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VISUAL RESPONSE:  
A CURRICULUM UNIT INTEGRATING BOOK ARTS AND LITERATURE IN THE  
ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

by

ANNE C. SHEA

Under the Direction of Dr. Melanie Davenport

ABSTRACT

This study focused on the integration of book arts in a fifth grade classroom. As an art teacher turned regular education teacher I was interested in the effects of integrating art into the area of reading. The curriculum unit consists of two lessons in which the students were invited to use books arts as a means of expression and comprehension. The lessons correlated with the novel *Number the Stars*, by Lois Lowry. The results include my observations and reflections as a practicing elementary teacher.

INDEX WORDS: Integrated curriculum, Interdisciplinary curriculum, Book arts,  
Reading comprehension, Visual response

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A CURRICULUM UNIT INTEGRATING BOOK ARTS AND LITERATURE IN THE  
ELEMENTARY CLASSROOM

by

ANNE C. SHEA

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Master of Art Education

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2011

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2011

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A CURRICULUM UNIT INTEGRATING BOOK ARTS AND LITERATURE IN THE  
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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **Introduction**

Art education is a fundamental element in a quality education. However, over the past few years economic factors have caused many to question its importance. When faced with the reality of budget cuts that many districts are experiencing it is difficult for many to see the significance of art programs any longer.

### **Need for the Study**

In contemporary educational institutions many programs are being sacrificed due to budgetary issues. Visual art education is a program that appears to be one of the first to be dismembered. Much of education today is focused upon state-wide tests and school achievement. Art is one area of the curriculum on which students are not tested, therefore when faced with budgets to cut, art looks like an easy option. During these difficult economic times incorporating art could be just the thing that students need. Integrating the visual arts into the core curriculum has become a more relevant concept. This integration could prove beneficial to students' learning and engagement in the core curriculum. According to Kosky and Curtis (2008) "introducing the Arts into everyday classroom work may provide the extra push students need to gain or maintain a desire to learn" (p. 23). This issue is one of great importance to me due to the fact that I have had the rare experience of being an art educator who has made the transition to a traditional educator. The perspective that I have gained from this transition is a unique one.

The district in which I work, like so many others, faced a difficult task in the previous year. This task was reducing the budget. The district was forced to make difficult choices to resolve this issue. At first they considered the idea of cutting orchestra and band at the middle and high school levels. However, many parents and students alike passionately rejected this

proposal. In response, the board of education for the district swiftly made a decision that would affect my future and livelihood. The resolution was to reduce the number of teaching and support positions within the district. Consequently the number of elementary art and music teachers was reduced by half. The board stated that one art teacher would travel between two schools, therefore eliminating a teaching position at one of every two schools. The faculty retained was based on seniority. Since I had only been with the district for one year I was the one to be displaced. The board also decided that the students would receive half of the amount of time in art and music as they had in previous years. The students would only visit art every other week as opposed to every week.

Due to the fact that I am also certified in elementary education I was offered a teaching position at the same school where I had been teaching art. As a fifth grade teacher I learned a great deal about myself as well as the education of my students. It was a difficult transition but I found comfort in teaching my students creative, hands-on lessons that incorporated the standards being studied across the curriculum. This allowed my students to take a more imaginative approach to the learning process. My interest and passion lies in teaching my students lessons that are integrated with the visual arts. The research questions that I intended to answer in this study were, (1) How can I integrate book arts and reading into an age appropriate curriculum? (2) What can I learn about the teaching process from this curriculum? (3) What can I learn about book arts?

### **Purpose of the Study**

I took an auto-ethnographic approach to my research. The study was based on my observations and experiences as I developed and implemented a unit of study for my students, which integrated art into the curriculum.

Much of elementary education is based on literacy. If students are not able to read and write then they will automatically suffer in the years to come. Books of all kinds are a wonderful tool to utilize in the classroom. The unit of study that I developed for my students was based upon the idea of integrating art with reading and writing. My students created two books, a pocket book and a tunnel book. The pocket book was constructed in order to be used throughout the reading of the novel, *Number the Stars* (1989) by Lois Lowry. These books in particular were used as a means of responding to literature. The tunnel book was used to bring to life a scene from the novel using visualization.

Through this unit I learned how these types of projects can be a positive addition to the curriculum. It was my hope that the students would become more engaged in the reading and writing processes. Though I will not be measuring their performance in any way, I will record my own reflections and process. Being able to utilize my reflections as a practicing classroom teacher, should be beneficial for my future planning and teaching. I am optimistic that my experience will prove valuable to other teachers who may be interested in integration.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **Literature Review**

In recent years there has been much talk among educators concerning No Child Left Behind and the trail of alterations that have followed it. Much of today's education is based on tests and test scores required under law. With such an abundance of time spent on the subject areas of reading, writing, and math there has been little time for other areas of study. Content areas that are not assessed do not hold as much value as those that are and this permits the non-tested areas to be neglected easily in order to allow more time for the core subjects of reading, writing, and math (Jones & Thomas, 2006). According to Chapman (2004), these standardized tests will most likely result in fewer hours of study spent in other areas, such as the arts. From the first day of school students are training for the tests they will take near the end of the school year. At one point I asked my students to respond to three questions one of them being: what was their goal for fifth grade? The majority of the students responded by saying their goal was to pass the Criterion-Referenced Competency Tests (CRCT), which is Georgia's state-mandated assessment. This supports the idea that students are reminded constantly about this type of assessment and of its importance. Jones and Thomas (2006) state that the creation of the No Child Left Behind Act will ultimately lead to negative impacts in the areas that are not tested, such as art, music, and physical education, while areas that are assessed will have increased time and attention.

There is another issue that is plaguing art programs in education and that is financial distress. Many public school districts feel the hard economic times and it has taken its toll on many programs. The art programs are particularly susceptible to cuts especially in states that have had financial troubles already in existence (Chapman, 2004). I have experienced this first

hand and have seen what one school district believes to be important and what is easily disposable.

### **Integrated vs. Interdisciplinary Curriculum**

Due to the problems associated with No Child Left Behind and budget concerns, many educators have turned to integrated or interdisciplinary curriculum. In some opinions the two words may seem interchangeable while in other opinions they differ entirely. It is important to decipher between the two terms in order to gain a proper perspective.

Taylor, Carpenter, Ballengee-Morris, and Sessions (2006) define an integrated education as the uniting of two or more areas of study. That is, in an integrated curriculum there is a natural flow or connection between two content areas, no clear separation is present.

Jones and Thomas (2006) state, “In schools, we break the world down into fragments, but the preference of the brain is to consider phenomena coherently—to identify the patterns and structure with context as a clue” (p. 64). It is important for human beings to observe and make connections. However useful an integrated education may be, there are many demands put upon the teachers in order to develop and implement a quality curriculum (Eisner, 2002). Integrating curriculum makes sense in the eyes of many educators, however, the extra time and energy required may scare most people away. Due to the fact that such precise collaboration must occur, the integrated method requires additional time for planning and is more often seen at the elementary level (Taylor, et al., 2006).

In his book, *The Arts and the Creation of Mind*, Elliot Eisner (2002) refers to integrated curriculum several times. Eisner articulates that the arts are utilized four ways in regards to integration. The first method discussed is when the arts are used as an avenue of comprehension to aid in student understanding of specific historical times or cultures. For example, while

studying the 1920s in social studies one could relate the Harlem Renaissance and the various prominent artists that dominated the time period to the students. The second mode of integration is based on the arts as a whole and the commonalities they share, but also keeping in mind their individual values. For example, teachers could discuss repetition in both music and art while looking at the similarities and the differences of the two. The third method mentioned is related to exploring a particular theme, most likely from another area of study, such as science. Take for example the concept of metamorphosis. This concept can be explored through both fields of music and art as well as focusing on science (Eisner, 2002). The final approach discussed involves the idea of problem solving skills. Lessons can be designed that require students to use various areas of study in order to find the solution to the particular problem given to them (Eisner, 2002). These various approaches to an integrated curriculum are the ones most likely to be seen in education. Eisner's approaches to integrating art with the core curriculum are typical ones that I have observed as well. As a fifth grade teacher, I have found myself using art as a means of furthering the students' comprehension of various time periods and important historical events in social studies. Through these approaches the students appeared to enjoy this avenue of learning.

On the other hand, an interdisciplinary education is a precise connection between the content and instruction of more than one area of study in a teaching/learning practice (Taylor, et al., 2006). Instead of studying World War II in social studies and in literature class separately an interdisciplinary approach would allow students and teachers to "see, celebrate, and make explicit cognitive connections between and among their varied courses of study (Taylor, et al., 2006, p. 7). In the article *Toward a Connected Core Curriculum* Wraga (2006) suggests that *interdisciplinary* refers to the idea of making connections between the core curriculum subjects



as well as connecting those academic experiences to real world experiences of the students.

Wraga (2006) focuses on a concept identified as ‘horizontal articulation of curriculum.’

Traditionally, education has focused on the connections between subjects from grade to grade.

That is, looking at the relationship between sixth and seventh grade math, instead of looking at the relationship between the different subject areas at the same grade level (Wraga, 2006).

Wraga (2006) provides three approaches to an interdisciplinary curriculum: correlated curriculum, fused curriculum, and integrative core curriculum. The correlated curriculum focuses on the students being allowed to investigate and make precise connections between the separate content areas of study. In this case teachers could easily collaborate to organize their focus of study so there will be a clear correlation between two subject areas. The fused curriculum approach merges two completely separate subject areas into an entirely new class. Integrative core curriculum does not refer to the commonly used version usually associated with the required courses. This method is based on the idea of students discussing personal and social tribulations and having the content material only be incorporated when it correlates with the specific issue being addressed. This approach allows students to work in partnership with each other as well as with their teachers. In working together the students “apply and integrate subject knowledge to analyze common personal or social problems” (Wraga, 2006, p. 93).

In regards to my own teaching philosophy I am drawn to the integrated approach as describe by Eisner. Due to that fact that I am an elementary school teacher this approach is by far the most sensible. I often use art as a means to further comprehension and support the topic being studied. For example, while studying the circumference of a circle I taught a lesson in which we looked at *Concentric Circles* by Wassily Kandinsky. My students were then given either the radius or the diameter of four circles. They were required to use a compass to draw and then cut

out these circles. Once glued concentrically to each other the students were to find the circumference of each using a formula we had studied. This lesson created vibrant collages while reinforcing the area of math. It was an apparent success in regards to integration.

High school may be a more appropriate place for the interdisciplinary approach due to the fact that the areas of study are more focused and not as broad as elementary curriculum. For example, in fifth grade social studies we cover information from the Civil War to present day. The amount of information that the students must learn is enormous and requires an immense effort from both the teachers and students. Therefore it would be impossible to bring all of this information and combine it with another area such as literature. As mentioned previously high school curriculum becomes more centered on a particular time period. Students can decide, for example, whether they want to study American History, World History, or a more specific time period within those. By choosing one particular time period in history teachers could more easily collaborate and create a new curriculum combining history and literature, or perhaps art history and world history.

