawing and it followed him through his whole life, and he is still doing it today. I would recommend this book for children ages 4-8, and I think that it would show kids to do what they want to and never give up.

I ordered a copy of Tomie dePaola's *The Art Lesson* after my seven-year-old daughter raved about him after her teacher read one of his books in class. When the book arrived and I surprised my daughter with it, she hugged me with the strength of Thor because I had given her a book from her favorite author. We sat down and read *The Art Lesson* together several times, but what was so exciting was that my daughter pointed out how the story reflected the childhood of the author. Upon closer examination, I recognized that this was a golden opportunity to use this book to teach author's craft and purpose. I decided to use this book to introduce this skill to a middle school ESL class. Initially, I was afraid that they would be insulted that I was using a children's book with them. However, I was pleasantly surprise: many of them had read it in Spanish in their home country, so they possessed background knowledge. Since they had prior knowledge, I was able to expand upon

it by introducing how the author crafted the book using specific writing strategies and that his purpose was to reflect his childhood awakening to a life as a writer and artist. I would definitely recommend this book as a high interest, literacy-enriched text for children; it also is an extraordinary resource for teaching challenging skills such as author's craft and purpose.

Little Tommy couldn't wait until the art teacher came to give the class its first art lesson. This was first grade. The year before, the kindergarten teacher mixed powder in water then students painted on paper. The paint usually cracked, then blew off in the wind. So, yes, "The Art Lesson" was an anticipated event for young Tommy in the first grade. Young Tommy received a wonderful 64-color box of crayons for his birthday just after school began for first grade. However, his teacher took them away because "everyone must use the same crayons--school crayons," which happened to be the same old eight colors. Imagine his dismay!(The teacher looks bad here, but consider what she does. Whether it is fair or not, she is trying to put the children on the same playing field with the school crayons. Tommy's 64 colors would have given him a touchdown even before the game began. We always look at how awful the teacher is for denying individuality and autonomy, but I can appreciate what she is trying to do. I don't know the answer in this case, but a perfect solution IS provided in the story!)When the art teacher comes to teach the first greatly anticipated art lesson, Tommy can hardly sleep the night before. Need I say the lesson is disappointing? Wait! The art teacher and his first grade teacher work out a satisfactory solution. Voila! Tommy is on his way to becoming an artist. The story promotes steady resolve, unflinching determination, and joy in doing what is loved. A hearty recommendation!Note: The name is spelled T-o-m-m-y in the story and was perhaps changed when Tomie dePaola actually began to be published.

If you ever observe a class of young students, when given free time, you will find that a great number of them choose to draw, some good, some not so good, but all great. This book has great appeal to these children. I have to admit to being a big dePaola fan, feeling he is one of the best out there and this work, which is obviously at least semi-autobiographical is truly inspirational. It is a story of a young lad who likes to draw, love art and art work and ends up doing what he loves. This gives the young ones something to shoot for and something to ponder and think about. This illustrations of the authors usual high quality, by that I mean wonderful and the text is quite near perfect and matches the illustrations perfectly. I cannot recommend this one highly enough.

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