

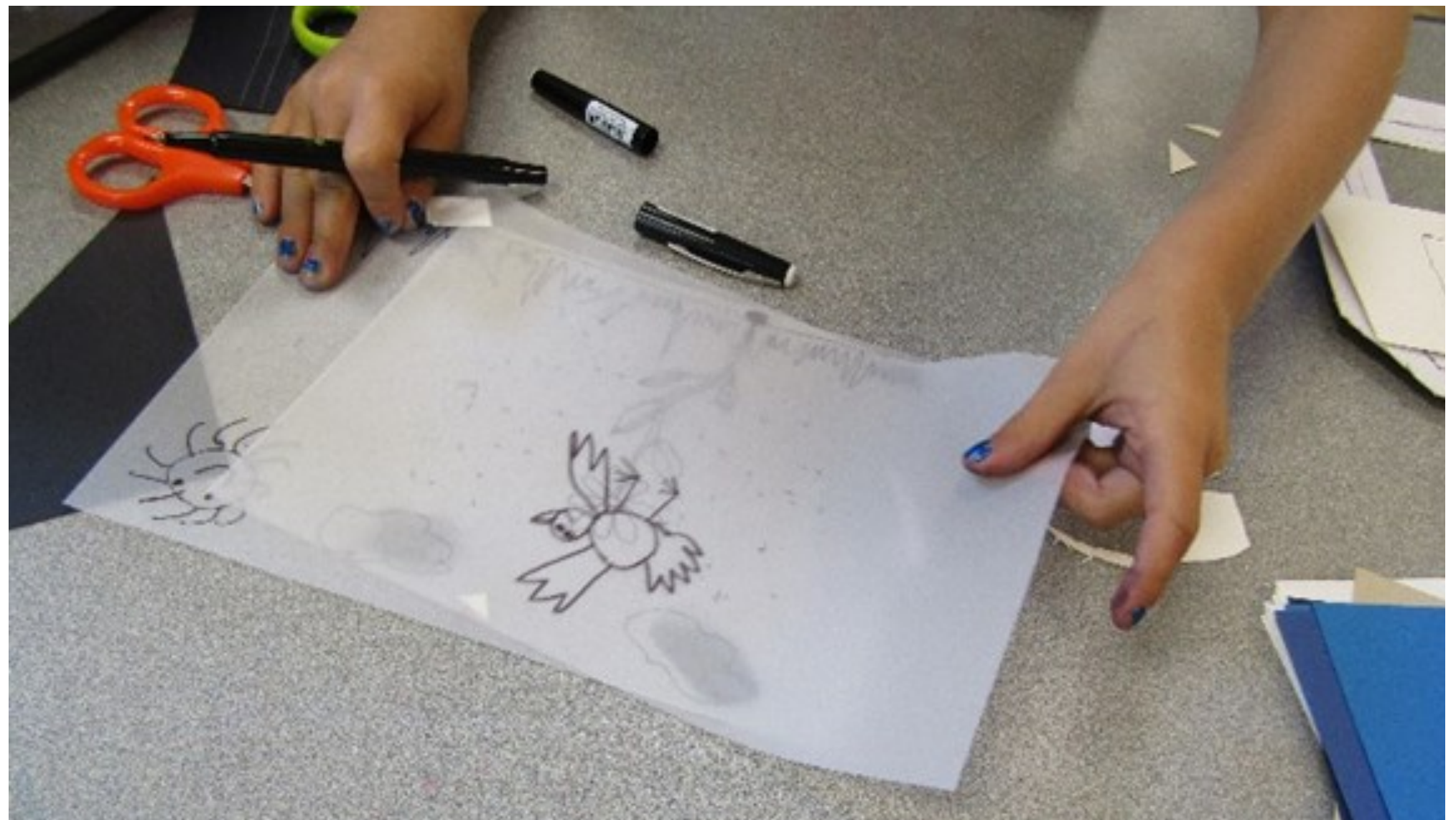
## ***When Art Materials Inspire Stories***



As Ainsley drew, she discovered the transparent quality of tracing paper by accidentally placing her drawing of a bird on top of the artist's drawing. Since she could see both drawings at once, she immediately moved her drawing sideways (to show that her bird was moving across the landscape that the artist drew). Ainsley discovered a way to animate her drawing!

Experiences, memories and thoughts ignite ideas and stories in children. Through materials children can express and communicate these ideas providing us with a window into their mind.

One morning in a Drop-In program, after story time, Ainsley (age 5 years 9 months) discovered new materials; transparent tracing paper, frames, and drawing tools (charcoal and black fine liner markers). After careful observation of the artist using these new materials to draw a rainy day garden scene, Ainsley was curious about what she could do with these materials and began drawing. With the notion of making transparent drawings on tracing paper, Ainsley began to draw her 1st of 5 related drawings. Ainsley told a story as she drew.







Ainsley took a moment to draw a cloud (2<sup>nd</sup> drawing). She began by placing a new piece of tracing paper on top of the first 2 drawings; in this way, she was able to draw a large cloud next to her bird drawing. She explained that it was a storm cloud.

“Does your storm have thunder? Or lightning?” the artist asked.

Ainsley quietly added a charcoal line around the cloud to represent thunder and later, a zigzag line to represent lightning.



Ainsley proceeded to draw a third drawing and said, *“There's a robin living in our background with babies. Now I'm gonna make the nest and the eggs and 8 eggs.”*

Ainsley used the transparency of the tracing paper to view multiple drawings at once and since they were interchangeable, this helped her to visualize the details of her story.





Ainsley continued drawing and said, *"This is the Mama flying and this is the Mama sitting and these are the apples."*

5th drawing: large picture of the mama bird.



Ainsley continued, *"Now, I'm making a big fat Mama Bird. Now, she's flying. Now she has big ginormous eyes. Now I just need to do her big fluffy tail. There! Now you have all the parts of the story. Now you can write all the words of the story. You can say all the words of the story."*







“What is your story called?” the artist asked.

*“The Bird Takes The Flower,”* Ainsley responded.

“What’s the name of your big Mama bird?”

*“Birdica. That’s her name. Now you can say Birdica to everyone when you say all the words of the story.”*

“Would you want to share your story with the other children during circle time?”

Since it was time to go, Ainsley agreed to leave her story until next time and would consider sharing her story with all the other children and adults during circle time.

The following week, Ainsley presented the story she wrote the previous week to the Drop-In families. Everyone listened with great interest. She displayed each drawing as she spoke to the group with her grandmother by her side.

*“This is a bird named Birdica. And this is a flower. The dog is chasing the bird. The bird got the flower. He brought the flower to the babies. A flower blanket. Then, a storm! And that’s all!”*

When children discover that pictures can convey stories and that they can use drawings as a storytelling tool, they also discover the power that ideas have (in narrative form) to influence others and to spark conversations.