There are many theories about what constitutes an integrated or interdisciplinary education. With such an abundance of options it is easy to become confused by the various definitions. However, it is important to remember that whichever approach is taken the main focus is the success of the students.

### **Integrating Art with Reading and Writing**

Along with the subject of math, reading and writing are a main concern on many state mandated assessments. Due to the fact that so much time is spent on these content areas it only makes sense to utilize multiple approaches in order to benefit the students' comprehension of the information being taught. This is when art can be utilized in order to help students who need a

more creative method to comprehend or respond to the information. Helm and Katz (2001, cited in Wu, 2009) state that children utilize drawing and painting in order to make connections and relationships with various concepts and express their thoughts.

The National Endowments for the Arts (cited in Shmulsky, 2009) published a survey revealing a great decline in the amount of literature being read by all age groups. Due to this alarming decrease in reading Lucinda Shmulsky, an art teacher in Massachusetts, developed and implemented a lesson to engage and encourage her students in reading. Shmulsky (2009) asks the rhetorical question, “What better way to engage young students in the love of reading than by using the arts as an integral part of the process?” (p. 40). In the lesson, Shmulsky had her students write a story and then create original illustrations in order to bring their stories to life. She also used a variety of children’s books as inspiration in order to get their young minds excited and thinking. Upon completion, the stories were assembled into a book for the students to enjoy. It was Shmulsky’s hope to motivate her students “in the roles of writers, editors, and illustrators” (p. 42). This is simply one successful example of a teacher incorporating art into the literature curriculum in order to inspire her students.

Another avenue of integrating art with literature is thru the use of comic books or graphic novels. Comic books have been enjoyed by children dating back to the late 1800s, however they did not become as mainstream until the 1920s and 1930s (Vega & Schanckenberg, 2004). Comic books and graphic novels are an ideal avenue in which to engage students and literacy. This type of approach can help students in contemporary society “relate to big themes and topics by tapping into the way students are already learning naturally” (Cleaver, 2008, p. 30). There are a variety of quality skills and knowledge that one must have in order to create comic books. These particular abilities include creative writing, storyline development, a variety of art skills,

graphic design sense, familiarity with document layout, and finally computer literacy (Vega & Schackenberg, 2004). Cleaver (2008) states,

The American Library Association recently embraced comic books as an ideal way to motivate young readers. The Maryland State Department of Education (2005) has done the same by partnering with Diamond Comics, a distributor for Disney, to develop a comics-based curriculum for reluctant readers. Several organizations—including the National Association of Comics Art Educators (2006) and the New York City Comic Book Museum (2006)—are aligning with schools and teachers to promote the use of comic books in K–12 classrooms. (p. 30)

It only makes sense to utilize what is already present in the lives of students in order to grasp their attention and allow for exploration. If teachers are able to find a topic that is interesting to their students then students will most likely become immersed in the process and ignore the reality that learning is in fact taking place. Papert (1993, cited in Vega & Schnackenberg, 2004,) suggests that when works are created that hold a certain value of importance to the creator then this is when “some of the most powerful learning occurs” (p. 818). The examples presented here simply demonstrate only two methods to investigate while developing lessons that integrate art and literature.

### **Visuals and Reading Comprehension**

The ability to understand what one is reading is essential to a successful educational and professional career. I have observed students who were able to read fluently, however when asked questions in regards to the context of the reading they struggled to articulate it. Many researchers and teachers have attempted to find a connection between reading comprehension and the use of visuals. Purves, Rogers, and Soter (1995) state

By using visuals we can obtain student responses that we might not otherwise get through talk or writing. Visuals, as response, represent a third “sign” system through which understandings are expressed metaphorically. They provide an opportunity to express aesthetic responses and responses to a word’s form and quality as well as to its content. (p. 27)

Eisenkraft (1999) developed a curriculum for her high school English class that incorporated visual representations. The aim of this implementation was to find a more interesting approach to a novel. She felt that her students were not excited or involved in the reading process. Eisenkraft states, “I was looking for an activity that would assure full participation and appeal to a variety of learning styles” (p. 95). During this lesson the students created watercolors based on scenes from the book. These watercolors were a means to open up the class to further discussion regarding the reading, which they successfully did. Upon the completion of this unit Eisenkraft was adamant about “integrating visual responses into our regular reading, writing, and discussion” (p. 101). Based on her experience Eisenkraft urges other teachers to integrate the use of visuals to further students involvement and achievement.

In the article, *Using Pictures to Assist in Comprehension and Recall* (Rich & Blake, 1994) a program was implemented which used the strategy of picture drawing throughout the reading process to help students comprehend the text. The fourth and fifth grade students used sticky notes to draw simple representations of the reading. According to Rich and Blake (1994), the students were enthusiastic about this creative strategy. They were also able to easily create a visual summary, and then use the visual as a means of articulating the reading in the days that followed without having to reread the material. This provides sufficient evidence that the use of visuals do in fact help students with comprehension. Upon completion of this program students

stated that they felt the picture drawing strategy was helpful to them (Rich & Blake, 1994).

Hibbing and Rankin-Erickson (2003) agree that,

A picture truly is worth a thousand words for students who struggle with reading comprehension. We have found that if students can create their own images on the television screens of their minds as they read, their potential for understanding the text is increased. (p.769)

Many teachers have implemented the use of visuals in their lesson plans and based on their experiences, as well as my own, there is much support for integrating these strategies in order to aid in student achievement.

### **Books Arts: A Historical and Contemporary View**

In the traditional sense of what is thought to be art, one may not think that a book would be considered. However, many artists in historical and contemporary times have turned to this mode of creation in order to express their ideas.

According to Hutchins (2002) books have a long standing history. The first books were made of clay tablets and placed in libraries around 1300 B.C. The ever important Bible and the Torah began on scrolls not long after. The ancient Mexican cultures communicated with vibrant pictographs on folded strips of bark. While the Chinese in the 10<sup>th</sup> century used dragon-scale binding in order to attach multiple pages of scroll. During The Middle Ages books were considered luxuries due to the fact that this time pre-dates the invention of the printing press. Furthermore, at the time of illuminated manuscripts, books had to be written, illustrated, and bound by hand which took an immense amount of skill and time.

### **Artists' books**

Books have evolved since then and have been used and transformed in a variety of ways. The idea of artists' books is a fairly recent development. According to Drucker (2005), the artist book did not come into existence until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was during this period of important social and artistic movements that the idea made an impression. One of the most recognizable forms is the *livre d'artiste*. These books originated in France during the late 1800s and were quite the commodity. They are recognizable by large format, intricate hand coloring, elaborate printing techniques, exquisite binding, the use of exceptional materials, and text or images that appealed to more sophisticated demographic (Drucker, 2005). The 20<sup>th</sup> century was an important time for artists; some of the artists featured in early *livre d'artitse* include such influential names as Pierre Bonnard, Henri Matisse, Joan Miró, Max Ernst, and Pablo Picasso (Drucker, 2005).

In contemporary times, Phillpot (1998, cited in Burkhart, 2006) states, that artists' books are "distinguished by the fact that they sit provocatively at the juncture where art, documentation, and literature all come together" (Burkhart, 2006, p. 33). Many artists have continued down the path that was paved by some of the most influential artist of all time.

Some recognizable artists of today are Johanna Drucker, Brad Freeman, and Clifton Meador. Each of these artists' projects their unique style in the creation of their artists' books. Drucker is a professor at University of California, Los Angeles. She is an internationally recognized book artist. Her work primarily focuses on typography and has been exhibited in countless museums throughout the country. Drucker also founded Artists Books Online which provides access to a multitude of images of various book artists (Drucker, 2009).

Brad Freeman, another renowned creator of artists' books, produces books that center on various issues and experiences. For example, in collaboration with Drucker, Freeman created a

book entitled, *CUBA & Torre de Letras y Musica*, 2006. This particular book was in response to visiting Cuba as guests of the UNEAC (The Union of Writers and Artists of Cuba). Freeman believes that his books become mobile exhibitions in themselves due to their portable nature.

Clifton Meador, yet another well known book artists, approaches the art form as narratives that are a combination of the disciplines of writing, photography, printmaking, and design. The narratives that he conceptualizes are based on culture, history and place; therefore, his books illustrate this interconnectivity.

All three of these artists approach the art form of creating artists' books in different ways, however, they all share a common interest and that is taking their ideas and expressing them in the form of a book rather than a painting or drawing.

### **Tunnel books**

Another book that has caught the attention of many artists is the tunnel book. The concept of tunnel books dates back hundreds of years. For centuries people have been enticed by illusions and the tunnel book is a simple illusion based on perspective. In 1437, Leone Battista created a box with a small hole (a peep hole) that allowed the viewer to see scenes using perspective. From this point on peep show boxes were seen throughout Europe at various fairs and gatherings. The scenes typically depicted were those based on religion, history, or mythology (Hutchins, 2002). Hutchins (2002) states,

Regardless of the subject matter, the physical structure of tunnel books creates an intimate setting that immediately draws the reader into the heart of the book. The viewer is not merely holding an object, the participant has mentally entered the structure and is surrounded by the environment created by the artist... Few books structures can so



quickly grab the reader's attention...It's almost alchemy; certainly it's enchantment.

(para. 46)

Tunnel books are still being created by many artists today. Some prominent tunnel book artists include Carol Barton, Edward Gorey, and Laura Davidson. Carol Barton's work has been exhibited internationally throughout the years. Along with being a book artist, she is an educator, as well as the proprietor of Popular Kinetics Press, which is a company that focuses on the publications of various artists' books. Barton is interested in showing individuals how to create these imaginative books. *The Pocket Paper Engineer*, published in 2005, was produced as a workbook for those interested learning more about the creation of pop-up books. Barton (n.d.) expresses her views on book arts in the following statement,

Making books as an art form allows me to combine my backgrounds in painting and photography with my interests in sculptural forms, printing, and serial images. My inspiration comes from various sources: reading, history and science topics, functional objects (furniture, jewelry, and kinetics toys), architecture, and other artists' books. The book is an intimate type of art in which the viewer becomes actively involved. It's the opportunity for personal communication through the books I design that I most enjoy.

(para. 2)

Another well known artist who experimented with tunnels books was Edward Gorey. Gorey was a renowned illustrator as well as costume and set designer. One of his creations that has attracted much attention is the tunnel book entitled, *Tunnel Calamity* (1984). This particular piece from Gorey's whimsical imagination invites the viewer into his world. The book consists of various original characters layered in a tantalizing tunnel which can only be seen through a small

opening on the cover. Though published in 1984 *Tunnel Calamity* continues to entice viewers both young and old.

