# MAKING CONNECTIONS, FORMING COMMUNITIES: WHAT I LEARNED WITH AND FROM STUDENTS IN AN ARTS-BASED WRITING WORKSHOP

by

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Approved:

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## LIST OF FIGURES

## Chapter One:

## Green Beans with Salt, please

Dear Reader,

If you and I have somehow crossed paths and you found your way to read this applied project, you maybe able identify with one of the following statements:

1. Writing can be a challenge.
2. Making art can be a challenge.
3. Teaching writing or art can be an even bigger challenge.

If you do not identify with at least one of these statements, I beg you to not waste your time. Go and find something else to read for you are truly exceptional. If you can identify with at least one of these (and I am guessing that nearly everyone can) then, welcome. And for those of you—like me—who can identify with all three of these statements, I hope this work resonates with you most of all.

I wonder if anyone would disagree that writing is hard work. I think most writers can associate with the search for the perfect word or the struggle to a find a logical organization. Thoughts begin scattered about like a mess of papers on an unorganized desk and slowly become arranged into neat lines, sentences, and paragraphs like rows of books on a shelf.

Those of you who are artists can probably identify with the pain that involves really seeing something. You know the difficulty of "adhering to the outline of a thing" (Collins, pg. 75). I am sure you can relate to the felt confusion when faced with the task of drawing a mess of gnarled branches or distinguishing between zinc white and titanium

white. But, the difficulties are subsumed by the magic of seeing an abstract thought come alive on a page or the sensuousness of a paint brush on canvas.

And teaching art and writing is perhaps the most peculiar behavior of all these mentioned. We teach because even though we know the difficulty that is writing and art, we have had experiences with one of these forms of expression that changed our lives. Our hope is to pass on the "magic" of this experience to our students. But as fellow teachers, I am sure you know the difficulty that is involved in this task. We want our students to have meaningful experiences that resonate with them the rest of their lives, but we have to work with students crawling under desks or groaning before we can get the two syllables of "writing" off of our lips.

Being both a writer and an artist, and a teacher of writing and a teacher of art, I associate with the difficulties involved in all these tasks. But, as a writer and an artist, and a teacher of writing and a teacher of art, I have also become aware of the similarities between all of these endeavors (...and yes, there are more similarities than just the challenges). There is a relationship between writing and art, and when teachers use writing and art together and in relationship to one another, great things can happen. New relationships can be formed. You may be thinking to yourself: "Writing is hard, art making is hard, teaching is hard. Why do all these together? Isn't that three times as hard?" Those are legitimate concerns. I have found that teaching art making and writing together is hard, but the benefits that come from integrating these challenges are too important to overlook.

I must tell you, before we begin this journey, of my inspiration for this applied project. Looking back, I believe it began at seventeen years old. As a second grader, I

liked to draw. I would draw on notebook paper, folders, and unfortunately I would draw notes to my friends. I say unfortunately because there were the occasional times when I would get caught. As a punishment, I would have to either write sentences or read aloud to the class. I hated both. Writing "I will not write notes" or "I will put my name on my paper" one-hundred times gave me writer's cramp. And I really hated to read aloud; I would mispronounce words, stutter, and had horrible comprehension when I had to read things aloud. I began to hate words.

My hatred of words continued through elementary school. The only other memories I have of writing are spelling and vocabulary tests, which I bombed frequently up until eighth grade. But, in ninth grade my opinions of language began to change when my English teacher, Mr. Smith, showed me that words could be personal. I remember the first paper I wrote for him about George Orwell's *Animal Farm*. I had to meet with him after school one day to discuss my paper—which I did poorly on. He asked me, "Rebecca, what is a food that you absolutely cannot eat without salt? But, if you put salt on it, you love?"

Annoyed to be staying after school (I would be late to swim practice), I thought *what does this have to do with writing?* But, I knew the answer. "Green beans" I replied.

"Ok," he responded. "This paper is like green beans with no salt. It could be great, but you need to add your voice to it. It needs salt." When Mr. Smith said salt, he pointed to his heart. *What?!?!?* I thought to myself and internally rolled my eyes.

At swim practice that evening, I had to stay late (because I was late). I remember thinking as I swam extra laps—*what do green beans and salt have to do with writing?* And then it hit me; Mr. Smith cared. He wanted to know what I thought about*Animal*

*Farm*, not what *Cliff's Notes* thought. On the next paper, I tried to add "salt". Not only did I improve my grade, it improved the flavor of the writing process. I began to enjoy the challenge.

Through high school, I tried to always take his advice and add the "salt" to my papers. English became my best class. I graduated from high school winning the writing award for a paper I wrote as a junior. My reservations about language were still in the back of my mind, but were beginning to subside.

But, I took a few steps back my first few years of college. My sophomore year, I took the Regent's Test. For those of you who are not familiar with this exam, the Regent's Test is required of all college sophomores in the University System of Georgia. It tests reading and writing skills. Students who fail the exam are required to take additional remedial English classes. The joke on campus is that everyone passes. The day I took the test I thought I aced it—I wrote a four paragraph comparison essay with lots of seasoning. But, I was wrong and found myself in remedial English my sophomore year. They told me that I did not follow the "proper formula" in order to write an "effective essay". "Proper formula" equals five paragraph "green beans with no salt" paper. I found myself in remedial English, where every Wednesday I had to write a five paragraph essay. It did not matter what it was about or what I included, as long as it was five paragraphs. All the insecurities and hatred towards language flooded back. Luckily I was in the School of Art; I could graduate without speaking if I needed to—or so I thought.

In the Spring of 2004, I enrolled in Richard Siegesmund's Elementary Methods in Art Education course, a "WIP" (writing intensive program) class. This class exposed me

to a concept of language that spoke to my heart—the idea that deep language comes from within. The WIP courses expect students to write with a voice and passion. It was in this class that I "found" my voice as a writer.

Additionally, this class also introduced me to my research question during my first field experience teaching at Eighth Avenue Elementary School[1]. The goal for my peers and me was to teach a lesson that integrated art and writing in order to teach "the power of words" (Taylor, pg. 25). I was placed with three other girls in a pre-kindergarten classroom. Of the four of us, none of us had any idea what we were doing. Everything was foreign—from working with *four* year olds to the idea of actually combining *writing* with artmaking.

Despite our inexperience, we learned. The pre-K students we taught created a class poem about a work of art a friend of mine created (If you are interested in reading more about this experience—see Quinn, 2006). The poem was beautiful, despite our teaching flaws. The experience was extremely meaningful for me, partially because I learned "teacher survival skills," but more so because I was amazed at the language that came out of the four year olds who I was teaching. It was language "with salt." It took me years to learn how to do that, yet here were four year olds doing it. The idea that I could give a student an experience so much better and different than my own was exhilarating—perhaps even addictive. I suspected the success had something to do with using art and language together. I knew I wanted to try this art and writing thing again.

A couple of years and a few teaching experiences later, I found myself back in Dr. Siegesmund's Elementary Methods in Art Education course, but this time as a teaching assistant for the same program which helped me find a voice. My experience in this

[1] The name of this school has been changed, as have all student names.

position only strengthened my interest in how we can get students, at all levels, to engage with language— to find a way to write from the heart, or finding a way to "salt" their words.

As a WIP TA, I went back with my undergraduate students into Eight Avenue Elementary, the place where I began this journey a few years earlier. Once again, our goal was to integrate art and writing. Once again, I saw great things happening. After this experience, I realized I really wanted to investigate this phenomenon for my applied project. And, with more education and experience I was able to narrow down my research question from figuring out how to get students to "salt" their language. I decided I wanted to know:

1. Why is it important to integrate art and literacy instruction?
2. How should we go about art and literacy integration?
3. What are the learning outcomes of such an integrated approach?

Dr. Siegesmund and I planned for our students at the university to be teaching at Eighth Avenue again in the fall of 2006. This was the perfect opportunity for me to conduct my research and find answers. The Spring of 2006 Dr. Siegesmund and I met with Jan, the literacy coach; Jennifer, a first grade classroom teacher; Jamie, a third grade classroom teacher; and Krista, the art specialist. As a group, we planned a rough sketch of the fall curriculum; together we decided on the theme, form, and context of the unit. The theme, or the big idea, would be personal memoir. The form the memoirs would take would be book making. We considered the theme of memoir to be especially pertinent considering the context of the school. In the Fall of 2006, the students would be uprooted from their home school and placed in an older building while construction was

taking place at Eighth Avenue. Jan, Jennifer, Jamie, and Krista were concerned that a number of students would not travel to a different location, and that the sense of community would be lost. Memoirs would be a great way for students to learn about themselves and others at the same time.

Initially, my plan was to study a group of my undergraduate students as they taught the memoir unit at Eighth. But, Richard and I decided the best way for me to understand how to teach writing and art together was to actually teach it. So rather than studying a group of my students, I studied and reflected on my own teaching while I was a visiting teacher in a wonderful first grade classroom. The classroom teacher, Jennifer Folkerts, welcomed me into her space and was instrumental to the success of this project. Although I was only in her classroom for a short time, I felt a bond with her and her students.

