

# Five Simple Ways to Encourage Right-Brain Thinking in Your Child

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The idea of right brain and left brain thinking is a theory based on research from an American psychobiologist Roger W. Sperry, in the 1960s. Dr. Sperry discovered that the two halves of the human brain process information in very different ways.

The right side of the brain is very visual and intuitive. Right-brain thinkers tend to see the "big picture" more easily and therefore are very visual and processes information in intuitive and conceptual ways. That is why so many right brain dominants are great artists.

The left side of the brain is our verbal, logical and analytical side. Our left brain processes are important for organizing and sequencing information. That is why many right brain thinkers (I have two in my family) have a more difficult time with traditional workbooks, math and tests.

Of course both sides of the brain work together in a very complex way we don't fully understand. Encouraging right-brain thinking in your child is simple and will enrich their lives in many ways as the grow and develop. It can help your child learn how to draw better, be more imaginative and even play a musical instrument well.

## Five simple ways to encourage the right brain

1. Throw out the coloring books. Provide your child with an unlimited supply of paper, pencils and crayons. This encourages your child to create his own shape and style and "draw outside of the lines."
2. Turn off the television and limit the computer and video games. Too much television and "electronic entertainment" is a creativity killer. Many children will choose watching television or Xbox over more beneficial activities. If the TV is off and mom says, "no Xbox today," they will be forced to look for other things to do (this is the time to break out the art supplies).
3. Expose your child to beautiful artwork, starting at an early age. Postcard-sized art prints available in booklets are great books to look at with your children and keep on the coffee table for them to browse through.
4. Keep a well-stocked arts/craft cupboard. Important "staples" are watercolor paints, tempera paints, oil pastels, colored pencils, glue sticks, scissors, clay, paintbrushes in many different sizes, many different types of paper such as plain white for sketching, construction paper, large heavier paper for painting. Of course this is only the beginning. Now, allow your child to create, every day if he wishes!
5. Be more choosy about toys you provide. Instead of buying toys that don't involve the child's imagination or creative skills (electronic toys, video games), choose toys like Legos, Tinkertoys, dress-up clothes (I provide a large tub of second-hand play dresses, shoes, capes, etc.), puppets, etc.

All of these ideas are easy to implement and quite often are just a matter of changing habits and routines. Who knows, your child may be the next Monet in the making!