Laura Davidson is yet another artist who is revitalizing books as an art form. She has created several tunnel books, one in particular entitled, *Tunnel Vision* (2000), depicts a construction scene outside of her studio. Davidson states (Hutchins, 2002),

I chose the tunnel format for this book because I found it to be [a] perfect way to show a view of something in a 3-dimensional way. If I had chosen a conventional format, it would not have captured the visual depth I was after. (para. 23)

Another tunnel creation by Davidson is *Venice* (2010), which depicts San Marco Square. This is one of a series that the artist has created to showcase her favorite places. The detail and delicate nature of this piece allows the viewer to obtain a more intimate view of this popular destination.

Even with all of the technology of contemporary times, people are still fascinated by this simple means of illusion; the tunnel book. These artists, along with many others, have assisted in the continuation of this art form and keeping it alive for the younger generations to discover.

### **Implications for Education**

Why are bookmaking or book arts important to education? What are the implications for general, as well as, art education? Heath (1997, cited in Darvin, 2009) notes, it is the responsibility of educators to provide students with ample opportunities to write and illustrate “meaningful personal narratives” (p.58) as well as to gain the perspective of considering writing and drawing as a mean of interacting with each other. Burkhart (2006) states that by teachers and students exploring artists’ books they will be investigating concepts applicable to interdisciplinary and integrated curriculum methods. In a study noted by Darvin (2009) the

researcher observed children who had experienced traumas from a war-ridden country and the use of book creations as a means of expression. There are many benefits from utilizing book-making, Darvin (2009) explains that the method of bookmaking was specifically chosen for the children because such an activity can promote a creative and meaningful mode of expression. Rosenblatt (1978, cited in Jacobs, 2006) states that by responding in a more aesthetic fashion to literature the reader may more easily comprehend the reading by partaking in a more authentic “lived-through experience” (Jacobs, 2006, p.113) therefore, the student would have “a higher level of engagement and interaction” (p.113). The results from Jacobs’ study (2006), which focused on incarcerated youth, provides various implications for the benefits of integrating art with literature. Two of the findings indicated in the study are: (1) when artistic response to literature is incorporated into the curriculum, specifically high –level thinking, it can be useful in determining comprehension of the text (2) by incorporating an artistic response the students are being provided an alternative method of response as opposed to the traditional paper and pencil approach. Darvin (2009) notes, that by allowing children to write their own stories, create their own illustrations, and generate their own titles, book covers and autobiographies the children will be able to more fully express their thoughts and feelings regarding a particular theme or issue. Jacobs (2006) found that allowing the youth to respond artistically to readings elevated their communication skills, attitudes, and engagement toward the text. There are many positive implications of incorporating art or artistic response in the areas of reading and writing, teachers simply need to know which tools to utilize. Jacobs (2006) states, “Artistic response can be a powerful tool to evaluate engagement and understanding of the text. It is important to engage youth in literature, and there are a multitude of ways to make sure that happens” (p. 118). From the information provided it is evident that there are numerous benefits to using art as a means of

engaging students in the learning process. By using various approaches the students are being allowed the freedom to express themselves in alternate mode, which is what some students desperately need. If only more teachers would utilize these valuable tools for the sake of their students' education!

## CHAPTER THREE

### Methodology

The curriculum that I developed and implemented was focused on the idea of integrating art and literature. I taught this unit to one fifth grade class in a suburban public school setting. The class consisted of sixteen students ranging from ages ten to eleven. The novel was read both independently as well as collectively. The length of this unit was four weeks long and was centered on one novel, *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry.

Reading has become an integral part of a student's education, therefore by focusing on a novel I integrated reading and writing with art as well as social studies due to the fact that the story is set in Poland during World War II. The unit of study had two main components integrated with visual production. The lessons developed for this unit of study ranged from analyzing the text by identifying and summarizing the important details to using visualization in the depiction a scene from the novel.

The first lesson was centered on analyzing the text. Students were expected to read the assigned chapters and then accurately identify three important details related to the chapter. In addition to providing three keys points from each chapter students were expected to respond to specific questions related to the reading. All of this was completed and kept in the pocket book that they created. This pocket book was

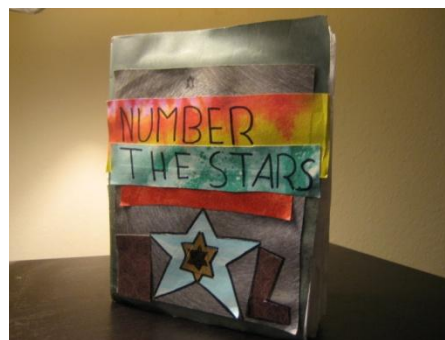


Figure 1. Student Reflection Book I

referred to as their Reflection Book. While the students read the story they used index cards for each chapter, these index cards were then placed in the corresponding pocket within the book. As the class proceeded through the novel, the students' Reflection Books were easily accessible and

helped with mental as well as physical organization. This book was produced in a creative fashion in which the students were allowed to express their ideas in an imaginative approach. I purposely left the overall design of the book up to each individual student. I wanted to allow them freedom in regards to their design. Some chose to show Stars of David, which were related to the story, while others chose to draw more abstract designs using various lines and patterns. While I did allow them choice in design, however, I did require them to use collage on the outside of the book and drawing on the inside, otherwise the design was up to the student.

The second lesson was centered on visualization. Throughout the unit I discussed with the students what is meant by the term visualization and the important role it plays while reading a story. While progressing through the reading the students and I discussed various scenes or events that had transpired, this was done on a daily basis. Upon reading the majority of the novel students began working on a tunnel book. After a collective dialogue related to various scenes from the novel the students chose a scene that was of interest to them to visualize. The students



*Figure 2. Student Tunnel Book-Front View*



*Figure 3. Student Tunnel Book-Top*

used the text in order to locate meaningful details that helped to create a vivid image. Instead of simply drawing the scene the students created a three dimensional version of it. Along with creating a visual representation students were required to write a brief description of the scene they had chosen.

## **Limitations**

There were some limitations that were evident as I approached this study. First, due to the fact that this is an auto-ethnographic study the findings were based upon my observations only.

The students did not participate in a survey or questionnaire in order to help with the results. They were not interviewed or asked to share their thoughts about the lessons. The results are based upon notes and observations that I kept throughout the unit of study. Therefore, I am not able to fully report on the success or failure of this unit in terms of student learning. Rather, my goal was to see what I learned from the process to enhance my own teaching.

Another limitation I faced was time. I implemented this unit near the end of the school year after the state mandated tests. I was concerned that time may become an issue and in fact it did. Originally, I had planned on implementing three lessons within this unit, however due to unforeseen end-of- the-year events I was only able to focus on two lessons. One thing I have learned as a teacher is that you can only plan so much. Students may end up taking you down a different path and the teacher has to be flexible with the plans. As this unit was taught to fifth graders I was concerned about keeping their focus as the school year came to an end with the excitement of summer and middle school just around the corner.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Curriculum

In this chapter I provide detailed lesson plans of the two components that comprise this unit on art and literature. Both plans provide a wide range of information needed to implement these lessons. Included are: the characteristics of the learner, rationale, historical and cultural context, standards, objectives, materials, preparations, introduction/motivation, procedures, distribution and clean-up, closure, assessment, extensions, vocabulary and visuals, and a teacher example.

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*Figure 4. Student Reflection Book II*

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*Number the Stars:*

Art and Literature Unit

Lesson: Reflection Book

Teacher: Anne Shea

Grade Level: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

Characteristics of the Learners:

The students being taught this lesson were average 5<sup>th</sup> grade students with no accommodations necessary in regard to physical or academic state. This lesson was done with 16 students, 8 boys and 8 girls. There are a few important things that students must be able to do in order to complete this assignment. First, students are expected to be able to read and comprehend at a 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. Second, the students work on summarizing various chapters. Finally, they will be working on deciphering the important details from the non-important details of the chapters. They will also be expected to respond to a number of questions by inferring as well as finding specifics from the text.

Rationale:

The ability to read, process, and summarize are important skills to acquire. Throughout ones educational and professional career one may be asked to use these specific skills. This lesson is teaching and furthering those skills that are vital to critical thinking.

Historical/Cultural Context:

The idea of artists' books is a fairly recent development. According to Drucker (2005), the artist book did not come into existence until the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It was during this period of important social and artistic movements that the idea made an impression. One of the most recognizable forms is the livre d'artiste. These books originated in France during the late 1800s

and were quite the commodity. They are recognizable by large format, intricate hand coloring, elaborate printing techniques, exquisite binding, the use of exceptional materials, and text or images that appealed to more sophisticated demographic (Drucker, 2005). The 20<sup>th</sup> century was important time for artists; some of the artists featured in early livre d'artiste include such influential names as Pierre Bonnard, Henri Matisse, Joan Miró, Max Ernst, and Pablo Picasso (Drucker, 2005).

In contemporary times, Phillpot (1998) states that artists' books are "distinguished by the fact that they sit provocatively at the juncture where art, documentation, and literature all come together" (p.33). Many artists have continued down the path that was paved by some of the most influential artist of all time.

Some recognizable artists of today are Johanna Drucker, Brad Freeman, and Clifton Meador. Each of these artists projects their unique style to the creation of their artists' books. Drucker is a professor at University of California, Los Angeles. She is an internationally recognized book artist. Her work primarily focuses on typography and has been exhibited in countless museums throughout the country. Drucker also founded Artists Books Online which provides access to a multitude of images of various book artists

#### Standards:

ELA5R1 The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts.

For literary texts, the student identifies the characteristics of various genres and produces evidence of reading that:

- a. Identifies and analyzes the elements of setting, characterization, and conflict in plot.
- d. Relates a literary work to information about its setting (historically or culturally).

- f. Identifies and analyzes the author's use of dialogue and description.
- g. Applies knowledge of the concept that theme refers to the message about life and the world that the author wants us to understand whether implied or stated.
- i. Makes judgments and inferences about setting, characters, and events and supports them with elaborating and convincing evidence from the text.
- j. Identifies similarities and differences between the characters or events and theme in a literary work and the actual experiences in an author's life.

ELA5W2 The student demonstrates competence in a variety of genres.

The student produces a response to literature that:

- a. Engages the reader by establishing a context, creating a speaker's voice, and otherwise developing reader interest.
- b. Advances a judgment that is interpretive, evaluative, or reflective.
- c. Supports judgments through references to the text, other works, authors, or non-print media, or references to personal knowledge.
- d. Develops interpretations that exhibit careful reading and demonstrate an understanding of the literary work.
- e. Excludes extraneous details and inappropriate information.

VA5C.1 Applies information and processes from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of artworks.

- a. Makes interdisciplinary connections applying art skills, knowledge, and ideas to improve understanding in other disciplines.

VA5MC.1 Engages in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas.

a. Creates a series of thumbnail sketches to alter visual images (e.g., magnifying, reducing, repeating or combining them in a variety of ways) to change how they are perceived and interpreted.

c. Develops fluency, flexibility, and elaboration of ideas in the development of a work of art.

