



GENIUS Art — Student Artwork Guide

GENIUS Art challenges students to use visual creativity to raise awareness of environmental issues, communicate meaningful ideas, and inspire positive action.

Students may submit projects in one of three categories:

- **Photography**
- **Poster Design**
- **Mixed Media**

All submitted artwork must be the **original creation of the student** and must have a clear connection to an environmental issue, challenge, solution, or message.

GENIUS Art is not only about artistic technique. A successful GENIUS Art project combines:

Artistic Creativity + Original Student Work + Environmental Meaning + Visual Impact

Your artwork should help viewers see, understand, feel, or think differently about an environmental issue.

General Artwork Requirements

- **Artwork Size**
 - The maximum size of your artwork is: **18 × 24 inches**
 - Artwork may be created in either Portrait or Landscape orientation
 - For Mixed Media projects, the maximum depth is: **8 inches**
 - Artwork may be smaller than 18 × 24 inches but may not exceed these dimensions.
- **Number of Projects**
 - may submit **one artwork per application**.
 - may submit multiple artworks may complete more than one application.
 - submitting multiple applications may increase your chances of being selected as a finalist.
 - may present **only one Art project at the GENIUS Olympiad Finals**.
- **Originality Requirement**
 - All GENIUS Art projects must be created by the student submitting the project.
 - Stock images are **not permitted** as part of the artwork.
 - Regardless of the category, **all artistic elements must be created by the student**.
 - Students should explain the following within their artist statement:
 - Their artistic concept
 - How the artwork was created
 - Materials and tools used
 - Their creative process
 - How the artwork connects to the environment



- **Artificial Intelligence**
 - **AI-generated artwork is not accepted.**
 - Students may not use generative AI tools to create images, illustrations, backgrounds, objects, or other visual elements that become part of the submitted artwork.
 - The artistic work must represent the student's own creativity and artistic skills.
- **Artwork Submission Requirements**
 - Artwork may be submitted in any of the following formats: PNG, JPEG, or PDF
 - Each application should contain **one artwork**.
 - For Photography and Poster Design, submit a clear image of the completed artwork.
 - For Mixed Media, combine **2–3 photographs showing different views of the same artwork into one file**.
 - Rights to Submitted Creative Work
 - By submitting your project, students grant GENIUS Olympiad permission to use submitted creative work for purposes related to the program.
 - This may include uses such as judging, event presentations, GENIUS publications, educational materials, program promotion, GENIUS websites and social media

Category Descriptions and Requirements:

ART | Photography

Use original photography to communicate an environmental message.

A strong photograph should do more than simply show a beautiful landscape. It should communicate an idea, emotion, story, concern, or perspective related to the environment.

Simple observations can also create powerful environmental messages. A plant growing through concrete, wildlife adapting to an urban environment, or visible contrasts between development and nature may tell meaningful stories.

- **Photography Requirements**
 - The photograph must be **taken by the student**.
 - **AI-generated images may not be used.**
 - Students may digitally enhance their own photographs using photo-editing software. Permitted enhancements may include:
 - Cropping
 - Exposure adjustments
 - Brightness and contrast
 - Color correction
 - Black-and-white conversion
 - Sharpening
 - Other standard photographic adjustments



ART | Poster Design

Combine art, design, and environmental communication to inspire action.

A strong environmental poster should help viewers quickly understand an environmental issue or message and encourage them to think, respond, or change their behavior.

Poster projects may be artistic, educational, persuasive, symbolic, or campaign-oriented.

Students are encouraged to develop a clear visual concept rather than simply placing large amounts of information on the poster.

■ Poster Design Requirements

- Poster projects may be created using:
 - Traditional Methods, such as pencil, paint, colored pencils, ink, pastel, or other techniques.
 - Digital Methods
- Students may create original artwork using digital illustration or graphic design software.
- Regardless of the method used, **all artistic elements must be created by the student.**
- Stock images are **not permitted** as part of the artwork.
- AI-generated images are **not permitted.**
- Students should not build a poster by combining photographs, illustrations, backgrounds, or graphics created by other people or generated by AI.
- Any photography incorporated into the poster should also be the student's own photography.
- Viewers should be able to understand the main message without needing a long explanation.

ART | Mixed Media

Combine different materials and techniques into one original three-dimensional artwork.

Mixed Media projects allow students to experiment with texture, depth, structure, color, recycled materials, and unconventional artistic approaches.

Students are especially encouraged to consider how the materials themselves can strengthen the environmental message of the project.

■ Mixed Media Requirements

- Students may combine any materials such as paint, pencil, ink, student-created photos, paper, cardboard, fabric, plastic, cans, newspaper, wood, packaging, recycled materials, natural materials, etc.
- Mixed Media artwork should include a clear **3D component.**
- The project should not simply be a flat painting or drawing that happens to use more than one type of material.
- Students should intentionally use layers, texture, raised elements, attached materials, depth, structural components to create a three-dimensional artistic effect.
- The maximum depth of the artwork is: **8 inches**
- Make sure at least one photograph clearly shows the artwork from an angle where its depth can be seen to show the three-dimensional qualities of the artwork
- The 2–3 photographs, with different angles, of the same artwork should be combined and submitted as **one single file.**