This applied project tells the story of my journey, starting with my research for designing my integrated curriculum and finishing with my current thoughts. One thing that I love about this journey is that it does not end. I will continue learning to write, create art, and teach for the rest of my life. The pages that follow reflect where I am at my learning today, February 16, 2007, 11:07 PM. I may gain new insight next year in my classroom. I may gain new insight Tuesday in my graduate seminar. I may gain it later today as I am painting. It is the search that does not end, which is what excites me. I am not an expert on this matter, rather a learner and a teller of stories. I hope that you can learn something from this journey as well. Enjoy.

Your friend,

Rebecca Rose Bowers

## Chapter Two:

## Teaching for Democracy: Why Art?

### Forms of Representation

I thought we could begin by noticing the differences between a few pieces of writing and art that deal with a similar theme: war.

First, let us consider Wikipedia's definition.

"**War** is a conflict involving use of weapons and physical force by states or other large-scale groups, coinciding with a lack of dialogue between the parties" (retrieved November 20, 2006).

Now, look at Picasso's painting *Guernica.*

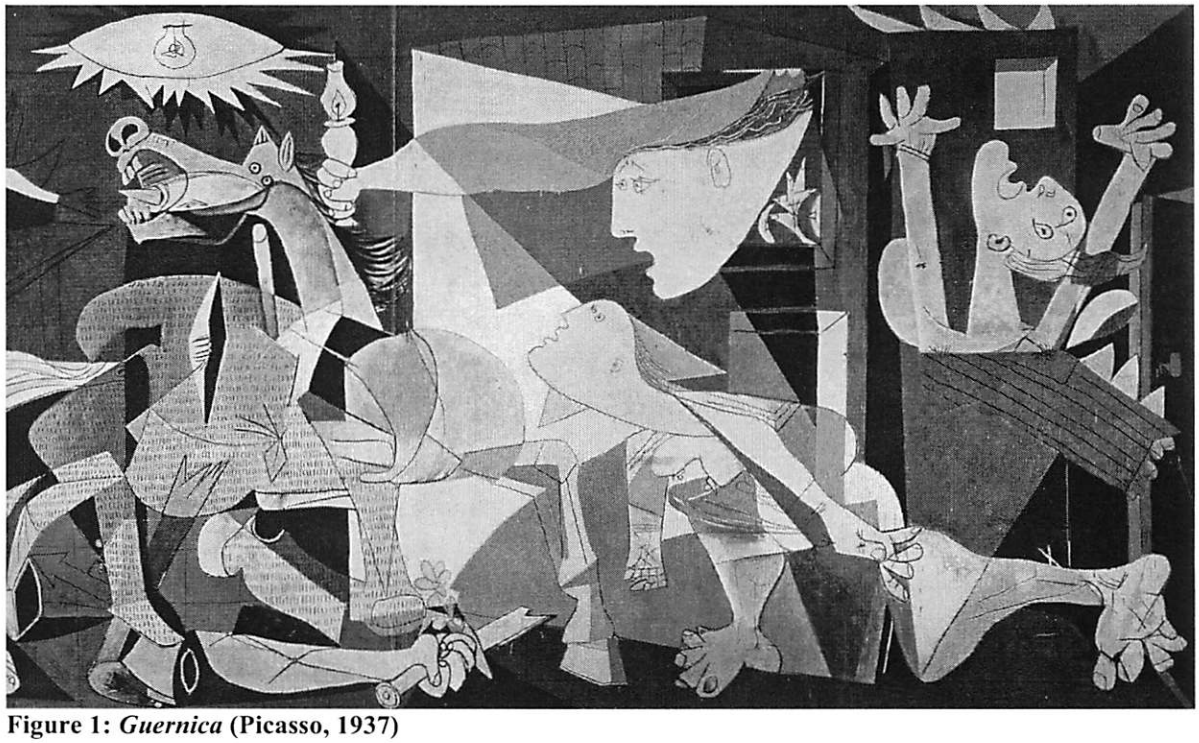

**Figure 1: *Guernica* (Picasso, 1937)**

And finally, consider David Kreiger's poem "Today is Not a Good Day for War" (Krieger, 2005).

## Today is Not a Good Day for War

Today is not a good day for war,
Not when the sun is shining,
And leaves are trembling in the breeze.

Today is not a good day for bombs to fall,
Not when clouds hang on the horizon
And drift above the sea.

Today is not a good day for young men to die,
Not when they have so many dreams
And so much still to do.

Today is not a good day to send missiles flying,
Not when the fog rolls in
And the rain is falling hard.

Today is not a good day for launching attacks,
Not when families gather
And hold on to one another.

Today is not a good day for collateral damage,
Not when children are restless
Daydreaming of frogs and creeks.

Today is not a good day for war,
Not when birds are soaring,
Filling the sky with grace.

No matter what they tell us about the other,
Nor how bold their patriotic calls,
Today is not a good day for war.

Now, reflect a moment on these pieces. How are you affected by reading a definition of war? How are you affected by seeing an artistic reaction to war? How are you affected by reading a poem about war? Do these three forms of representing meaning communicate the same idea? How do they communicate differently?

For me, each of the three responses tells a different story. The dictionary definition is literal and avoids feeling. The painting illustrates sorrow and shows anguish. The poem speaks to emotions through metaphor and written imagery. In each of these, a writer or artist has created a response about the same idea through a different form of representation.

Forms of representation make the knowledge we possess public; they make abstract thinking concrete (Eisner, 1994; Siegesmund, 1998). In short, forms of representation help us construct meaning of our world. No one form of representation—whether it is a definition, a painting, or a poem—can say everything (Eisner, 1994). Each form conveys a different message.

Teaching through different forms of representation can support progressive literacy instruction, which is concerned with leading students to conceive the world and their place in it (Thompson, 2002). Since no one form of representation can say everything about the world, literacy instruction should concern itself with teaching students how to construct meaning of the world around them through various forms of representation (Siegesmund, 1998).

However, schools have traditionally privileged only one form of representation when teaching for literacy—literal language or language that can be reduced to symbolic form (Efland, 2004). But, are we to fully understand a phenomenon, like war, because

we read a definition? Are we to fully understand ourselves because we can spell our name? Surely not. By limiting forms of representation, we limit what students can say. To allow for communication through only one form of representation assumes that all students are alike. Yet, we know they are not. Ultimately, such narrow assumptions and practices may be at odds to the goals of public schooling.

Originally, public schools were a place to prepare youth to become participants in a democratic nation (Allen, 1995). Horace Mann, who is credited with founding public schooling in America, saw the importance of teaching different forms of representation and advocated teaching art as part of the public school curriculum (Efland, 1990). However, from this origin that embraced multiple forms of representation, the history of public schools show that they have been exhorted to narrow their educationalfocus on linguistic and mathematical skills (Tyack & Cuban, 1995). This narrowing of focus is damaging. When we limit how students can express themselves to what they can say with their tongue or with a word processor, a population of students gets left behind.

In recent years, cognitive scientist Howard Gardner (1999) has suggested that there is more than one type of intelligence. Rather, there are eight—linguistic, logical-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, and naturalist. As I mentioned, in past years literacy instruction has privileged only one intelligence type—linguistic. It seems logical enough. If you are going to study language, then teach language. However, students who are adept at rendering knowledge through music, image, or dance, yet struggle with grammar or symbolic representation, can be marginalized. Schooling, an agent whose goal is equality, can thus become a device that

suppresses some voices and empowers others; a participatory democracy means all voices are heard, not only a select few (Wilson, 2006).

It is the responsibility of educators who are concerned with literacy to provide access to all forms of representation to ensure that all voices are heard and all ways of knowing are acknowledged. I argue that a narrow view of literacy, or one that is focused upon language only, is counterproductive to schooling a nation for democracy because of its narrowing implications. It is the responsibility of educators who are concerned with literacy to provide access to all forms of representation, including aesthetic forms (Siegesmund, 1998).

Aesthetic forms of representation are those forms that communicate through felt qualitative relationships and do not rely exclusively on the use of literal language. Literal language is language that can be reduced to symbolic form and deems the use of metaphor and figurative language meaningless (Efland, 2004). For example, Wikipedia's definition of war relies on literal language to communicate. But the aesthetic forms of representation, Picasso's *Guernica* and Kreiger's poem, rely on qualities such as shape, repetition, or rhythm, to convey meaning. Although the poem uses language, the meaning is conveyed through the synthesis of repetition, metaphor, and rhythm as well as the symbolic translation of the written words.

When we expose students to aesthetic forms of representation, we are teaching them to think in relationships of qualities. John Dewey (1934) suggests that to think in relationships of qualities is a more sophisticated, complex intellectual endeavor than thinking in language. When Picasso painted *Guernica*, he was thinking in qualities. An artist can produce painting after painting, thinking in this realm, and never translate this

meaning into language, but still be *thinking* (I will discuss the role of cognition later in this chapter).

But, Siegesmund argues that "this thinking also translates to language" (Siegesmund, 2005, pg. 23). The German philosopher, Martin Heidegger (1954) argued that thinking in qualities *is* how we get to language. These thinkers suggest that qualitative thinking is a natural part of the language process (Dewey, 1934; Heidegger, 1954; Siegesmund, 2005, 2000). Unfortunately, schools today often deny this fact, and therefore our view of literacy remains narrow. By narrowing the roads through which literacy is taught, we narrow the number of students who can travel on the road to literacy. Literacy is a destination that all children can reach, but if we limit the modes that a child might employ to get there, then we cannot help but leave some children behind.