VA5PR.3 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes of three-dimensional works of art (e.g., ceramics, sculpture, crafts, mixed-media) using tools and materials in a safe and appropriate manner to develop skills.

d. Creates compositions using traditional and/or contemporary craft methods (e.g., weaving, stitchery, batik, jewelry, book arts).

SS5H6 The student will explain the reasons for America's involvement in World War II.

a. Describe Germany's aggression in Europe and Japan's aggression in Asia. b. Describe major events in the war in both Europe and the Pacific; include Pearl Harbor, Iwo Jima, D-Day, VE and VJ Days, and the Holocaust.

### Objectives:

Students will...

1. Demonstrate comprehension of the novel *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry by providing answers and information directly related to the text.
2. Analyze the text being read and provide an adequate summary of the chapters.
3. Respond to questions directly related to each chapter.
4. Identify books (artists' books) as a creative means.
5. Create a pocket book in which to house their summaries as well as questions for each chapter.

Materials:

- *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (novel)
- 8.5x11 computer paper-9/student.
- Large (around 6.5x 11.5) and small pieces of wall paper, construction paper, scrap booking paper, etc.
- Glue
- Scissors
- Rulers
- Markers, crayons, colored pencils
- 4x6 index cards or 4x6 pieces of paper-18/student

Preparations:

Prior to presenting this lesson the teacher will need to locate and organize supplies to be used. Once the books are constructed students will be using the index cards and regular pencils.

You can make the books before reading of the novel has begun.

Introduction/Motivation:

- The introduction should take 15-20 depending on the amount of discussion.
- Lead into the lesson by talking about books. What are books for? Why do we have them?
- Discuss artists' books. What do you think they are?
- Share with students the definition provided (See Vocabulary below)
- Share with the students images of various artists' books.
- Discuss the images. What do they think of the books? What do they notice about the books?

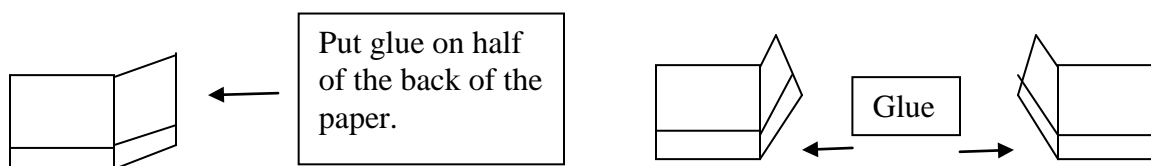
- Share with the students about the lesson. We will be creating our own books that will be used throughout the reading of *Number the Stars*.
- These books will house their ideas, questions, and answers regarding the novel.

#### Procedures for Art Production:

The production of the book will take 4 days; however the book itself will then be used throughout the reading of the novel.

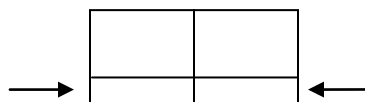
#### *Day1*

- Today students will construct the reflection book.
- Begin by introducing the lesson to the students by using the above information/questions.
- Pass out 9 pieces of computer paper to each student. It's best to have the paper counted and sorted for easy distribution.
- Students should have rulers and pencils available.
- Holding the paper horizontally fold each piece in half vertically. Do each piece separately, not all together. Seems tedious but makes a difference.
- In order to create a pocket students must measure from the bottom of each piece about 2 inches and then fold. The folds should all be about two inches; this will ensure a nice and neat book. Try to make them all the same. This will take them some time.
- With each piece folded independently you will construct the book by taking the first two pieces of paper and gluing the half of the back of one to the back of the other piece.



*Figure 5. Construction of Reflection Book I*

- Do this for the rest of the pieces of paper to create the book. Make sure they are being glued properly with all of the pockets across the bottom and not upside down across the top.
- After books are constructed have students choose a large piece of wall paper, construction paper, scrapbook paper, etc. to be the cover of the book.
- Glue the decorative paper to front and back of the book creating a taco. Some of the pages may not be lined up perfectly which is okay.
- Final gluing...on each page put a small dot of glue under the flap to create a secure pocket.



*Figure 6. Construction of Student Reflection Book II*

- Carefully separate pages so they don't get permanently glued together.
- Allow them to dry standing up or fanned open.

### *Day 2*

- Today students will decorate the **outside** of the books.
- Carefully pull pages apart if they are glued together.
- Using any decorative paper students can cut and paste to add creative details to front and back covers of the book. I do not allow them to draw on the covers- I want them to use collage to add interest. They may use sharpie to write "Reflection Book" and "Number the Stars" somewhere on the cover.

### *Day 3*

- Today the students will decorate the **inside** of the book. They will have two days to work and finalize the design of the book.

- Using colored pencils, crayons, and/or markers the students can add creative details to the inside pages of the book. You may want to remind them that index cards will be going in the pockets so don't draw in the space because it will be covered up. I also allow them a lot of freedom in regards to their design. They may choose to draw Stars of David which are related to the story or they may choose to draw more abstract designs using various lines and patterns.
- One requirement: they must number each page for the chapters of the book. There are 17 chapters so starting from the front of the book students will somehow label each page/pocket. There will be an extra pocket at the end which will be used to keep a character list.

#### *Day 4*

- Today students will continue and finalize the design of the book.
- Continue to use crayons, colored pencils, and/markers to add creative details to the inside of the book. This is the last day to add such designs.
- Once the book is constructed the students will use the index cards to write 3 bullets points from each chapter. This will be the summarizing aspect of the project. This will be done both in class as well as for homework.
- They will also be given one question for each chapter (Table 1). The answer to the questions will go on the back of the corresponding index card.
- Also if supplies are available each student could receive an additional piece of 4x6 paper or index card to draw a quick sketch and the important events that happened in the chapter.



### Distribution and Clean-up:

This lesson can get a bit messy with the glue during construction and with all of the paper scraps used during the decorating. As far as the glue issue, make sure to stress that they do not need a lot of glue. This will make their pages bubbly and more likely to get stuck together. Glue sticks may be a good alternative to Elmer's glue that I used. In regards to the distribution of materials I usually pass out most of the supplies to avoid a chaotic classroom. Sometimes I ask for students to help. When it comes to the decorative papers being used for the covers and the details I spread out a variety of paper on a table and call a few students at a time to choose their paper. It is always a good idea to have basic supplies in a well known location for easy access.

### Closure:

As with many lessons I enjoy allowing the students to share with one and other what they have created and/or accomplished.

Assessment: See Rubric (Table 2)

### Extensions:

This particular type of book, a pocket book, could be constructed and used in any area of study for a wide variety of purposes. The students could create a book to keep track of observations and experiments performed in science or to use as a journal for writing. Since the book consists of pockets the artifacts housed within are endless.

### Vocabulary and Visuals:

Vocabulary: Definition from [www.artlex.com](http://www.artlex.com)

Artists' Books- Artworks in book form, not books about art, or art made of books.

William Blake (English, 1757-1827) was among the first artists to create books with his own pictures and texts. Some artists' books have only pictures or only texts. Marcel Duchamp

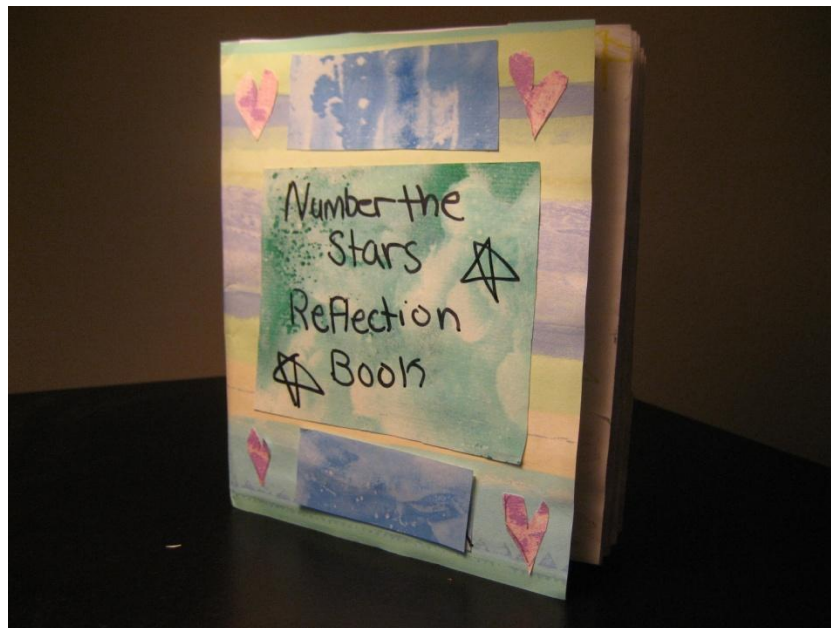
(French, 1887-1968) made some, beginning in the 1930s. Artists in many countries have produced them since the late 1960s, including Sol LeWitt (American, 1928-), John Baldessari (American, 1931-), Ed Ruscha (American, 1937-), and Anselm Kiefer (German, 1945-)

Visuals:



*CUBA & Torre de Letras y Musica*, 2006  
inkjet printed artists' books  
collaboration between Brad Freeman &  
Johanna Drucker  
<http://www.bradfreemanbooks.com/>

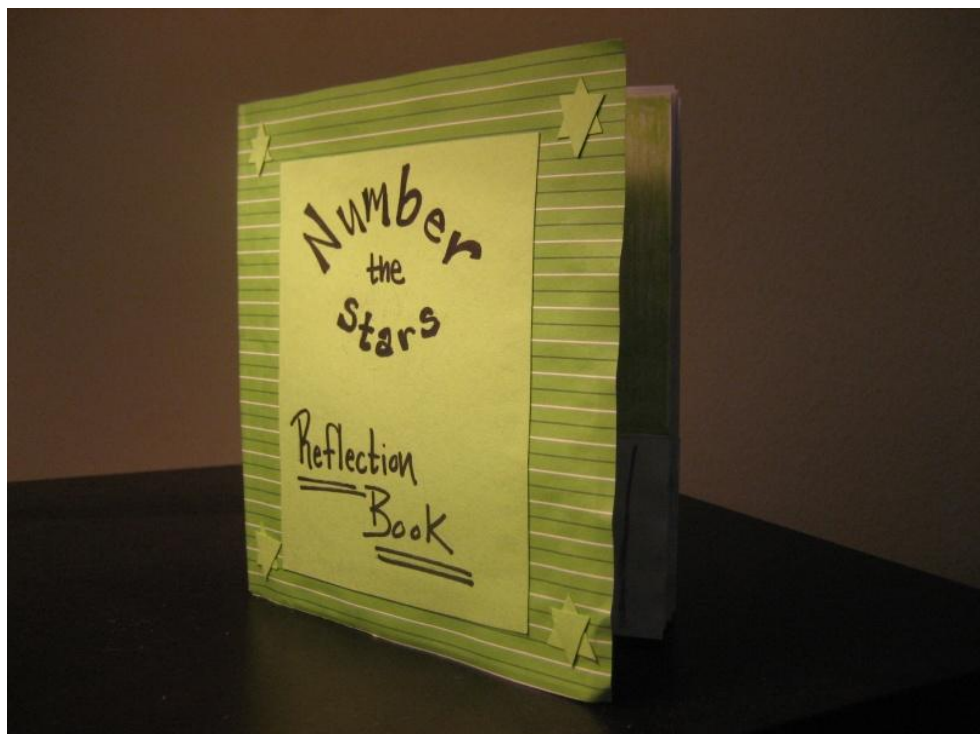
*Figure 7. Artist Book by Brad Freeman and Johanna Drucker*



