

The Paradise Center Presents

Dominic Nelson

Noxon Elementary School Spotlight on the Arts – August 2024



Interviewed by
Karen Thorson

“Spotlight on the Arts” by The Paradise Center honors and encourages students in the arts by highlighting their talent and acknowledging the support they receive through their schools and teachers.

Budding artists in their early years seem to like depicting things they know and can see. That is not the case for Dominic Nelson, a 7-year-old first grader at Noxon School. His energy and his art reflect an enthusiasm for the fascinating, the colorful, and the unfamiliar. He has an ability to create

his own versions of things he would like to see and know more about.

Nelson began his artistic journey before he started school. Currently, he has several teachers at the Noxon School, including Mrs. Odenburg and Mrs. Novak.

When our conversation began, he was polite and a little reserved, but soon he was animated and at ease. He seems interested in everything, comfortable talking with unfamiliar people, and generally a happy young man.

One source of inspiration for Nelson is movies, which can take us to unknown places and introduce us to unknown things. That may be where he has been introduced to some animals not native to Montana, but of great interest to a young artist.

Because his favorite subjects are animals, and he loves the untraditional, his favorite animal is a panda. Along that trend, his favorite artistic medium is graphite pencil, and he notes that not only can he correct mistakes with pencils, but he can also control light to dark areas, shade and darken where he wants to strengthen an image.

But paint and markers are also favored by this young, self-taught artist. Those implements lead him to more colorful and unusual animals. It is no wonder that he happily portrays animals such as a seahorse under water and a close-up of a chameleon's eye, evidenced in the attached artworks.

Although there are no artists in his immediate family, he has been told that his great, great grandmother was an artist. That may explain why his favorite painting by a famous artist is "Mona Lisa" by Leonardo Da Vinci.

Nelson plans to continue his art throughout his school years, hoping to be introduced to new artistic mediums along the way. When asked what advice he would give another first grader wanting to try art, he says, "You can do it!"