I believe that to move towards an expanded view of literacy, we should reconsider our epistemological stance, and examine the late nineteenth century events that determined what subjects were to be viewed as academic. Additionally, we should reconsider our mid twentieth century desire to separate subjects into disciplines rather than teach for a holistic understanding of ideas (Bruner, 1963). In addition to critiquing these beliefs, I found it helpful to look at how other teachers and researchers have attempted to integrate art and literacy. A synthesis of these findings guided my construction of the goals and pedagogy for the unit researched for this applied project.

## Expanding ways of knowing

We must move away from narrow epistemological beliefs that deem artistic expression as non-cognitive (Efland, 2002). Examining such beliefs will cause a shift

away from literacy as a mechanical capacity to manipulate symbols and syntax. In its place will be the belief that literacy means teaching the tools through which our students make meaning of the world around them. We may move towards a view similar to that of Elliot Eisner (2003) who claimed that "literacy itself can be thought of as limited to not what the tongue can articulate, but what the mind can grasp" (pg. 342).

How we think the mind grasps knowledge is an important issue for teachers to consider, for it has impact on how we teach others to acquire knowledge (Siegesmund, 1998). In other words, how and what we teach stem from our epistemological stance. One can tell a great deal about what schools think is warranted knowledge by looking at pedagogy and curriculum. Our current narrow view of literacy is a result of our narrow view of knowledge. Expanding what counts as knowledge will help us to broaden forms of literacy and move more towards schools of democracy, where all voices can be heard.

Epistemology is the study of knowledge (Siegesmund, 1998). A narrow epistemological view is one that reflects dualisms such as the separation of thinking from feeling, the mind from the body, and perception from cognition. These dualisms have deep roots. Plato argued that true thinking was reason void of feeling; he argued that knowledge dependent on the senses was to be viewed cautiously (Eisner, 1994). A view of cognition that discredits perception and separates the affective and cognitive has negative effects for the arts, as it implies that the work done by an artist can be credited to talent, not the mind.

Recently, thinkers with interest in the arts and education have worked to expand what counts as knowledge and mental skills. The work of Rudolf Arnheim (1969)

deconstructed a view of knowledge that separates perception and cognition and is only concerned with decoding and encoding symbol systems. Consider his words:

> My contention is that the cognitive operations called thinking are not the privileged of mental processes above and beyond perception, but the essential ingredients of perception itself...By 'cognitive' I mean all mental operations involved in receiving, storing, and processing of information: sensory perception, memory, thinking, learning. The use of the term conflicts with one to which many psychologists are accustomed and which excludes the activity of the senses from cognition (pg. 13).

Arnheim argued that perception is thinking. Looking at the world is as much of a cognitive event as when one "sits with his [her] eyes closed and thinks" (pg. 13).

Art educators Eisner, Siegesmund, and Efland built on the work of Arnheim "to promote a more complex, pluralistic conception of the mind" (Eisner, 2000, pg 6). Traditionally, the mind and the body were viewed as separate entities. Thinking was to be done independent of bodily encounters. But, cognitive science shows that the mind and body are not independent of one another and that thinking and bodily sensation are indeed connected (Efland, 2004). The interconnectedness of the mind and body help us see the connection between feeling and thinking.

Our senses are not neutral, fully configured, recording devices. Our contacts with the environment—seeing, smelling, touching, tasting— require refinement (Eisner, 1994). This refinement is a form of thinking that makes us aware. Being aware of the qualities of sight and sound "require some modicum of thought, for what else would make awareness possible?" (Eisner, 1994, pg. 31). When we acknowledge that "feeling",

or sensation, is a work of the mind, the boundaries between the mind and the senses begin to dissolve (Eisner, 1994). Our sensory contacts with our environment provide ways of knowing; sensation and experience are knowledge.

**What counts as "academic"?**

Acknowledging different ways of knowing has implication for the arts in education. I mentioned earlier that instruction in schools is based primarily in literal language. This pedagogy stems from traditional views of knowledge and cognitive linguistics, which emphasize the importance of mastering literal language. In traditional literacy practices, students must learn to be proficient in literal language before meaning can be made. For example, students copy sentences to learn grammar and spelling before commencing to the real work of writing. Such a view of language translates disciplines that use literal language as cognitive and those that use figurative or affective language as non-cognitive (Efland, 2004). Cognitive subjects are essential in schools; non-cognitive subjects are a bonus. In cultures that believe the use of figurative ways of knowing are non-cognitive, the arts, including poetry, have taken a back seat to "real writing" instruction.

All too often, the arts are welcomed into the elementary curriculum because they provide planning periods for the busy day of classroom teachers. While planning periods are needed for teachers, students also need music, art, theatre, and dance classes. As I said earlier, to expand our literacy instruction, we must redefine the role of the arts in curriculum. If we view literacy as teaching students how to express knowledge in multiple ways, we can no longer overlook the arts and push them to the side. The arts are

essential for teaching a robust sense of literacy. Instruction in the arts is academic and crucial to the success of students as it helps to (a) refine the senses; (b) develop minds in specific ways; (c) understand and comprehend our world; (d) and expand our ability to express knowledge through multiple forms of representation (Eisner, 1994; 2000; 2002). The idea that the arts can *develop the mind* is crucial, for this is surely an academic task. This development can be expressed through the arts. It can also enhance expression through language as well.

To review, we develop our minds by making meaning of our world; students constructing meaning of their world is the prerogative of progressive instruction in the arts and in literacy. We express this meaning through forms of representation: drawing, painting, poetry, sculpture, numbers, words, etc. Each of these forms represents a way of knowing and understanding the world. To hear all student voices, we should allow students to express knowledge through multiple forms of representation. Moreover, instruction should seek to interconnect the knowledge that is produced through these multiple forms.

## Connecting ways of knowing

Acknowledging different ways of knowing should result in cognitively flexible curricula (Efland, 2004). Cognitive flexibility is having a variety of problem solving strategies *and* being able to distinguish which strategy is most appropriate for a given problem (Efland, 2004). Ideally, students would be given a problem and choose a form of representation to present their knowledge, demonstrating their ability to choose the strategy most appropriate for their needs. A curriculum that does not demonstrate

cognitive flexibility, or does not allow for multiple forms of representation, restricts students in what they can learn and express, and is disrespectful to the idea of art as an intelligence.

Teaching for cognitive flexibility, and allowing for problem solving through multiple forms of representation, is interdisciplinary and challenges yet another dominant mindset in schools: the idea that each discipline should be studied separately and independently of one another. Efland (2000) attributes the study of disciplines to modernist ideals of the efficiency of separation. In education, the separation of subjects into disciplines stems from the philosophy of Jerome Bruner (1963) who maintained that disciplines have structures. It is through these structures that we acquire knowledge. Bruner believed that educators should teach students to think in the disciplines; for example, we should teach students to think like "scientists". According to Bruner, we must understand and be able to conceptualize the structures of the disciplines before we can connect knowledge.

Bruner's work has a strong hold in education and seems to have permeated all disciplines, even art. The ideals of Discipline Based Art Education (DBAE) reflect Bruner's beliefs in knowledge structures. DBAE asserts that art education is not one discipline, but *four* (Efland, 1988). But in recent years, art educators have begun to question if separating our students' study into "knowledge structures" is the most effective way to teach children (Efland, 1988, 2002, 2004).

Efland (2002) uses a city plan as a metaphor for curriculum models to explain how separating the disciplines may not be extremely effective. I will briefly outline his thoughts. Modernism, and its emphasis on the efficacy of the individual, brought about

the idea of the planned city. The goal of a planned city was to separate areas of the city to make living convenient, safe, and efficient. No longer would people live above their place of business; places of work were separated from the home. The rich were separated from the poor, the black from the white, the blue collar from the white collar, and so on. Areas for walking and areas for riding in a car were separated. Such cities resulted in suburban sprawl and had obvious drawbacks. For example, what would happen if one needed to hail a taxi? Our traditional school curriculum has similar ideals. Students study ideas within disciplines and are seldom instructed on the connections between such fields, or how to apply knowledge from one discipline to another. We break subject matter into disciplines to make knowledge acquisition quick and easy.

Efland (2002) contrasted these beliefs with those of postmodernists, who seek to deconstruct the systems of power that are not working for everyone. Integrated curriculum can be viewed as a postmodern idea because it aims to break down the barriers of the "disciplines" in order to connect learning and make it more meaningful for all students. Efland uses his city metaphor to demonstrate the results of what can happen if learning is *not* connected:

> "If the roots of travel are congested, if one gets too many busy signals or wrong numbers, or if there are too many one-way streets, or blind alleys, these experiences are likely to frustrate and dissatisfy the residents of a city as they attempt to reach or be in touch with others in different areas or neighborhoods" (Efland, 2000, pg. 293).

The roots of travel are subject areas. The residents are students. When students do not see connections between subjects, or when one subject is weighted much more than

others, students will become frustrated in their learning. And learning is something that does not just happen in school, but is a habit of mind that needs to be extended to the non school hours. Therefore, if we are committed to producing life long learners and students who seek to apply their learning outside of school, frustration is not a desired outcome.

