




The Stages of Scribbling

S STAGES		8-12 months, or up to 1 year Early Scribbling
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In the first, or Early Stage of Scribbling, at about one year of age, children make a few marks (straight thrusts and emphatic dots), often without looking at them. Then, as marks catch their visual attention, children start to draw for longer periods of time, creating haystacks of lines and masses of dots. Initially, most children draw straight lines that go every which way, pushing with the marker or crayon, and jabbing dots.

S STAGES		12-24 months, or 1-2 Years Middle Scribbling
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In the second, or Middle Stage of Scribbling, between one and two years of age, children move away from helter skelter lines and dots to loops, nested loops, or loosely concentric circles, and the back-and-forth, up-and-down, in and out explorations called meanders, labyrinths and mazes.


S STAGES		24-36 months, or 2-3 years Mature/High Scribbling
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In the third, or Mature Scribbling Stage, between two and three years of age, children progress to controlled line explorations using spirals and a range of circles.

S STAGES		Still at 24-36 months FIRST TRANSITIONAL/TRANSFORMATIONAL Stage of Scribbling: Heading into drawing
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The Mature Stage of Scribbling is also a Transitional or Transformational Stage, occurring between three and four years of age, when children transform lines, dots, loops, circles, meanders, mazes, labyrinths and spirals into Euclidean and Non-Euclidean curvilinear shapes like circles, nested circles, and into linear (or non-curving, straight-edged) shapes, like triangles and rectangles and other parallel and/or perpendicular forms.


The Stages of Drawing

S STAGES		36 to 48 months, or 3-4 years Early Drawing
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Verbally, this stage begins at about three; visually it can happen from about the age of three, also, but may not be evident until later. While attempting to represent the external world faithfully, the child is also intent on mapping that external world, via marks, back onto his/her own earlier attempts at drawing, as well as onto hard-wired, pre-existing internal shapes of thought.

S STAGES		48 to 60 months, or 4-5 years Middle Drawing
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In my experience, from the ages of one through five years, children show a wide range of overlaps in stages of scribbling and drawing, while their spoken language-use may progress in a more or less linear manner.

S STAGES		MATURE/HIGH DRAWING: 60-72 months, or 5-6 years or older. Representational and abstract drawing and the metaphorical child. Getting ready for reading and writing words.
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The child is already reaching for new ways to say things, using images and words. Her drawings may be “surreal,” like Magritte (hyper-real in terms of accuracy, but weird in terms of juxtapositions) and her expressions may include visual and verbal metaphors, similes, hypotheses, analogies, predictions, and speculations. The Drawing/Writing Lesson Plans will lead you through these categories, both visually and verbally.

S STAGES		60 - 72 months, or 5-6 years and beyond. SECOND TRANSITIONAL/TRANSFORMATIONAL MARK-MAKING STAGE: Proto mathematics/music/writing
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From about age five, the child will make marks that look like writing: printed lists, cursive script, the alphabet, numbers, musical notes. Left to his/her own devices as a mark-maker, it is highly likely that the child would invent his/her own mathematics and musical notational systems, probably before invented spelling.

S STAGES		60-72 months, or 5-6 years and beyond. THIRD TRANSITIONAL/TRANSFORMATIONAL STAGE Drawing/Writing
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Your child is ready to become a balanced bilateral thinker, equally at ease with image, text, and image/text productions. Your child will have the visual-attentional capabilities to read books over hours or to decode electronic mixed media in seconds. Your child needs both skills and both speeds; to read images and text slowly for detailed content and to read images and text fast for overall meaning/message. Then the child needs to be able to make decisions about the usefulness or relevance of the details and the overall message.