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# South Bend Tribune

November 4, 2005

## Colorful ditties pep up art class

### Visiting artist a treat for students at Stanley Clark.

By **AMY GOVERT-LARSON**  
 Tribune Correspondent

SOUTH BEND -- Teachers will do just about anything to get their students to learn.

For Greg Percy, that meant picking up a guitar when he wasn't holding a paintbrush.

The 20-year veteran teacher first integrated art appreciation music into his kindergarten classroom after penning the colorful tune "The Red and Yellow Blues."

The kids loved it.

They still do.

"You're going to be my echo," said Percy to a classroom of kindergartners at Stanley Clark School recently.

"The primary colors," sang Percy, strumming his acoustic guitar in time with the canned music on his iPod.

... the primary colors ...

"They are red, yellow, blue."

... red, yellow, blue ...



**Greg Percy, a visiting art educator and musician from Wisconsin, answers questions during a workshop for kindergarten students at Stanley Clark School.**

Tribune Photo AMY GOVERT-LARSON



"And, when I sing a song about them, I get the red and yellow blues."

... red, yellow blues ...

What the students lacked in gusto during Percy's early morning workshop, they made up for in movement. His playful songs generated a lot of giggles and wiggles.

The visiting Wisconsin artist received even livelier receptions during his first-, second- and third-grade workshops at the school before delivering an interactive afternoon performance.

"We listen to his music in our art class while we're cleaning up," said Isabela Nanni.

Isabela, 8, and her third-grade peers are big fans of Percy's tunes.

"My favorite is probably the cleanup song," said Kendall Sharpe, 8. "Sometimes we like to dance and then we clean up more."

"We like to sing too," said Isabela.

Students enrolled in Stanley Clark's Lower School are familiar with Percy's music, thanks to the school's own art instructor, Jill Hunt.

"We've been listening to his music for a while," said Hunt, who discovered the musician quite by accident.

While researching an artist her students were about to study, Hunt stumbled upon a Web site that included one of Percy's music files.

Percy's music "enriches the art lesson," said Hunt.

"He makes that extra connection with the kids."

Hunt organized Percy's visit, the school's first guest to incorporate art and music into a lesson.

Stanley Clark School's annual budget includes funds to support visiting artists.

"I could tell we were going to connect," said Hunt, describing her correspondences with Percy. "Percy employs a lot of concepts I use quite often in art."

Percy, now a middle school art teacher in Madison, Wis., has produced four volumes of children's music. From "pop to polka to punk," each song explores individual artists or concepts.

After a morning of workshops tailored to each grade and the afternoon show, "the kids felt like they knew him too," said Hunt.

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