

# Children get creative at weekly art classes

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## Youth Art Class

Rhea Brown, owner of the Phoenix Art Studio in Harker Heights, helps Chloe Dinwiddie, 7, left, and Surayya Irfan, 6, as they work on abstract collages during a youth art class Tuesday at the Harker Heights Activities Center. See more photos on page 6 and at [kdhnews.com](http://kdhnews.com).



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Children have the opportunity to explore their creativity in art classes taught by artist Rhea Brown at the Harker Heights Activities Center.

Open to ages 7 through 12, the classes are held from 4:30 to 5:30 p.m. every Tuesday. A different medium is studied each month.

In January, students are learning about abstract art. At a recent class, they explored circles and the color wheel by first looking at a complex painting of segmented colored circles by well-known abstract artist Bruce Gray. Later, Brown provided a simplified version of overlapping colored circles. With watercolors, the children painted each circle a different color, using the overlapping parts of the circles to mix colors.

At the end of class, the students had created their own interpretation of the class project. Ethan Dixon, 10, used a combination of abstract and nonabstract techniques for his favorite form of artistic expression.

"I like to doodle," he said.

For Brown, the most important thing students can bring to the class is creativity.

"We have projects, but the students always interpret the projects to their own capability," she said. "They might tweak it or have something to add to it ... it's always somehow their own.

"Even if we do one project, each one ends up looking a little bit different."

Brown uses a framework for each class, but her teaching style remains fluid.

"I don't so much teach step by step. ... I provide the activity and the materials, and they're able to use their creativity in the project," she said.

Brown said the students are at a good age to learn about abstract art.

The cost of the youth art classes is \$60 per month and includes materials. The class will study portrait painting in February, 3-D art in March, still life painting in April, and mixed media art in May. For more information, call the Harker Heights Parks and Recreation Center at (254) 953-5657.