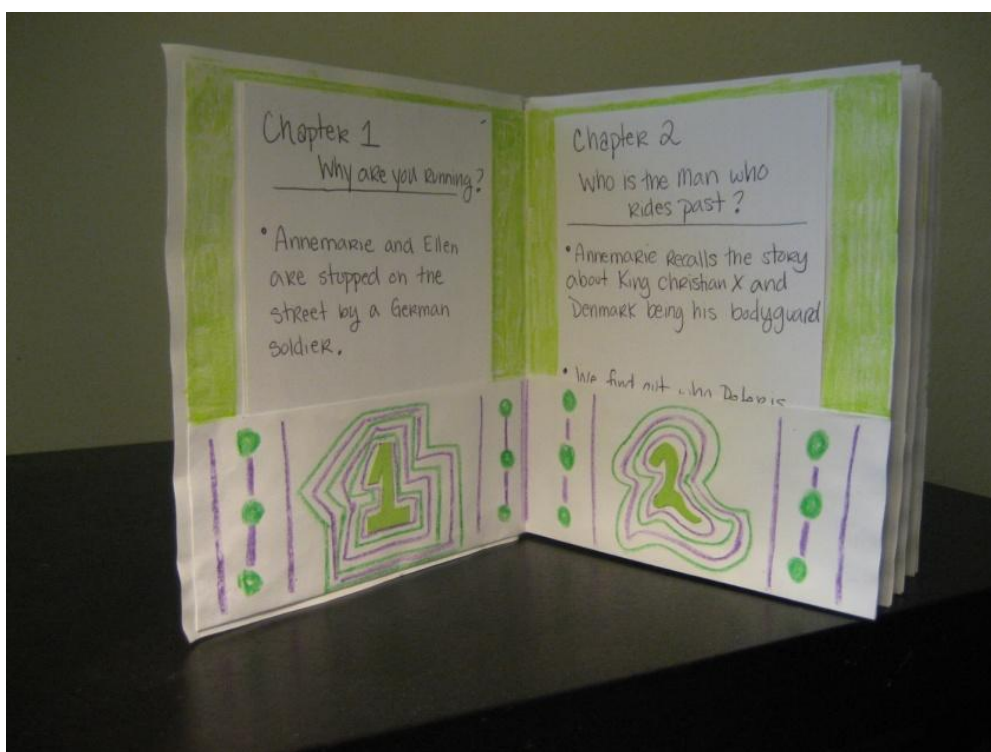
*Figure 8. Student Reflection Book III*

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Teacher Example:



*Figure 9. Reflection Book Teacher Example-Outside*



*Figure 10. Reflection Book Teacher Example-Inside*

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Table 1. Questions for Reflection Book

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>Questions for Number the Stars Reflection Book</b>
<b>1</b>	Think of one adjective to describe the personalities of each of the three girls (Annemarie, Ellen, and Kirsti). Provide a specific example from the chapter to support your adjective. Provide the page number as well.
<b>2</b>	How has Peter changed since Lise's death?
<b>3</b>	Foreshadowing is a literary device in which the passage gives a hint that something is coming up in the story. Find an example of foreshadowing from the last two paragraphs in Chapter 3.
<b>4</b>	What happened to Ellen's parents? Where is Ellen staying?
<b>5</b>	What did Mr. Johansen do to show that Ellen was their daughter?
<b>6</b>	What does Mr. Johansen mean by "cigarettes" when speaking with Henrik?
<b>7</b>	Describe the house and area around it. Use descriptive words.
<b>8</b>	What do you think Henrik meant by, "Tomorrow will be a day for fishing"?
<b>9</b>	What do Annemarie and Henrik talk about in the barn? Be specific.
<b>10</b>	What does Mrs. Johansen do to convince the soldiers not to open the casket?
<b>11</b>	How did Annemarie know that the Rosens still regarded themselves with a measure of self respect?
<b>12</b>	Respond to the following, "It was harder for the ones who were waiting, Annemarie knew. Less danger, perhaps, but more fear." P. 98
<b>13</b>	Why is the chapter called "Run! As fast as you can!"?
<b>14</b>	Annemarie often thinks back to stories being told. Why do you think she does this so often?
<b>15</b>	What happens when Annemarie is running through the woods to the boat? Be specific.
<b>16</b>	What do we find out about the handkerchief?
<b>17</b>	What do we find out about Peter and Lise?

Table 2. Reflection Book Rubric

### Reading - Analyzing Information : Number the Stars Reflection Book Rubric

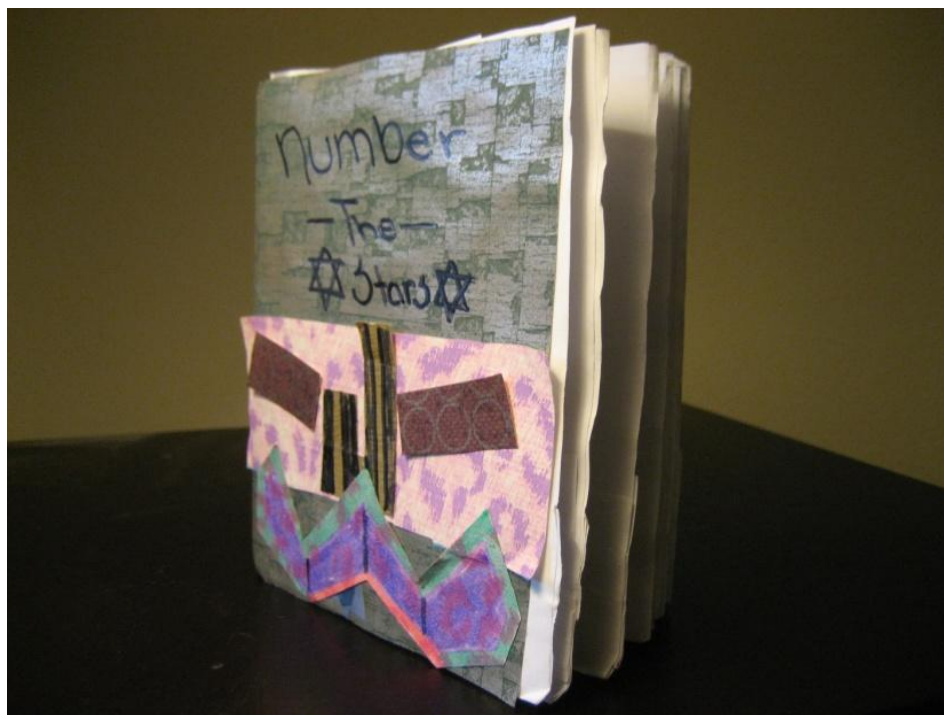
Teacher Name: **A Shea**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Demonstrates comprehension	Student demonstrates a clear and precise understanding of the text through verbal and written communication.	Student demonstrates an above average understanding of the text through verbal and written communication.	Student demonstrates an average understanding of the text through verbal and written communication.	Student demonstrates a lack of understanding of the text through verbal and written communication.
Analyze the text in order to summarize	Student identifies several important and specific details in an accurate summary of the chapter.	Student identifies some important and specific details in an accurate summary of the chapter.	Student identifies few important and specific details in a less accurate summary of the chapter.	Student identifies no important and specific details in a less accurate summary of the chapter.
Response to Questions	Student provides accurate and correct responses to all of the questions.	Student provides accurate and correct responses to most of the questions.	Student provides few accurate and correct responses to the questions.	Student provides no accurate and correct responses to the questions.
Creates a pocket book to house all of the components	Student creates a pocket book that is very well constructed and is organized as instructed.	Student creates a pocket book that is constructed properly and is organized as instructed.	Student creates a pocket book that is constructed less than proper and is organized as instructed.	Student creates a pocket book that is constructed poorly and/or is disorganized.
Overall design and craftsmanship of the pocket book	The overall design of the pocket book is creative and unique. The craftsmanship is excellent.	The overall design of the pocket book is creative and unique. The craftsmanship is good.	The overall design of the pocket book is somewhat creative and unique. The craftsmanship is good.	The overall design of the pocket book lacks creativity and uniqueness. The craftsmanship is lacking.
Comments: _____			Total_____	

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Images of Student Work: Reflection Book



*Figure 11. Student Reflection Book IV*



*Figure 12. Student Reflection Book -Inside*

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*Number the Stars*

## Art and Literature Unit

Lesson: Tunnel Book

Teacher: Anne Shea

Grade Level: 5<sup>th</sup> Grade

This lesson was adapted from Joanna Davis, Garden Elementary School Venice, FL from

<http://www.princetonol.com/groups/iad/Files/Joanna-Popart.htm>

Characteristics of the Learners:

The students being taught this lesson were average 5<sup>th</sup> grade students with no accommodations necessary in regards to physical or academic state. This lesson was done with 16 students, 8 boys and 8 girls. There are a few important things that students must be able to do in order to complete this assignment. First, students were expected to be able to read and comprehend at a 5<sup>th</sup> grade reading level. Second, they were expected to understand the concept of foreground, middle ground, and background in a visual sense-this was also related to literature during the lesson. Finally, the students were expected to develop the idea, create the drawings, and construct the tunnel book.

Rationale:

So many lessons in regards to reading are simply reading and then writing a response. Students are all different and all have different needs when it comes to how they comprehend things. This lesson is showing students that there are many ways to go about exhibiting their understanding. This happens to be a more creative approach that the majority of teachers may not allow their students to explore.

Historical/Cultural Context:

History of Tunnel Books Information from Edward Hutchins

<http://artistbooks.com/abr/index.htm>

The concept of tunnel books dates back hundreds of years. For centuries people have been enticed by illusions and the tunnel book is a simple illusion based on perspective. In 1437 Leone Battista created a box with a small hole (a peep hole) that allowed the viewer to see scenes using perspective. From this point on peep show boxes were seen throughout Europe at various fairs and gatherings. The scenes typically depicted were those based on religion, history, or mythology. Tunnel books are still be created by many artists today. Even with all of the technology of contemporary times, people are still fascinated by a simple means of illusion, the tunnel book.

The novel, *Number the Stars*, is fictional writing however, the story takes place during WWII in Denmark. The Nazi are occupying Copenhagen and many are faced with the choice of staying and being taken or fleeing to pursue safety. The main character, Annemarie, along with her family, helps their friends (who are Jewish) escape to Sweden. Along the way Annemarie must act beyond her years and take on tasks that a ten year old would not normally undertake. She must show strength and courage in order to help those she cares about.