## Integrated curriculum in practice

Cognitive science predicts that students will have to apply different knowledge sets to solve problems in the future; the question, therefore, is not whether to integrate, but *how* (Freedman & Stuhr, 2004). This became an authentic question for me as I was designing the curriculum to teach in this applied project. In the section that follows, I briefly discuss the goals of integrated curriculums and review several attempts to integrate art and literacy instruction. I feel it important to note that discussing all the studies, articles, and books I found is beyond the scope of this applied project. Rather, I have included studies that I felt were especially influential in helping guide me in my curriculum development.

To begin, an overarching goal of integrated curriculum is for students to solve a problem in more than one way in order for the student to come to a greater understanding of the world and their place in it (Parsons, 2004). It is constructivist in nature as it promotes students seeking knowledge and applying it to our own particulars (Ada & Campoy, 2004). Additionally, constructivism places an emphasis on conceptual connections, and therefore supports integration; we learn best when ideas, in all subjects, are connected (Marshall, 2006).

The spectrum of integrated curriculum is broad. On one end, there are activities which connect subjects in order to make learning more meaningful for students. At the more ambitious end are integrated curriculums that aim to promote a participatory democracy "via student choice, self-reflection, and active inquiry" (Parsons, pg. 776). In 1981, Anna M. Kindler demonstrated the breadth of integrated art curriculum by doing a humanistic study of the rationales of integrated art curricula. She found that "the fundamental assumptions of integrated arts programs can be summarized as follows: (a) there is a similarity across the arts; (b) incorporating the arts into other subjects matter areas accelerates and facilitates the learning process; (c) the arts promote creativity; and (d) integrated arts programs are more economical that separate instruction in each area" (pg. 53).

My own review of literature was more specific. I am interested in literature that describes art and literacy integration. As I mentioned earlier, this is not a humanistic study to review and analyze all research that describes art and literacy instruction. In the section that follows, I will briefly discuss research that integrates art and literacy, and identify what the goals of such research are. I will conclude this chapter by discussing how this research helped me develop the curriculum I taught in this applied project.

The first research trend I will discuss is a popular, and perhaps seductive, one that aims to prove that using art will improve literacy scores. "The Art of Writing: Drawing as Preparation for Narrative Writing in the Primary Grades," an article by Helen Caldwell and Blaine H. Moore (1991), describes a quantitative study that aims to test whether drawing as preparation for writing will improve writing quality. In this experiment, researchers established a control group that received normal writing instruction and a test

group which was allowed to draw before writing. The test group was found to have significantly higher writing scores than the control group after fifteen weeks of instruction. Such research hopes to justify art education because of its contributions to other academic subjects and can be very persuasive at a time when standardized test scores drive our culture. There are, however, obvious concerns with such research. For example, what were to happen if something "better" (i.e. cheaper and faster) came along that improved writing? Would the arts be dissolved?

A more substantial approach to integration is when teachers and researchers explore and make explicit the connections between art and literacy, both in concept and structure (Marshall, 2006). Teacher researchers Beth Berghoff, Cindy Bixler Borgmann, and Carlotta Parr (2003) used the arts because of their intrinsic value, and aim to contribute to the theoretical rationale for arts inclusion (Berghoff et al., 2003). In one unit, students explored an idea simultaneously through music, poetry, and drawing. Findings showed that students saw that they "can communicate the same idea in different sign systems and have a more complete meaning" of the idea (Berghoff et al., pg 359). The parallel processes were made explicit by the teachers in order for students to realize the connectedness of their learning. Such research is more meaningful and substantial because it is respectful both art and language arts as a discipline—neither discipline is comprised. Also, it shows us that transfer does not happen automatically; we must teach for it and make it explicit.

Finally, some researchers have explored how art and writing can be used together in the classroom as research tools for students and teachers. The PhOLKS (Photographs of Local Knowledge Sources) project was developed by a team of researchers in order to

understand students and their home lives (Allen, et. al., 2002). Elementary students and pre-service teachers used photography and writing together to learn more about themselves and their culture (Allen, et. al., 2002; Allen & Labbo, 2001). Sharing their work in multiple forms of representation helped the teacher-researchers gain multiple perspectives about their students. In this case, the integration of photography and writing was used as a way for the teachers to learn about their students' culture and homes, or to hear more student voices. Studies and projects, like PhOLKS that aim to include more student voice in schools are supportive of democratic learning.

## Designing a Curriculum

Considering all of these discussions—integration, broadened epistemological views, and the role of the arts—my question became "How should I teach an art and literacy unit? What are my goals?" A synthesis of research presented in this essay guided my own development of the curriculum I taught in at Eighth Avenue Elementary. The following ideas are my conclusions on how to apply such research to practice.

### 1. View Art Making as an Intelligence

First, we must view art as intelligence, not as a means to enhance other intelligences. We should allow for multiple forms of representation because each is a mode for expressing knowledge, not because students finish early or it improves their test scores. We construct meaning of our world through poetry, dance, and painting as well as literal language and numbers. We should be able to express this knowledge in different ways if we are truly "literate", because no one form of representation can say everything (Eisner, 1994; Siegesmund, 1998).

Viewing art as an intelligence means giving credit to students who can communicate aesthetically (without words). Our assessment measures should reflect a sensitivity to communication through visual qualities, not only how the student manipulated language or if their image making improved their writing. For this reason, I did not conduct a study of whether using drawing yielded more robust writing. Rather, I described what happened when image making and writing were used together.

**2. Focus on connections**

Second, in order to appropriately integrate visual arts and literacy, we must focus on meaningful connections that the two forms of expression share. Listing all the connections between art and writing is outside of the scope of this paper. However, if one were to list characteristics of writing and art making, one would find the two disciplines have far more commonalities than differences. I keep a running list of all the similarities between art and writing, and the list is becoming quite long. The important thing is that teachers make connections that are meaningful to their own curriculum. For the purposes of this unit, there are two similarities that I paid extra attention to between writing and art: pedagogy and process.

Because I conducted my research in a general classroom rather than an art classroom, I wanted to model pedagogy practices that the students would be used to in their general classroom. Luckily, this was not a stretch. For several years, Eighth Avenue has been transitioning its literacy curriculum for teaching writing to a "writing workshop" model.

The writing workshop has a few essential characteristics which are important to specify in order to make the similarities between the art class and the writing workshop

clear. First, and most important, there is time to write every day (Ray, 2001). Students writing takes up the majority of the writing workshop hour, the justification being that practicing writing is essential to becoming a writer. In the art classroom, art making is often central to our curriculum. Art teachers try to find ways of teaching content standards through art production.

Another characteristic is that the teacher is "continuing to add to a knowledge base about writers and writing" (Ray, 2001, pg. 8). Teachers are learning with students, and continuing to learn what it means to be a writer. It very much resembles a studio, in which art teachers are practicing artists learning with their students.

Finally, talk is an essential characteristic to the writing workshop (Ray, 2001). Talking is a natural part of the writing and artistic process. Artists and writers talk to their peers, talk to themselves, and talk to their mentors as they create. It is important to be flexible and allow students this necessity. The "silent classroom" is actually an unhealthy and *unrealistic* creative atmosphere. I am reading aloud the words in this sentence as I type them. The writing process would be very difficult for me if I had to complete this paper in silence.

These characteristics help to create the framework for how the writing workshop is set up in a classroom. Often, units in the writing workshop and art classroom are "Study Driven" (Wood Ray, 2006). Rather than focusing on a certain artist or grammatical structure to study, units in the art room and writing workshop are inquiry based. Students and teachers study different themes and big ideas together.

Finally, the routines of the writing workshop and art room are similar. Katie Wood Ray (2001) describes the writing workshop as having the following three sections:

- **Focus Lesson:** a five to ten minute lesson that gives students something to think about while writing for that day. Focus lessons are often part of larger units that lead to enduring understandings, or big ideas (Ray, 2006). Art teachers may introduce an element or principal of design as a way to express a big idea, not as the big idea itself. Similarly, writing teachers may use a punctuation mark as a way to communicate an idea, not simply to practice how to use a comma or to diagram sentences. The objectives in the focus lesson are a means to an end, *not an end themselves.*
- **Independent Writing Time and Conferences:** After the focus lesson, students have time to practice writing, using the information presented in the focus lesson. During the independent writing time, the teacher goes around the room, conferencing with students one on one. The role of the teacher is to act as fellow writer or artist, not "know-it-all". Again, the establishment of a community of writers is key.
- **Sharing Time:** Sharing is a part of the art room and writing workshop. The difference is that at the conclusion of every writing workshop, there is time for students to share their writing. While, in the art room there maybe only one critique, when the artwork is completed. Katie Wood Ray (2001) describes several sharing strategies, including whole group sharing, small group sharing, or sharing with a partner.

The schedule of the writing workshop is similar to the art classroom, but we are not as explicit about our framework. For this unit, I made a point to stick to a five to ten minute

focus lesson and to hold one on one conference with every student as they worked independently. Additionally, I allowed time for sharing every day.

