

ARE YOU AN ARTIST?



This is "Winky", the illustration I tried to copy from the Art Instruction School ad. (My actual drawing is long gone.)

One day I saw an ad in a magazine that said if I could draw "Winky", the cartoon character in the ad, I might have the talent to be a professional artist. I didn't know what a professional artist actually did, but the ad excited me, and I loved to draw and colour, so it sounded to me like something I should try. I grabbed a pencil and paper, and immediately set to work at the kitchen table.

After a half hour or so, I figured my drawing of "Winky" was good enough to call finished, and I showed it to Mum and Dad, thinking maybe they would like it. "Can we send it in to the company?" I asked. To my delight, Mum and Dad were very enthusiastic about my chances, and so we filled out the small form in the ad and mailed it and the drawing to the Art Instruction School. I was sure my drawing was good enough to get me some kind of prize or maybe free drawing lessons. I didn't really understand that this was just a promotion to sell art correspondence courses. I thought it was some kind of contest.

After what seemed like an eternity, we finally got a letter back from the Art Instruction School. Mum and Dad called me and Kim into the kitchen and excitedly opened the letter. It said that my drawing was an excellent effort for a child my age. "Huh?" I thought. "Unfortunately," it continued, "the minimum age to be accepted is twelve". Since I was only eight, I was not eligible, but the letter encouraged me to re-apply when I was a little older.

I felt disappointment at being rejected because of my age, which I couldn't do anything about. Yet in my mind, there was still a vague feeling of accomplishment. My age was the **only** reason that my drawing was rejected. That meant that my drawing itself was still good. Mum and Dad still seemed very proud of me and that made me feel pretty happy about

the whole Winky experience.