In 5<sup>th</sup> grade WWII is an area of study, therefore, this lesson also relates to the subject of social studies. The students' knowledge of the war helped them to imagine and comprehend the premise of the novel.



Standards:

VA5MC.1 Engages in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas.

- a. Creates a series of thumbnail sketches to alter visual images (e.g., magnifying, reducing, repeating or combining them in a variety of ways) to change how they are perceived and interpreted.
- b. Formulates visual ideas by using a variety of resources (e.g., books, magazines, Internet).
- c. Develops fluency, flexibility, and elaboration of ideas in the development of a work of art.

VA5C.1 Applies information and processes from other disciplines to enhance the understanding and production of artworks.

- a. Makes interdisciplinary connections applying art skills, knowledge, and ideas to improve understanding in other disciplines.

ELA5R1 The student demonstrates comprehension and shows evidence of a warranted and responsible explanation of a variety of literary and informational texts.

For literary texts, the student identifies the characteristics of various genres and produces evidence of reading that:

- a. Identifies and analyzes the elements of setting, characterization, and conflict in plot.
  - i. Makes judgments and inferences about setting, characters, and events and supports them with elaborating and convincing evidence from the text.

SS5H6 The student will explain the reasons for America's involvement in World War II.

- a. Describe Germany's aggression in Europe and Japan's aggression in Asia. b. Describe major events in the war in both Europe and the Pacific; include Pearl Harbor, Iwo Jima, D-Day, VE and VJ Days, and the Holocaust.

Objectives:

Students will...

1. Demonstrate comprehension of the novel *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry by depicting a specific scene from the novel.
2. Analyze the text to find important details related to a specific scene.
3. Identify tunnel books as an art form.
4. Create a tunnel book to illustrate the scene from the novel.

Materials:

- *Number the Stars* by Lois Lowry (novel)
- 5 pieces/student of 6x9 white paper
- 2 pieces/student of 9x9 colored paper
- Glue
- Scissors
- Pencils
- Prints to show perspective
- Colored Pencils

Preparations:

Prior to teaching the lesson the teacher and students will need to have read the novel either half way or in its entirety. This provides the students with a number of scenes to choose from. The teacher must also prepare the paper that the students will use to create their tunnel books. Cutting and organizing the paper beforehand is essential for an organized and timely lesson.

Introduction/Motivation:

- The introduction should take probably 15-20 minutes depending on the discussions involved.
- Ask students what they think is meant by the term “visualization.”
- Discuss what it means to visualize something.
- Brainstorm scenes or events that have taken place in the novel.
- Share with the students about the lesson-they will be choosing a scene from the book and create a visual representation of it.
- However, it will not just be a simple 2 dimensional drawing, it will be 3 dimensional.
- Discuss the history of tunnel books.
- Show students various examples of these works of art.
- Show students the teacher example to really get them excited.
- Ask students what they notice about the example being presented.
- Show students prints that show perspective.
- Ask about background, middle ground, and foreground. What do they notice about the objects in each of these places?
- Relate BG, MG, and FG to the elements of a story. BG is the setting, FG are the characters, and MG are any other details that are important to the scene.
- Have students independently choose a scene that they wish to visualize and bring to life.
- Have students find the scene in the book and read about it to find any descriptions that help them visualize what is happening.

Procedures for Art Production:

This lesson will take three to four 45-60 minutes time periods.

*Day 1*

- Begin by introducing lesson to the students by using the above information/questions.
- Students will choose a scene from the novel to illustrate. Allow students time to use the text for visual cues.
- Pass out one 6x9 white piece of paper to each student.
- With the paper vertical, draw a line on each side of the paper-Use a rulers' width. This will give you a bit smaller space in which to draw the background.
- Have the students draw (with pencil) the BG or setting of the scene. Remind them not draw anything important near the top/bottom of the paper, it will be difficult to see.
- The BG should be relatively simple not a ton of detail. Remind them about perspective and the scale of things that are further away.
- When students are finished drawing they may use colored pencils to color the BG.

*Day 2*

- Today, students will construct the tunnel books basic frame and structure.
- Review FG, MG, and BG with students and how they relate to the elements of a story.
- Pass out the completed background drawings to each student. They should have finished these the previous day.
- Pass out 3 6x9 white pieces of paper (3/student).
- Glue, scissors, and rulers should also be available for student use.
- Fold one piece of 6x9 paper in half vertically so that it is a tall skinny rectangle.

- Use a rule to draw and cut out the “frames” for the book. This will be done to each piece of paper so the students end up with 3 frames that are the same. You don’t want the frames to be too skinny or too fat, about an inch or inch and a half is good.
- Keep the inside scraps they can be used later to draw the other components on.
- Pass out two pieces of 9x9 colored construction paper. I usually walk around quickly and let the students choose the color they want to use. The two pieces will be the same color.
- The colored pieces will be accordion folded. But first have the students fold each piece in half once, then fold in half again, and fold in half a third time. This will be the guidelines for the accordion fold.
- Demonstrate how to accordion fold the paper. Some may need extra help in this part. It is important to do it correctly.
- Now it’s time to construct. Glue the background drawing in first. The colored pieces are the sides of the book, so glue the drawing on the last fold of each colored piece.
- Glue the rest of the frames onto the colored paper. This can be a tricky step for the students. Make sure they are doing it correctly. They may need to help each other.
- Once constructed let them stand up to dry.

### *Day 3*

- Today the students will begin drawing the important details that are present in the scene they have chosen.
- Students should have the scraps left over from creating the frames. They will use these to draw the components of the scene.
- Have students use the book to really find some good details about the scene they have chosen. I would require them to use the first 5-10 minutes to simply look at the text.

- Once they have decided what will be included in the scene allow them to begin drawing the characters as well as other important details they are including. Share with them that the people should not be too small and/or skinny, they will be cutting them out. They will also need to be consciously thinking about where and how they are going to attach these components to the frames.
- I allowed my students to use this time to look for details and practice drawing them.
- Some students may need some extra paper, if they run out of the scraps.
- No cutting or gluing today just researching, drawing, and coloring.

#### *Day 4*

- Today students will finish the tunnel book.
- Have the students gather around to demonstrate how to glue in the characters and details. They probably don't need to put glue on the entire back of the cut-out just where it is touching the frame.
- This can be kind of tedious because you have to carefully maneuver your hands inside of the tunnel book to attach the characters and details.
- Each frame should have at least one thing glued to it.
- Write in sharpie "Number the Stars" on the top front frame.
- Write a description (2 sentences) that describes what is happening in this scene on the bottom front frame. Also include the page number/s.
- Let dry and display.
- These projects will get a lot of attention around the school.

Distribution and Clean-up:

This project is not terribly messy. The only potential problem is the glue. But as long as the teacher regulates and demonstrates how to properly use the glue there should be no problem. This project has many parts to it and it's important to keep the students materials together. At the end of each day the students were to make a stack of their materials and I collected them for the next day. This allows for easy clean-up and distribution for the next day. There is also a lot of paper involved in this project so it's important to stress organization while the students are working-they don't want to accidentally throw away something. I always keep a trash can in a central location and remind them to throw unneeded pieces away. To avoid students up unnecessarily I pass out glue, scissors and colored pencils while the students are working. As for clean-up I usually delegate certain students to help.

Closure:

As a closure I like the students to share very briefly about the scene they chose. They can read their description. This allows students to look at what their peers have created and to be proud of what they themselves created.

Assessment: See Rubric (Table 3)

Extensions:

The wonderful thing about a tunnel book is that it can be adjusted to many different lessons. This could be done with another novel read or to create a historical event from Social Studies or even to display various math problems. The possibilities are endless when it comes to use of a tunnel book. The only limitation is the creativeness of the how to use it.

### Vocabulary and Visuals:

Vocabulary: Definitions from [www.artlex.com](http://www.artlex.com)

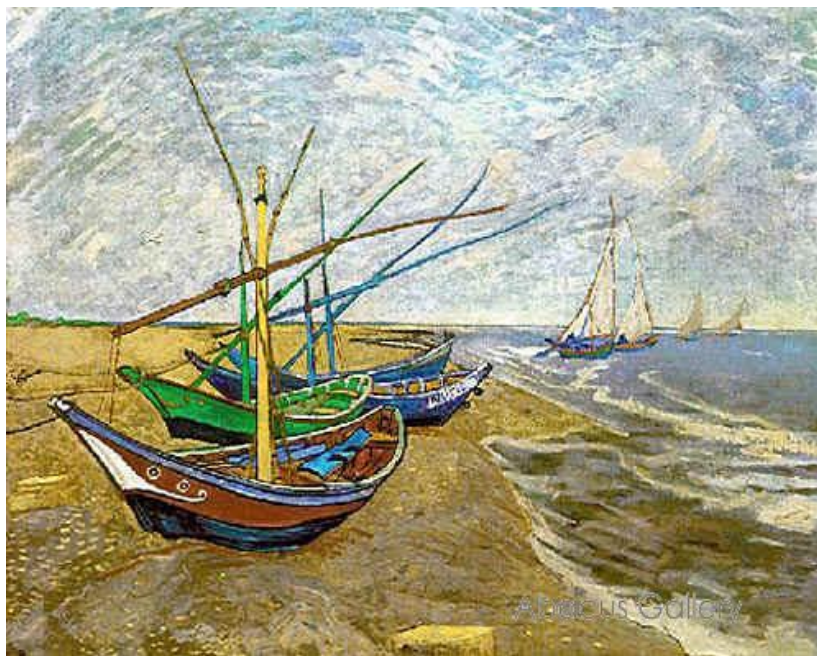
- Foreground- The area of a picture or field of vision, often at the bottom, that appears to be closest to the viewer.
- Middle Ground- The part of an artwork that lies between the foreground (nearest to the viewer) and the background.
- Background- The part of a picture or scene that appears to be farthest away from the viewer, usually nearest the horizon. This is the opposite of the foreground. Between background and foreground is the middle ground.

### Visual:

This is a painting by Van Gogh. I use this print to demonstrate FG, MG, and BG. It shows perspective and scale wonderfully, and is not too complicated for a 5<sup>th</sup> grader to grasp.

*Fishing Boats on the Beach at Saintes-Maries, 1888.*

<http://www.vangoghgallery.com/catalog/Painting/141/Fishing-Boats-on-the-Beach-at-Saintes-Maries.html>



*Figure 13. Fishing Boats on the Beach at Saintes-Maries*



## Examples of Tunnel Books



Figure 15. Martin Engelbrecht Tunnel Book-  
Side View



Figure 16. Martin Engelbrecht Tunnel Book-  
Front View

18th century tunnel book attributed to the engraver and print-seller Martin Engelbrecht (1684-1756) of Augsburg, Germany.