Another similarity I tried to exploit is the similarity between the writing and artistic process, especially revision. Both writers and artists go through a process before they arrive at a finished work. I think it is important to allow students an opportunity to revise their work and allow time for that revision. Ideally, students could move through these processes together to see the connections between art and writing. I have outlined the artistic process below to show the similarities.

| Artistic Process | Writing Process |
|---|---|
| • Plan<br>• Sketch/Research<br>• Revise<br>• Finish | • Plan<br>• Draft<br>• Revise<br>• Edit |

### 3. Support Democratic Learning

Finally, integration is most ambitious when it advocates for democratic learning (Parsons, 2004). In order to support democratic learning, it is important to make learning as accessible to as many learners as possible. In the design of the memoir unit, I made sure to apply principles of universal design (Allen, J., ELAN 7320 lecture, September 22, 2006)—equitable use, flexibility of use, tolerance for error, and full membership in a community of learners—in order to make learning accessible and beneficial for all. For example, to provide equal access to reading that supports writing, I chose an artist who writes stories in English and Spanish. Reading the story in both languages will benefit

Spanish speaking students because they are able to hear a story in their native language. It will also benefit English speaking students, as they may learn some Spanish in hearing the story. In Appendix B, there is a table which illustrates how I applied the principles of universal design to this unit.

Another aspect of democratic learning is to allow for student choice whenever possible. In a research study at an elementary school, JoBeth Allen (1995) found that students feel disconnected from the decision making in their schools. In contrast, students view an ideal school as one where they have choices—whether it is about what they read, write, or where they sit (Allen, 1995). Teachers can allow for choice in forms of representation or unit of study. This may require mœ work on the part of the teacher—having a variety of supplies on hand—but is essential in creating a participatory democracy in the classroom. Additionally, allow students the choice to share their work with the whole group or in small groups. Again, the universal design table in Appendix B illustrates where I allowed room for choice in this unit.

## Summary and Conclusion

To summarize, perception, feeling, and cognition can no longer be separated, and the arts can no longer be seen as optional if we are schooling a nation for democracy, for if they are we loose voices. There are different ways of knowing. Expanding what we consider to be "mental skills" yields literacy instruction as being dependent on the arts, for they help to refine the senses, promote metaphoric thinking, and therefore, develop the mind. Fully developing one's mind involves integrating disciplines in order for

students to connect knowledge sets. As we create works of art, we are thinking in qualitative ways; this form of thinking is a way to language.

# Chapter Three

## Conducting Inquiry: Research Methodology

Writing workshops are designed with two main goals in mind—for students to write with purpose and intent and to "do things writers do" (Ray, 2001). In awriting workshop, teachers are also "doing things writers do". They may share their own writing with students, ask for feedback, or conference with other student-writers. Because students are "doing things writers do" and teachers are "doing things writers do" there is a sense of a writing community, in which everyone in the classroom, teachers and students included, is working towards a common goal of publication.

This looks very different than a writing classroom twenty years ago, in which the teacher has the answer for "how to write" and students copy "the answer" from the board. The difference stems from how the teacher conceives her students. In traditional classrooms, teachers view students as "empty vessels" thatteachers can pour knowledge into. Such classroom practices are filled with inauthentic questions (Heath, 1983). The teacher knows the answer, tells it to the students, and they regurgitate it back.

The writing workshop is filled with what Shirley Brice Heath (1983) considers authentic questions. Authentic questions have no preconceived answers. The teacher conceptualizes students as co-knowledge producers, or co-answer finders. In a writing workshop, a teacher may introduce a unit of study, such as personal memoir, and get an infinite number of different approaches to writing a memoir. These approaches are shared with the class, so that teachers will learn from students and students will learn from each other. Knowledge is constructed within a community of writers—students and teachers. With each different approach and result that is shared, new clarity and insight is

gained on how to write a memoir and how to approach writing. The writing workshop is a space for students to search for new approaches and results to writing and a space to share those findings with other students.

The pedagogical practices in traditional writing classrooms reflect a different conception of a student, or audience, than writing workshops. I see a similar distinction in educational research. A major distinction among educational methodologies is how the researcher conceives the audience. In traditional methodologies—which I compare to traditional classrooms—the researcher reports "the answer" to the audience. Research is viewed as a prescription—the audience "receives prescription from 'experts' who have defined proper treatment or best practice" (Cahnmann & Siegesmund, in press). The outcome of such research is that the audience reads the answer from a source, takes it to his/her classroom, and has a script to follow to produce "success".

The writing workshop pedagogy is similar to the type of research methodology that guided this study: arts-based research. Arts-based researchers, like writing workshop teachers, conceive their audience as co-knowledge producers. I do not intend for this applied project to be a script to be followed for the "best practice" of integrating art and writing. Rather, I like to think of you, my reader, as a co-participant in my quest to answer authentic questions:

1. Why and how should we integrate art and writing?
2. What are the learning outcomes of an art and writing integrated curriculum?

This applied project attempts to answer these questions. How you react to this report is "part of the research" (Cahnmann & Siegesmund, in press).

## What constitutes arts-based research?

Tom Barone and Elliot Eisner (2006) define arts-based research as "inquiry that is artistic in character" (pg. 95). There are two criteria for research to be considered arts-based. The first is how we view the audience—arts-based research is not aimed to find one truth, rather the hope is that the research will enhance perspectives and give the audience new ways of thinking about "educational phenomenon" (Barone & Eisner, pg. 97). Therefore, my conception of the audience as participant constitutes this research as being "arts-based". The second criteria of arts-based research is that there is the presence of "aesthetic qualities or design elements that infuse the inquiry process and text" (Barone & Eisner, pg. 97). Through the discussion of my data collection methods and reporting, I will illustrate how I have met this criterion of arts-based research.

## Practitioner Inquiry

While being primarily guiding by the methodology of arts-based research, I was also the practitioner conducting the inquiry. "Practitioner inquiry" is the umbrella term under which several methodologies, where the practitioner is also the researcher, fall (Cochran-Smith & Donnell, 2006). The most common methodologies under this umbrella are action research and teacher research, and the line between these genres is blurry. Both require the practitioner to assume more than one role, like I did in this applied project as I assumed responsibilities of a teacher, and a researcher. The major difference between the two forms of inquiry lies in how the researcher wants her research to be used.

The action researcher typically conducts research in order to fulfill a desire for social change or reform (Cochran-Smith & Donnell, 2006). The teacher researcher typically conducts research to learn about and possibly reform teaching and learning (Cochran-Smith & Donnell, 2006). I consider this applied project research to be guided by the methodologies of teacher research, as I was more interested in "developing alternative ways to understand, assess, and improve teaching and learning" than social reform (Cochran-Smith & Donnell, pg. 445).

Another theme that permeates much of teacher research is the collaborative aspect of the inquiry process. Teacher researchers work in groups to examine their practices and assumptions and to find answers to questions (Cochran-Smith & Donnell, 2006). I discussed in Chapter One how this applied project was the result of a group effort; several minds came together in the planning and implementation of this curriculum to help us gain insight into our authentic questions.

## Data Collection

For my research to be arts-based, my data collection must be infused with "aesthetic elements" (Barone & Eisner, 2006, pg98). Aesthetic elements are those that rely on non-language based ways of communicating. My data includes photographs and student artwork. I believe that this data has important information about the learning outcomes of the experience, even though it does not communicate through language.

I collected data in several ways. I have 73 digital photographs of students working, students' finished pieces, and class discussions. Dr. Siegesmund, Bryna Bobick, and I took the photographs. I also have copies of all the students' writings in

various stages. While I was in the classroom, I recorded fifteen pages of field notes which document conversations with students and observations from class discussions and students working. After each teaching session, I wrote a reflection, totaling seven reflections. Finally, I revised all lesson plans in a timely manner to include what actually happened in the classroom as opposed to what I planned (see Appendix A for lesson plans).

## Narrative construction as methodology

I have rendered this data in an arts-based form referred to as narrative construction (Eisner & Barone, 2006). Arts-based research is an umbrella term under which several methodologies fall. One methodology is narrative construction, which involves collecting details and descriptions of instances and arranging them into stories (Barone & Eisner, 2007). The narrative construction researcher attempts to "attend to the particulars of experience, observe behavior, and reproduce it in written form" (Barone & Eisner, pg. 101). The language should be evocative; the researcher should aim to describe in detail the phenomenon, and the reader will fill in the gaps. The gap, in my mind, is the space between the information presented here and the classroom of the audience.

So, my goal in reporting the data from this applied project is to tell some stories of my experience at Eighth Avenue. Just as I worked with these students to add more details to their memoir, I tried to include as many details as I collected. But, I found this impossible to do. I simply could not include every story. Everything is a story and we must always choose what we include, and more importantly what we leave out, for

"nothing would be more confusing than a rendering, portrayal, story, play, or poem that tried to describe everything" (Eisner & Barone, pg99). As I interpreted and analyzed the data from this project, I looked for meaningful themes. The themes that I discuss in the following chapter are themes that I could use several stories to illuminate, because they were so prominent. But, as this is an applied project, I could not tell every story that was meaningful, or talk about every student in the classroom.

