

# Youth Art Month

## Recent Ideas That Have Worked

Through the years, state chairpersons, local art teachers and others have developed wonderfully creative ideas to celebrate Youth Art Month and promote quality art education. We share with you just a few of them.

**Alabama** celebrated with **Chalk It Up Days/Festivals**, with students reproducing famous artwork on their school sidewalks.

**Georgia** promoted **YAM Facts or Quotes every day in March** on several local television stations.

**Indiana** held a **"Beautiful Farms of Indiana" Art Contest using soybean crayons**, highlighting an art material made from crops grown in their state.

**Louisiana** celebrated YAM by **featuring a different artist of the day every day in March** and by having students **paint the great monuments of the world on their school windows**.

**Maryland** developed a **"Who Wants to be an Artist" contest** based on the theme of the millionaire show that was held each day during the month of March and at the end of the month students with the correct answers received prizes.

**Minnesota** worked with **Target Corporation to include an article on YAM in their March newsletter**, a national publication that is sent to over 107,000 schools across the **United States**. Target Corporation has a special **"Take Charge of Education" program**, through which customers with charge accounts can designate a school of their choice to receive a percentage of their purchases. The **article in Target's March newsletter encouraged all schools to use their March checks to support the arts in their area**.

**New Jersey** held a multicultural art night titled **"Passport to Art from Around the World"** in which students and their parents took an imaginary tour to Japan, Holland and Mexico and at which **art therapy students performed a play featuring "ventriloquist puppets" they had made using paper mache**.

**Oklahoma** produced and distributed an impressive **"ArtsPower" guide book**, a collaborative effort of the state art education organizations and the business circle of Oklahoma that is comprised of business leaders from small businesses to large corporations across Oklahoma. It features 10 key avenues to improve arts education in your local school. More details can be found at [www.artspower.com](http://www.artspower.com).

**Oregon** created **shoebox trunks that students designed in the style of their favorite artist**, while the art educators statewide received a lesson plan incorporating objectives, materials list, procedures, and cross-curricular connections.

**Tennessee** participated in an **art exchange through Sister Cities International with**

**student artists from Russia.** An art contest was held and winning student art was exchanged between the cities, along with student biographies, pictures and gifts, bringing awareness of the importance of art education to two very diverse areas. **Vermont** students created **Temenos Books** (based on the ancient Greek thought, temenos is a magic circle, a sacred protected space where special rules apply and extraordinary events occur), **to express images for global healing, peace and gratitude.**

**Washington** held a "eye wear" contest and **decorated eye glasses and other related art items for display at Frye Art Museum,** a major Seattle-area Museum. The name of the YAM Exhibit was "The Art of Seeing."

**Wisconsin** students and professionals participated together in an **ice-carving event,** at which they **carved giant masks.**

**YAM benefits all:** A growing trend in state Youth Art Month programs has been to join with other worthwhile projects for the benefit of all. **Ohio** continues to combine their YAM events with local community assistance program, such as the "Harvest for Hunger" program. **Indiana** continues to combine some of their YAM events with the "**Very Special Arts**" program. A few ideas from previous years include students in **Maryland** **donating art to assisted living centers,** students in **Oklahoma** painting lunchroom walls with story scenes to encourage younger children to read, and students in **Arizona** beautifying their city during YAM by painting garbage dumpsters. Below are several other project ideas you might want to try:

- **Artists-in-Residence programs:** local artists explain their own artwork and to give lessons to students
- Hold a **bus poster contest** and display student artwork in buses throughout March
- **Student-run craft workshops** at a local shopping mall or library
- **Statewide postcard exchanges** and **Art exchanges** with foreign countries
- **Living art program:** students (or teachers) pose as famous pieces of artwork
- "**Edible Art**" projects, where the food item resembles a period of art, an artist, or a specific work of art
- **Student-designed coloring books**
- **Quilt projects** to benefit those who are less fortunate
- **Student-designed placemats and table tents** that can be used by local restaurants
- **T-shirts, sweatshirts, tote bags, note pads, refrigerator magnets, computer mouse pads, calendars etc.,** decorated with student artwork
- **Honorary chairperson:** Appoint a local celebrity who is supportive of the arts and art education

**Be sure to let us know what ideas have worked in your state so we can share them with others!**