<http://smithsonianlibraries.si.edu/smithsonianlibraries/2010/04/the-dance-of-the-tunnel-book.html>



Figure 14. Tunnel Book Example

Paris ca. 1830, artist unknown

<http://artistbooks.com/abr/1830.htm>

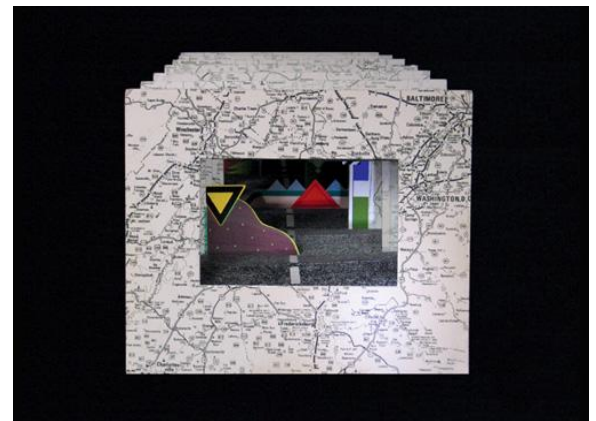


Figure 17. Everyday Road Signs - Carol Barton  
Tunnel Book

*Everyday Road Signs*, silkscreen edition of 50, 1988, printed at Women's Studio Wkshop Carol Barton

[http://www.popularkinetics.com/everyday\\_road\\_signs.html](http://www.popularkinetics.com/everyday_road_signs.html)

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Teacher Example:



*Figure 18. Tunnel Book Teacher  
Example-Front View*



*Figure 19. Tunnel Book Teacher  
Example-Top View*

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Table 3. Tunnel Book Rubric

**Reading - Analyzing Information : Number the Stars Tunnel Book Rubric**Teacher Name: **A Shea**

Student Name: \_\_\_\_\_

CATEGORY	4	3	2	1
Demonstrates comprehension	Student demonstrates a clear and precise understanding of the text through a visual interpretation.	Student demonstrates an above average understanding of the text through a visual interpretation.	Student demonstrates an average understanding of the text through a visual interpretation.	Student demonstrates a lack understanding of the text through a visual interpretation.
Analyze the text to find important and specific details	Student identifies several important and specific details to support the scene of choice.	Student identifies some important and specific details to support the scene of choice	Student identifies few important and specific details to support the scene of choice	Student identifies no important and specific details to support the scene of choice
Creates Visual Representation	Student creates an extremely detailed and accurate representation that effectively demonstrates comprehension of a specific scene.	Student creates an above average detailed and accurate representation that effectively demonstrates comprehension of a specific scene.	Student creates an average detailed and accurate representation that effectively demonstrates comprehension of a specific scene.	Student creates a representation that lacks detail and accuracy which shows lack of comprehension.
Craftsmanship	Student displays an excellent level of craftsmanship in the creation and construction of the tunnel book.	Student displays an above average level of craftsmanship in the creation and construction of the tunnel book.	Student displays an average level of craftsmanship in the creation and construction of the tunnel book.	Student displays a lack of craftsmanship in the creation and construction of the tunnel book.
Description and Page Number	Student includes an excellent description using their own words in describing the chosen scene. Page number is also included and is accurate.	Student includes an above average description using their own words in describing the chosen scene. Page number is also included and is accurate.	Student includes an average description using their own words in describing the chosen scene. Page number is also included and is accurate.	Student does not use their own words in describing the chosen scene or does not provide a description. Page number is not included or is incorrect.
Comments:			Total _____	



Images of Student Work: Tunnel Book

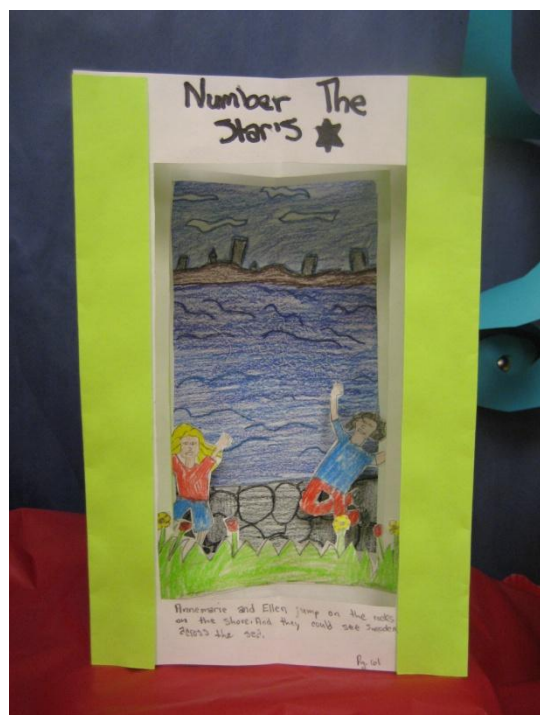


Figure 20. Student Tunnel Book II

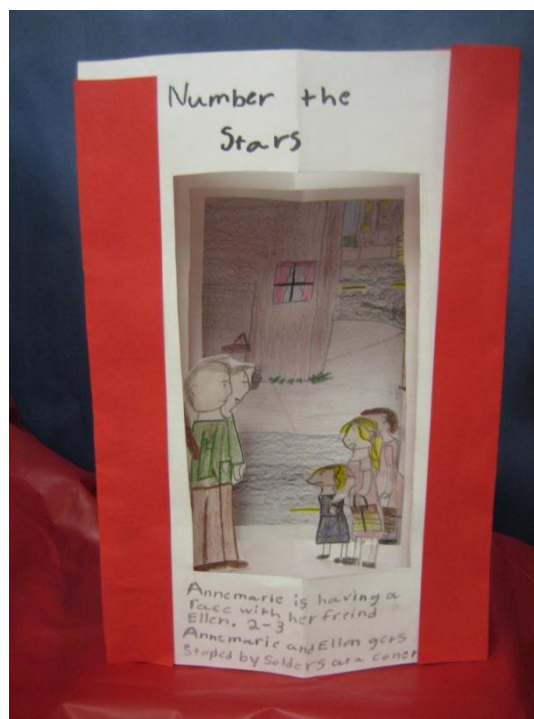


Figure 21. Student Tunnel Book III

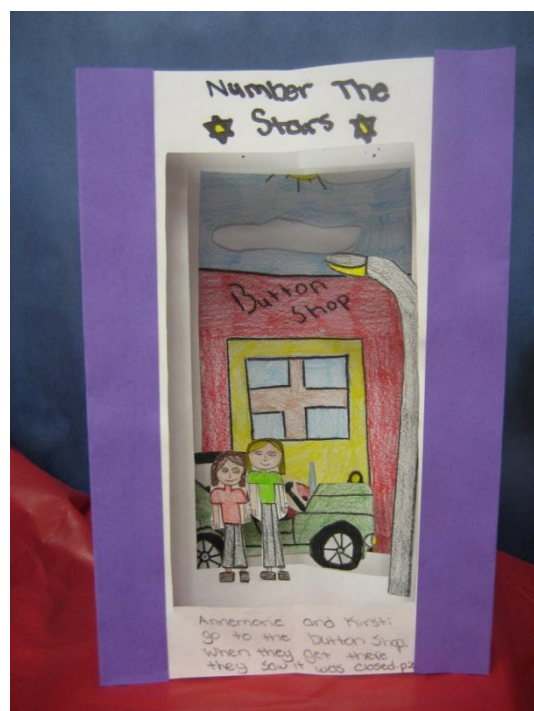


Figure 22. Student Tunnel Book IV

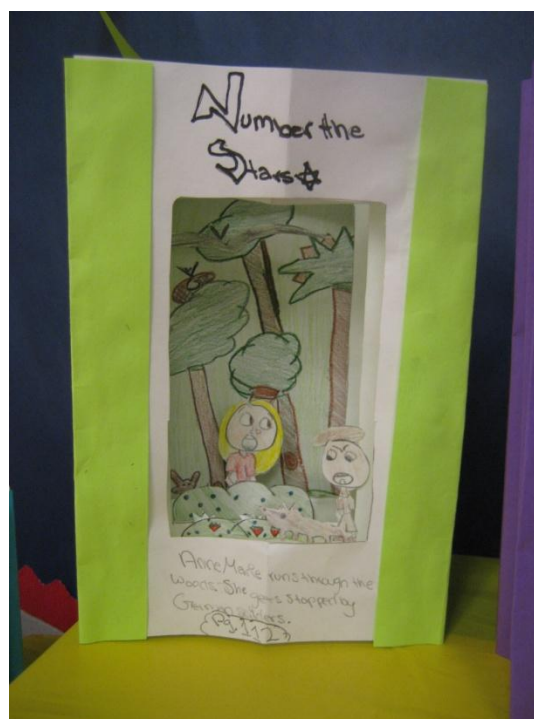


Figure 23. Student Tunnel Book V

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **Discussion**

As the students progressed through the reading and projects, the analysis of this study was based on my observations. The research questions I intended to answer through the development and implementation of this unit were: (1) How can I integrate book arts and reading into an age appropriate curriculum? (2) What can I learn about the teaching process from this curriculum? (3) What can I learn about book arts?

### **What Did I Learn as a Practicing Teacher?**

This past school year was filled with a multitude of feelings. As a trained art educator I was out of my element when placed in the regular classroom as a fifth grade teacher. However, as the year progressed I found myself becoming more comfortable and this was manifested in the lessons I taught to my students. I approached many subjects and topics with an integrated vision. This led to the curriculum unit that I developed and implemented relating to literature. I learned that it was possible to incorporate various projects related to art into the curriculum. The only thing that may hold a teacher back from investigating a more integrated curriculum is time and energy. If a teacher is willing to put the extra time and energy into their lessons it is unquestionably worth it, especially for the students' sake. The satisfaction will come with the smiles on the students' faces and the enthusiasm expressed when more creative lessons are implemented.

### **Revisiting the Research Questions**

Upon developing this study I was very interested in finding out three things. (1) How can I integrate book arts and reading into an age appropriate curriculum? (2) What can I learn about the teaching process from this curriculum? (3) What can I learn about book arts?

### **How did I integrate book arts and reading into an age appropriate curriculum?**

Although I taught many lessons the past school year that integrated art across the curriculum, I decided to focus on a specific content area for this study. I debated about which subject to choose and settled on reading, specifically literature. The other fifth grade teachers on my team had read *Number the Stars* with their classes and I saw an opportunity for me to take a more creative approach in lesson planning. I read *Number the Stars* when I was younger and greatly enjoyed it, moreover I wanted to share that experience with my students.

Once I decided on the literature route and the novel to take us there, I began thinking about projects to do with my students. Appropriately enough an idea was presented to me that focused on book arts and I was immediately enthralled with the thought. For this unit I was eager to implement some projects that my students would be excited about. I began by asking around my school for books on book making. Another fifth grade teacher allowed me to borrow a book, *The Big Book of Books and Activities* by Dinah Zike (1992). I found myself being drawn to the various designs first and then



*Figure 24. Student Reflection Book V*

thinking about how to create a lesson related to the novel. This is how I came across the pocket book idea. I was provided with the basic structure and construction of the book but then I had to work out what to do to specifically with it. The students were given several class periods to focus on the design and construction of the book. These books were then referred to as our Reflection Books. Once the books were completed they were used on a daily basis. By creating the pocket

books we eliminated the need of notebooks and folders. All the students needed each day were their Reflection Books and the novel.