I have organized the findings into four categories, or themes Each section has a story or stories that illuminatethe theme. In order to make the stories more interesting, more naturalistic, and more engaging, I included dialogue. I remember the conversations I had with each of these students and have field notes of student quotes and reflections that support this memory. Whether the conversation happened exactly as it appears in this applied project is more problematic because I did not audiotape conversations. But, I have multiple sources of data, collected systematically, that support these interpretations. But whether the stories happened word for word as they appear in this applied project is not the goal of the arts-based researcher. Arts based research should be assessed by the usefulness of research, and not its mimetic qualities; we should ask whether it "illuminates important qualities" (Barone & Eisner, pg 100).

## Constructing a Memoir: Generalizability and Validity

I realize my role in becoming a responsible researcher is to pay attention to the generalizability and validity of my findings. When I think about the generalizability of this research, I think it is addressed in how I view, you, the reader as a co-participant. This applied project is hopefully the beginning of dialogue, not the end. You, to use the

plural, become an audience and you bring your own experiences to your readings. Collectively, you construct a variety of new meanings while filling in "the gaps". Again, how the audience "fills in the gaps" is part of the research. My hope is that is work becomes part of a conversation where teachers can add on their knowledge and continue the discussion.

Additionally, I think the data is generalizable because I have paid attention to the elements of structural corroboration (Cahnmann & Siegesmund, in press). Structural corroboration asks if there "is sufficient information to sustain a clear argument through the dimensions of description, interpretation, evaluation, and thematics" (Cahnmann & Siegesmund, in press). I have made attempts to clearly describe each story in detail and interpret what the meaning of that occurrence may be. In my evaluation, I have asked myself to identify the "educational goodness" of the situation. In other words, I tried to explain why the reader should care that I am writing about this instance. Finally, I have organized chapter three into subheadings that reflect themes in this research project. As I mentioned earlier, I could not include every story or every child. I have chosen one story to tell that illustrates the themes that I feel were most dominant, meaningful, and worthy of further discussion.

Thinking about these research elements, I found that my applied project could be seen as a memoir. In writing a personal memoir, an author reflects about events from their past and shapes them into a story. This is different from a personal narrative, which recounts events in an author's life. The difference between a narrative and a memoir lies in the element of reflection (Calkins & Oxenhorn, 2003). In reporting the findings of this

research, I included narrative aspects, but reflected on the events to make the findings generalizable to the audience.

In order to assess the validity of this research, I asked Bryna Bobick to be an external auditor. Ms. Bobick spent time in the classroom while I was teaching this unit. She read my report and commented. She checked the findings to see if they "rang true" and for verification that these events happened.

## Creation of a dialogue

The following chapters contain my reflections on the experiences at Eighth Avenue Elementary School. I hope that you will be inspired to integrate art and writing in your own classroom, be it an art or general education class. As you reflect on your practices, you respond to this research. Together, our writing then becomes a dialogue that aims to understand this phenomenon.

## Chapter Four:

## Learning with and from students

Thus far, I have discussed why I think visual art should be included in literacy instruction and how I think this should happen. In this chapter, I discuss some of the outcomes of what happens when a first grade class engages in a unit that combines art making and writing. The lessons plans found in Appendix A of this applied project include what happened in the classroom, not what I planned to happen. Therefore, I will not go into detail about what I did in the classroom. Rather, I will tell a few stories that I feel illuminate common themes of student outcomes in the classroom. The themes fall into four categories:

1. Connecting visual art and literacy instruction teaches students to see a relationship between disciplines.
2. The importance of viewing artmaking as knowledge expression.
3. Artistic thinking can be a road to language.
4. Making room for student choice helps us get to know our students.

**Figure 2: Students' completed books at school exhibition**

1. **Connecting visual art and literacy instruction teaches students to see a relationship between disciplines**

Corinne is a self-directed and focused first grader. She knew she wanted to create a memoir about her cousin's football game from day one. At the top of her "List it/Sketch it" is a vignette of her and her friends cheering at her cousin's football game. The day we began the images to go in our books, Corinne immediately began working on a drawing of that game. Shortly after we began working, Corinne raised her hand asking for a marker to outline her drawing. I looked at her drawing of a small figure—her cousin—in the center of the paper with a football beside him. The drawing was far from looking as it does now. What is now filled with details and color was once negative space.

I sat to conference with Corinne about her work. Her response was short and to the point—much like her drawing. "I went to my cousin's football game".

"I bet that was fun. Can you remember anything else about that night?"

Corinne responded with a single nod, but no comment.

"Let's look at the picture of the birthday party again" I said. I grabbed the Carmen Lomas Garza's image *Cumpleanos*.

"This is a picture of a birthday party. But, did the artist only draw herself at the party?"

"No" Corinne responded.

"What else is there? What else can you tell me about this picture?" I asked.

"It's a family. There's a piñata. I see birthday presents and cake. And it's sunny outside" Corinne responded as she pointed to details in the work.

"Good. There is a lot going on in this artwork isn't there?"

"Yeah. And I see that she is blindfolded."

"Good. Now would this painting have been as interesting if there were not these details?"

Corinne shook her head.

"We have no idea how this work started out" I replied. "But we do know how it looks finished. Maybe she started with a picture of just herself and then added onto it. Artists sometimes add on to their work to include more details, especially if they are trying to tell the story with their picture. Would you like to include more visual details in your drawing so that it tells a story?" I asked.

Corinne nodded enthusiastically.

"What else can you remember?" I tried again.

Another shrug.

At this moment I realized the difficulty of the memoir unit. I wanted students to include details in their artwork and writing, but sometimes it is hard to remember. The details begin to blur. My role as teacher was more that showing Corinne how to overlap images; my role was to help Corinne remember. I tried a new approach.

"Ok. Close your eyes. Imagine you are at the football game. Your cousin is on the field playing. What did it feel like? Were you excited? Nervous? Happy? What was the weather like? Who else was there? What were you doing while he played?" I asked questions, hoping to help her to visualize that night. "Can you remember more now?"

Corinne nodded and I left to conference with another student. Later in the class, I returned to Corinne's table. Her drawing was much more detailed; she added stadium bleachers, cheerleaders, coaches, and fans. She very carefully outlined her drawing, and added color.

**Figure 3: Corinne's final drawing**

Once she had completed her drawing and was happy with the outcome, she began writing her story. At the end of the lesson, Corinne's story read as follows:

> *I went to my cousin's football game, and he was the king. I felt happy and it was cold, so I put on my coat. I played at the playground. Every boy wanted his autograph.*

Later, Corinne and her classmates had the chance to write more about their drawings. Corinne was ahead of the class, as most students had not begun their stories yet. Shortly after the mini-lesson, Corinne raised her hand to signal that she was finished for the day. I sat down to conference with Corinne.

"How is it going with your writing?" I asked.

"Good," she replied. Corinne read me her piece, pointing to each word as she read it aloud.

"Wow! You have included some of the details from your drawing in your writing. I really enjoyed hearing how it was cold outside and that you were happy. Those are great details. Now, do you remember how you added details to your artwork to make it more interesting and to make it tell a story?" I asked.

"Yes...like the birthday party" Corinne replied. She remembered.

"You revised your artwork. Writers use a similar process; they add details when they revise their writing. You can add to your writing like you added to your drawing" I explained. I left Corinne to work and wondered how she would respond to adding onto her writing. Her memoir was already developed for a first grader. But, I felt that she could add more and thought that this was a good opportunity to teach how the artmaking and writing processes are similar.

Later in the class period, I returned to check on Corinne's progress. Corinne had added sentences to her writing and demonstrated a willingness to revise her writing similar to the willingness she displayed when she revised her artwork. Corinne appeared to see a similarity between the two processes.

There is no way for me to tell whether Corinne transferred her knowledge of the artistic process and applied it to the writing process. But, that was not my goal in this applied project, and I did not share this story with you to show that transfer happened. My goal, rather, was to show that we must explicitly teach for transfer by making the similarities between disciplines explicit to students. Transfer will *not* happen unless we

make it explicit. Corinne did not immediately begin adding to her writing when she heard the instructions. But, she did acknowledge the similarities between the disciplines when I made them explicit to her. The probability that Corinne will see a connection between the disciplines is unlikely unless a teacher makes the connections explicit in her teaching.

Seeing connections between disciplines is important for two reasons. First, cognitive science predicts that students will have to apply different knowledge sets to solve problems in the future (Freedman & Stuhr, 2004). Success in life will depend on our ability to make connections in our world. Scientists solve problems by drawing on knowledge sets from the sciences, math, history, and art. Historians use their knowledge of science, math, and art to solve problems within their discipline. We can no longer view knowledge as "discipline specific" if we want our students to be able to solve the problems of tomorrow. It is important to realize that knowledge transfer is essential, but does not happen automatically. But, in the art room we can teach for it. Teachers can use art to make connections between disciplines explicit as artworks have inherent connections to other disciplines—especially language.

Second, it is important to make learning connected because is deepens students' understanding of complex ideas, in this case revision. Revision is a method that both artists and writers use. It is a method that we learn in first grade, and continue to learn about and develop for the rest of our lives. One of the outcomes of the writers workshop and art classroom is that we introduce concepts, such as revision or memoir, that students will be learning about for the rest of their life; we create life long learners (Wood Ray,

2001). By exploring this skill through more than one form of representation, students gain exposure and deepen understanding of a complex task.

