



## PART 5: Time Management

What do you do when one child finishes a project before the rest of the class? The age-old question of what to do with spare time must be as old as classroom teaching itself. Because children work at different rates and with differing amounts of diligence, **be prepared to deal with the child who finishes “early” as well as the one who moves slowly.**

While both finishing “early” and not finishing “on time” are challenges to our ingenuity as teachers, we must be sure to treat the children as individuals, being more interested in each one’s development than getting through the lesson. Apart from timed activities like quick drawings, don’t expect the students to begin and end assignments together. Avoid pressuring the children to “keep up to one another.” Your students are already subject to deadlines, having to complete assignments within the time constraints imposed on them by the boundaries of their scheduled class times. This is a reality of school life. As much as possible, however, when they are working on creative art projects, try to allow your students the freedom to work at their

own rate. Avoid reciting the time and telling them to hurry. Children need the security of uninterrupted time in order to seriously apply themselves to a creative project, and they will be discouraged from becoming deeply involved if their time is continually interrupted or cut short. While working within a time frame can have its own benefits for learning efficiency and responsibility, the key is sensitivity. **Initiating a “quiet time” when the available class time is short can work wonders at increasing productivity.** (See *B. Practical Tips* in Part 6.)

At the same time, we must be prepared for some students to finish ahead of the rest. What happens when a particular project the students have been working on begins to wind down? When the first child to finish says, “I’m done,” what are you going to do? In order to prevent a child from having to sit for long periods with nothing to do, we must consider the staggered finish not as an inconvenience, but rather as normal and healthy. Following are some suggestions that will assist you so that the next time, when the first child finishes, you won’t be tempted to say, “Just keep