One element for which the Reflection Book was used was furthering the students' ability to summarize. Summarizing is a significant skill and I noticed throughout the school year my students were not performing in this area as I would have liked. Therefore I used the Reflection Book as a way to organize a summary from each chapter of the novel. When I say a summary I am referring to the students reading a chapter and then on an index card making three bullet points of the most important events of the specific chapter. This activity required the students to think about the important events instead of the meaningless details.

Another element for which the Reflection Books were used was responding to literature. Along with summarizing, students were required to answer one question related to each chapter. These questions were answered on the back of the summary index card. The questions that the students responded to ranged from basic comprehension to using inferences in order to find the answer.

Finally, I had intended to also use the Reflection Books for responding visually to each chapter. For the first couple of chapters I had the students create a quick sketch of the most important event in the chapter. They were not to be detailed drawings just simple enough that it would help the students recall what happened in the chapter. Unfortunately, we only did this at the beginning due to time constraints. I think it would have been a helpful addition in regards to demonstrating comprehension. When I teach this lesson again I will be sure to include this element in the Reflection Book as well.

In thinking about another lesson to integrate art with *Number the Stars* I was reminded of my student teaching experience. One lesson I chose to attempt while student teaching was a

tunnel book based on Impressionist paintings. My cooperating teacher was impressed by my tenacity on presenting such a complicated lesson and was eager to observe the production. The tunnel books, in the end, were a huge success with both students and teachers throughout the school.

Previously in the school year my students read another novel. I had them illustrate two

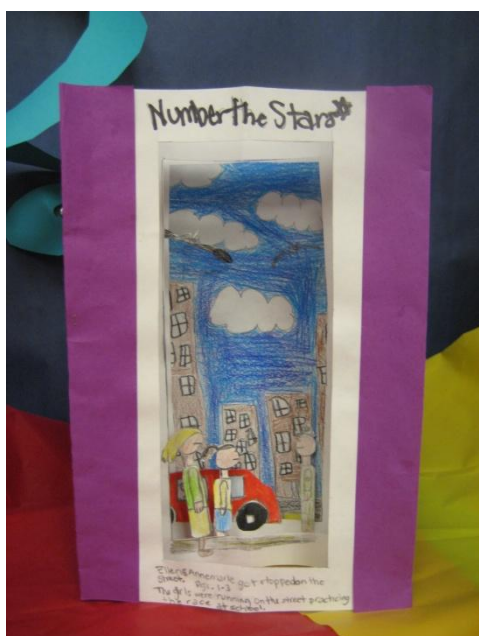


Figure 25. Student Tunnel Book VI

scenes from this novel by simply drawing a two dimensional depiction. Seeing how the students enjoyed this activity I decided to have them do a similar project with *Number the Stars*, except this time they would create a tunnel book to illustrate the scene. Along with choosing a scene and depicting it the students were also required to include a brief description of the scene they had chosen. I was adamant about the students examining the text for vivid details. Once the tunnel books were finished I displayed them at the entrance of our school. The students appeared extremely pleased

and excited about their creations. Many teachers took time out their day to come by our classroom and compliment the students on their fabulous work. That says a great deal about this lesson.

### **What did I learn about the teaching process?**

The greatest lesson that I learned was overall the arts were not difficult to integrate into the curriculum. I had already been including projects in the curriculum which incorporated a creative approach while still focusing on the topic at hand. Eisenkraft (1999) agrees that,



“Bringing art into the classroom requires some preplanning and organization but is well worth the effort” (p.100). There are many resources available for teachers who are willing and able to take on the task of integration. I do believe having a background in art education gave me an advantage because I was able to draw on past art lessons and adjust them as needed in order to relate to the topic being studied. Though, it must be said, many teachers at my school have impressed me with the visual, hands-on lessons they have implemented. Other teachers are an important resource to utilize. Simply discussing an idea with a fellow teacher may help to spark another thought. There are also many websites and books available that offer ideas in regards to integration they merely need to be located. As I mentioned previously, it is possible to create such a curriculum, nonetheless it does not come without effort. I did spend a good amount of extra time and energy on developing and implementing these lessons. However, once the planning was complete the most difficult component was accomplished. Teaching and presenting the lesson was the pleasurable part.

Another important lesson learned is based on my observations of the students. I was interested in learning whether or not these types of projects engaged students in the learning process. Due to the auto-ethnographic nature of this study the findings were based on my observations and reflections of the unit. Therefore, I did not receive feedback from the students in regards to their feelings about the lessons. As I reflected upon the lessons it appeared that the students demonstrated their comprehension of the novel remarkably well in using the avenue of books arts. I was greatly impressed by the students’ abilities and willingness to complete these two lessons. It was my hope that the students would be actively engaged and excited about this unit. I wanted to teach them something unexpected while still keeping with the educational integrity that was expected. As I was presenting the projects I felt much more comfortable due

to the nature of these activities being more closely related to a lesson taught in the art room.

Upon introducing these two lessons the students were abnormally talkative. This could have been due to the fact of new a seating arrangement, which was quickly adjusted or due to the fact that the students were doing something not normally done in the regular classroom. Once the seating arrangement was taken care of, students were particularly attentive as I demonstrated how to construct the Reflection and tunnel books. While monitoring and assisting students over this four week period there was a consistent quiet murmur and the satisfying sounds of enjoyment. A quite classroom is a good indication that students are completely engrossed in what they are doing. That was case for this unit of study.

The final lesson I learned was based on words of wisdom from the past. As a wise professor of mine once said, there is one word that is the crucial to remember in the teaching profession, and that is flexibility. If a teacher is not able to embrace changes and adjust accordingly then they will most likely not be a teacher for long. This word, flexibility, has always been at the forefront of my teaching philosophy. Being an art teacher turned regular teacher I had to be extremely flexible in regards to lesson planning. I had planned on teaching this unit near the end of school. The state tests were finished so there was less pressure, however, during the month of May I came to find out that the time I had been planning on utilizing for this unit was quickly diminishing. This valuable time was going towards many end-of-the-year events such as the talent show, the fifth grade cook-out, field day, as well as various award and reward parties. I found myself struggling to find time for completing this unit. I had intended to teach three lessons, however due to May Madness, as my principal called it, I was unable to meet my goals. Once again flexibility came into play in regards to completing this unit. Even though I was only able to complete two lessons, I am extremely pleased with how those two turned out.

### **What did I learn about book arts?**

As I approached this idea of integrating book arts I was interested to examine the overall comprehension of the students. Previously I referred to several educators who have integrated a visual approach with reading and comprehension and their results were supportive of mine. Even though I do not have statistics that clearly state the students comprehension was increased due to the involvement of art I do believe that these lessons affected their understanding in a positive way.

The creation of the Reflection Book provided a sense of ownership for the students. They appeared happy and proud to get them out each day. The Reflection Book required the students to summarize each chapter and in order to summarize they had to understand what the text was saying. As I checked their summaries daily, I was pleased to see the majority of my students exceeding with the ability to identify the important events of each chapter. I especially noticed an improvement in some the lower ability readers; their summaries were consistently accurate.

The tunnel book was a clear demonstration of the students' comprehension. The students' were required to choose a scene and depict it in a tunnel book. I allowed them freedom in the choice of the event, however, I was adamant about them using the text to help them visualize the specific scene. As they worked through this lesson I was pleased to constantly see the students utilizing the text as I had asked. This close examination of the text can be seen in their final pieces. Obviously, in order to depict a specific event from the story the students needed to understand what they were reading. If they had difficulty understanding that would have been manifested in their depictions. I am pleased to report that all of the students' depictions were accurate; therefore, that shows their clear comprehension of the novel.

Based on my observations there is a clear implication for the use of visuals and/or book arts with the reading/English curriculum. More teachers need to utilize the idea of integrating books arts across the entire curriculum and not only in the area of reading. It does require the teacher to make adjustments while planning however the results are a reward in themselves. The students will be thankful for the extra effort put into it.

Though it may seem like a daunting task there are many resources available for teachers to use when incorporating book arts. One book that I used was, *The Big Book of Books and Activities* by Dinah Zike. This book provides pages of ideas for creating a variety of foldables and books. These foldables and books can then be used in any fashion relating to any subject area. Zike, a former teacher, has many other products that cater to the teacher who wants to incorporate a hands-on learning environment for their students. Another book that I found useful was *Making Books that Fly, Fold, Wrap, Hide, Pop Up, Twist, and Turn* by Gwen Diehn (1998). As the title suggests this is useful in constructing a multitude of books that can then be adjusted to relate to specific curriculum.

## **Conclusion**

I began this unit wanting to express my passion for creating and integrating art into the core curriculum. Although transitioning from an art teacher to a regular teacher was an unwelcome change, I approached it with optimism. I found comfort in returning to my roots as an art teacher and introduced my students to art in other places besides the art room.

I want to take one more look at the research questions. How did I integrate book arts and reading into an age appropriate curriculum? First, I was able to integrate book arts with reading by doing some research on various styles and structures of books. Then I figured out how a specific style of book could be used with the unit. I settled on two styles: a pocket book and a

tunnel book. Next question: What did I learn about the teaching process? I learned many things from developing and implementing this curriculum. Most importantly I learned that art can indeed be integrated successfully into the core content areas, in this case reading. I also discovered that these lessons were very engaging to my students. They were excited by this new approach. I also learned that as always a teacher must be flexible and adjust the plans according. Final question: What did I learn about book arts? I found that the integration of book arts had a positive effect on my students' attitude toward reading. The reflection and tunnel books provided my students with a sense of pride. The books also provided a means of demonstrating comprehension. Not only were the books a creative response they also allowed me to view the level of understanding of my students. The students were allowed to respond to the text and demonstrate understanding in a visual manner. Another observation I made was in regards to my students who were lower-level readers. These students appeared to comprehend and summarize the text better than they had previously in the year.

Based on my experience there are implications for art educators who are interested in integration. I do not see integration as a one way street. I believe that it is important for regular education teachers to integrate art as well as art teachers integrating the core curriculum. As an art teacher it is difficult to know the curriculum for every grade level. However, I think it would be beneficial to the students as well as the teachers if the art teacher would focus on a few large areas of study within the curriculum. Whether that is circles in math, colors in science or Native Americans in social studies. Allowing students to make connections between all areas of study is crucial to their education. When I return to the art room I plan to take a more integrated approach, and help students to see the connections between art and the world around them.

I set out to develop and implement a unit that would incorporate art and literature in a meaningful and exciting way. I wanted to engage my students in the learning process. I believe I was successful in my venture and hope that I will inspire other teachers to integrate books arts into their curriculum.

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