2. **The importance of viewing artmaking as knowledge expression.**

As I approached Jon to conference with him about his memoir, I watched him as he huddled over his desk. One by one, he carefully drew raindrops on his paper.

"How is it going with your drawing?" I asked. As usual, I tried to refrain from asking a student to label what he/she has drawn. I feel as though it undermines the work they are doing visually; Jon may not have the words to label his drawing yet.

But Jon was eager to put words with his image. He told me his story. "This is me and my dad. We are on our way to the motorcycle place. It started to rain when we were riding and we had to pull over and get something to drink."

"Wow. I am glad you were safe." I responded.

"It was fun. I was happy to see my dad because I don't get to see him much since he moved away." Jon replied. We talked briefly about his work before Jon huddled back over his paper and worked on his raindrops.

While most other students in the class started writing their memoir that day to go with their image, Jon did not have a chance to start on his writing. He was very concerned with drawing each raindrop in pencil first, then outlining each one with a marker, and then coloring each raindrop. Because of the nature of this unit and our schedule, Jon had to pick back up on this piece two weeks later, when he then wrote a story to go with his drawing.

*I have a motorcycle. AJ and me went to the motorcycle place.*

*I saw my dad's friends. We went to the store. I got a drink.*

*I got back on my motorcycle. I went home and went to bed.*

As I read Jon's story, I was surprised to not read about the rain and hear more about Jon's father. Admittedly, it is not an ideal situation for Jon to be writing about a work he created two weeks ago—two weeks is an eternity to a first grader. But, this was something I anticipated and to make to make up for this factor, I had students share their drawings in pairs before they wrote. In our think-pair-share sessions, Jon talked again about the rain and the happiness to see his father. It was clear that he did not forget. Jon's writing could have been more robust had he included the qualities present in his drawing into his writing. I wondered why he had not done so.

**Figure 4: Jon's completed drawing**

Jon's drawing, on the other hand, is packed with details. There are several red and black raindrops that are falling from a cloudy sky. There are four figures riding

motorcycles along a yellow road, moving in the direction of a building. The repetition of the raindrops and their ominous scale creates a feeling of darkness in the work. The raindrops have obviously taken a long time to draw, and was a very tedious endeavor for a first grader. However, the raindrops are not what the story is about. The story lies on the yellow road. Jon could have drawn the road black or grey, as one would expect the color of the road to be. But he made an artistic choice to color the road yellow. The yellow road is in contrast to the dark raindrops because of its use of such a bright color. This makes the viewer's eye focus on the lower half of the composition, where Jon has drawn himself, his father, and his friends on the motorcycles. A viewer could interpret that Jon is reflecting on a happy time in his life, despite the inclement weather conditions, because the figures are located on a bright road.

Jon never put the robustness of his drawing into language, but this does not mean he was not thinking robustly. Jon communicated the emotions and qualities of his memory visually. This is an intellectually stimulating and sophisticated task, perhaps even more so than working in language (Dewey, 1934). Therefore, assessing Jon only on his writing, may not be a fair way to assess Jon. His writing does not convey emotion or included sensory detail. It does not use "spicy words" or have an interesting lead (both are objectives for this lesson). Even though it did not come through in his writing, I knew Jon was thinking about this memory in detail because of his drawing.

Assessing the artwork as knowledge expression is important on two levels. If Jon was not given the opportunity to create his drawing, or Jon's teacher did not take the time to assess Jon's art, we may assume Jon was incapable of complex thinking. Or worse, we would have lost his voice, as we would not know the full story he was communicating.

As we widen our epistemological views, we can acknowledge the form of thinking Jon chooses to communicate in. In our assessment of students like Jon, we can credit their visual expression, as they demonstrate their capabilities of complex and intent work—of *cognition*. This high level of cognition was not observable through Jon's writing, only through his images.

Our next step with students like Jon is to keep providing them with opportunities to work in aesthetic forms of representation and then help them move this knowledge into language. Currently, images are used in language arts instruction as a tool to help students gain mastery of language. According to this line of thinking, as students' mastery of language increases, the need for working in images decreases. However, thinking through art should not diminish and ultimately disappear after first grade. Rather, we should be continuously refining and developing our ability to communicate ideas through more than one form of representation.

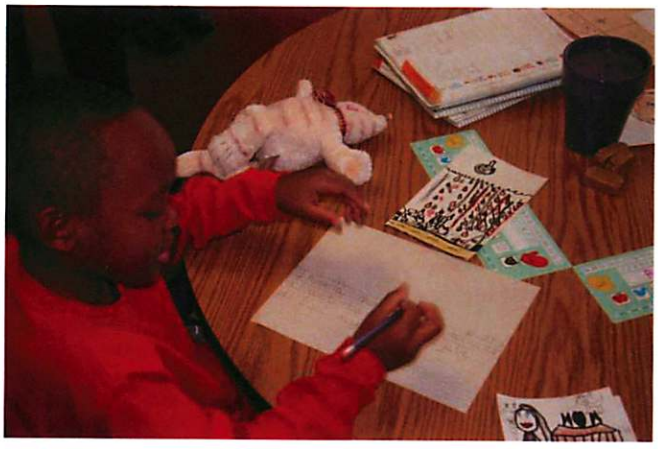

**Figure 5: Jon writing from his drawing**

3. **<u>Artistic thinking can be a road to language.</u>**

A goal of mine in designing this unit was to capitalize on the connections between the art and writing disciplines to get students to engage with art AND language on a

deeper level. After working with the first half of the unit, and seeing students like Jon, I did not feel that this was happening. But, I decided to the way to get to deeper language was to form deeper relationships between the students and their artwork. Teachers must help students form a relationship with their artwork, for in this relationship we can travel the road to language (Heidegger, 1954).

My Reflections Lead to My Revision

Initially, my plan was to repeat the same lessons for the second half of the unit. Students would draw another memory, and then write about that memory. But, the first lesson did not yield the results I was expecting; perhaps it was a reverse "illustrate your drawing" assignment that I discussed in chapter two. Perhaps it was too superficial. After assessing the work from the first lessons, I decided I wanted to take the unit in a different direction. Jon was not the only student that struggled translating his visual image into language; there were others. Overall, the students were telling wonderful stories and there were the occasional few (like Corinne) that were being reflective. But for the most part, I did not feel that students were thinking about the impact of these events on their lives; the language was not coming from within. After getting to know the students, I knew they were capable of doing so.

I had to think about how I wanted to get these six year olds to write from within themselves. This was overwhelming, as I still struggle with this myself. Asking first graders to write about how a memory made them into the person they are is daunting task; a task I did not feel ready to undertake. However, asking students to associate feelings with their memories is realistic *and* reflective. Associating feelings with

memories will add a reflective element and turn personal narratives into personal memoirs (Calkins & Oxenhorn, 2003). This became an explicit objective for the next few lessons. I wanted students to be more reflective—i.e. include more emotion—in their writing. I knew the way to do this was to get them to go deeper and connect more with their artmaking. But, how?

I began by thinking about my art education theory. It was Pestalozzi who suggested that the way we are in relationship to our surroundings is through close observation of nature, and the way to form this relationship is through drawing (Siegesmund, 2005). Pestalozzi (1801) theorized that when we look, observe, scrutinize, revise, and draw, we become emotionally connected to our environment and our work. This theory inspired the change for the second portion of this unit.

I began the second half of the unit by having students write about another memory. Their stories were general "I went to the zoo and then I went home" stories; they were similar to the stories from the first half of the unit. In the following lesson, rather than having students draw an illustration of that memory, the students and I focused on self portraits. We "zoomed in" on our memories to reflect on our emotions. Before beginning our self portraits, we read our second stories. I asked the students to think about how their memories made them feel, and to show that emotion on their face. Students drew their faces from close observation in a mirror, and were pushed to show the emotion they associated with their memory in their self portrait.

This was not an easy task. The class worked very hard on their self portraits. The students experienced the difficulty that is "seeing". Drawing what you see, and not what you think you see, is an achievement of the mind (Siegesmund, 2000). After the self

portraits were complete, students went back into their writing to revise. I pushed the students to add the emotions from their self portraits into their writings. As a class, the works were much stronger the second time around. The following vignette is how one student responded to my revised lesson.

Moving beyond our first response

I watched Paul as he drew two dots on an oval shape on his paper. He looked up at his face in the mirror. He looked back at his paper and erased the dots, and redrew two football shapes. Next, he drew an "L" shape for a nose, looked in the mirror again, and made a line to connect the "L" into a triangle. Finally, he drew a big U-shaped smiley face for a mouth and added hair and ears. He looked closely as he drew everything, and I captivated by how closely he observed. When Paul felt satisfied with his self-portrait, he raised his hand to get a marker for the next step of the project.

I sat down next to Paul. "Great work Paul. I was watching you draw and I was very impressed at how you looked in the mirror to notice details in your face. Can I hear the story that you wrote before you drew this picture?"

Paul nodded and began reading. "I went to the fair and rode a horse and my dad rode the other horse." That was all there was to Paul's story.

"Ok. So this is a memory about you and your dad. Now, tell me about how your drawing is showing the emotion of this memory." I expected Paul to say he was "happy" because he spent time with his dad and he had drawn a huge smile on his face. But he did not.

"I was worried because I thought my dad might fall off the horse." Clearly, Paul was taking the time to closely observe his face, but he was not showing the emotion he associated with this memory. His self-portrait was not aligning with the story he was telling me.

"So, this is a picture of you worried?" I asked. Paul thought for a moment and shook his head.

"This is me happy," Paul said. For a happy self portrait, Paul's was excellent. I told him so. I asked him to look in the mirror and compare a happy face and a worried face. We looked at the differences together. Then we practiced excited, worried faces. We talked about the differences between happy, worried, and excited. I challenged Paul to think about how this memory made him *happy*, since that was they way that he had drawn his face. But I did not suggest that Paul redraw his self portrait in any way.

A few minutes later, I returned to check on Paul. When I arrived at his table, I was surprised to see a big change in his drawing. Rather than a smiley mouth, Paul had drawn a mouth in the shape of an "O" to look worried and excited. I hadn't expected Paul to erase his whole mouth and start again. I told him I admired his courage; I find one of the hardest things to do is to erase something I spent time drawing. When I told him I wished I could be as brave as him, his face lit up.

"Do you have any more details that you would like to draw? What is inside your mouth?"

Paul looked. I watched him as he drew teeth on the bottom and top of his mouth.

"Can you see your teeth on the top and bottom?" Ms. Folkerts asked. Paul opened his mouth to check.

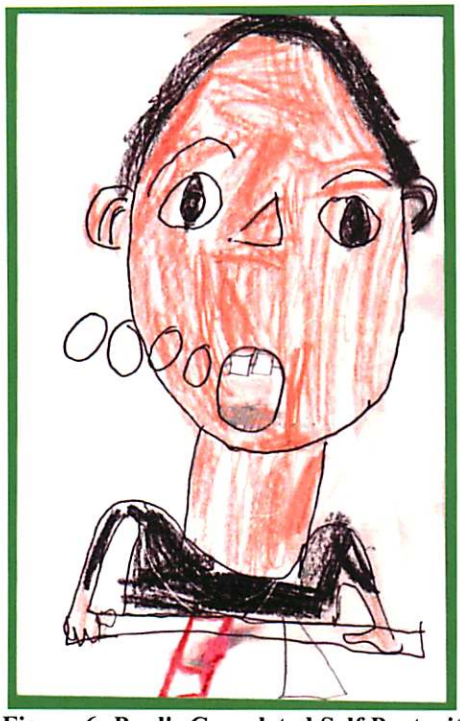

**Figure 6: Paul's Completed Self Portrait**

"No," he responded. He erased his bottom teeth. He opened his mouth again and drew his tongue. From the beginning to the end of this drawing, Paul drew, looked, erased, and redrew the features on his face. He demonstrated a resistance to give up, and a dedication to draw what he saw, and not what he thought he saw. As I observed him drawing, I noticed that he was not easily interrupted or disturbed.

Paul was not the only student who was like this. Looking around the classroom, almost every student was looking carefully at his/her face and then recording their observations through drawing. In the next lesson—a few weeks later—Paul and his classmates were asked to reflect on their drawings in language by revising their writings. Ms. Folkerts and I stressed using emotive words in our focus lesson. Almost every student in the class reflected on their work and memory by adding emotions to their writing. Paul's story was revised from the one that he read me to the following final:

*I went to the fair and rode and horse and my dad rode the other horse and I was excited. I was also frightened. I thought he would fall.*

Relationship to our Work: "The Road to Language"

My goal in telling this story was not to say that Paul's drawing *caused* better writing. Rather, the observational drawing helped lead to a relationship with the work that can be observed and assessed. I suggest there are three ways that we can notice a student is engaged with their work. First, Paul's willingness to revise is evidence that he was in this relationship with his work. My other two criteria come from Siegesmund's work with the Performing Arts Workshop of San Francisco. He suggests that when students pay attention to detail and move beyond stereotypical, they are more deeply engaged with their work (Siegesmund, 2006). Paul's attention to detail is obvious in his drawing; the teeth, tongue, ears, etc. Additionally, he moved beyond the stereotypical response in his artwork—from drawing a "smiley face" to draw a "worried" face.

Martin Heidegger (1954) explained the connection between being engaged in artmaking and language. Being in the realm of visual thinking, by using qualities to communicate, is a cognitive activity that is pre-linguistic. Heidegger (1954) suggests that being in this nonlinguistic thinking "space" is one way that we arrive at robust language. This road to language may be an easier path to language for some students who are resistant to engage with language, like Paul and Jon. In the second half of this unit, Paul started to move down this path. With more experience, he may be able to travel this path with greater ease and sophistication. This path can be traveled repeatedly. Once we have made the journey from the nonlinguistic image to the word, we find it fruitful to return to

this nonlingustic space and repeat the journey. Therefore, when we try to get our students to move from image to word, we should provide opportunities for students to be deeply connected to their artwork.

Below, I have included a few self portraits and writing to show how students included emotion.

**Figure 7: Writing: I went to my brother's house. My sister was there. We jumped on the trampoline. My brother jumped and my sister jumped with me. It was amazing! My dad said, "Marisela it is time to go!" but I didn't want to go. My brother jumps high and I was excited and delighted.**

**Figure 8: On Halloween there was a haunted house. I went in there was a spooky Ghost. He was tall. I was excited! I said, "I want my mom!" I was excited. I wanted to get to the house.**

## 4. Making room for student choice helps us get to know each other.

An implicit objective of the writing workshop is that we learn how to work together (Ray, 2001). We are in relationships with one another, and thus learn how to be

civic minded people. But how does this happen? I found that by using art and writing in relationship to one another in a classroom, new relationships were formed.

Allowing for Student Choice

"Are there any questions?" I asked. Immediately hands flew in the air.

"Can we draw first?"

"How many memories should we write down?"

"Are we taking home our books today?"

These are but a few of the questions students asked after the mini lesson which introduced the new writing workshop unit of study: personal memoirs. My team teacher and I had just introduced the concept of "List it/Sketch it" a brainstorming sheet that has two columns—one labeled "List it" and the other "Sketch it" (Wolfgang, 2006). Students can brainstorm ideas for their work—in this case for their memoirs—by either writing or drawing.

I began answering their questions. "You can draw or write first. You may choose how you wish to work...you can either think of several memories to record, or you can think of several details for one memory. This is also your choice...and, no, we will not take home our books today because we will not finish them for a while. Today, we are just brainstorming ideas to put in our books. Ok, let's quickly review the instructions." Twelve first graders helped me review the instructions for the writing workshop that day before I assigned them to do their work.

Students went to their working places and I immediately I felt a buzz fill the air of the classroom. I looked around and saw a pair of students on the rug, talking their ideas

over with each other. Other students were huddled intensely over their paper, working individually. One girl walked to get the Spanish/English dictionary to reference words she needed help with. All the students were engaged in being authors.

I walked from table to table, trying to get to know the students and offered feedback. I tried to pay close attention to the ways in which the students approached the problem of creating a memoir; this was a chance to get to know their working style. As I walked around the room, I was struck by the number of ways that students were conceiving the problem of creating a personal memoir. Charles drew a scene, wrote a few words, went back and added details to his image, and then started working on a new memory. Corinne and Dana would draw a memory, and then write about it. David and Kevin wrote and then drew. These students show the most popular working style, which was to move interchangeably between writing and drawing. This became what I expected as I went from student to student to conference. But, as I made my rounds, Kelly's List it / Sketch it caught my eye. Her page was nearly filled with writing, but there were no drawings. I pulled up a chair so that I can talk with her one on one, because I was intrigued by her working method.

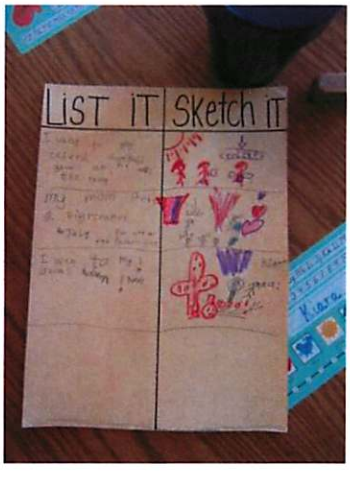


**Figure 9: A typical student's list it/sketch it**

"How is it going with your writing, Kelly?" I asked.

"Good. I went to the beach with my family. Can I read you my story?" When Kelly finished reading her story, I responded.

"Wow" I said. "I can tell that you are a great writer. I know you care about this piece because you have included so many details and describe this memory so thoroughly."

"Yes," she replied. "I love writing. Sometimes during writer's workshop I fill up two or more pages."

"That's great, Kelly" I responded. We talked more about her writing, and we brainstormed more details she could add. I encouraged her for the hard work she was doing and got up to conference with another student.

Seated at the same table, beside Kelly, was Suzanne. Suzanne's List it/Sketch it looked quite different from Kelly's; Suzanne had only drawings on her page. She had drawn several vignettes: a trip to the beach, her soccer game, cooking with her mom, and her first day of school. Her drawings filled both columns. I was very curious to talk to Suzanne; I was intrigued that two girls in the same room at the same table could approach a problem so differently. I pulled my chair beside Suzanne's and sat down to conference with her.

"These drawings are looking great, Suzanne. Can you tell me about what you are working on?" I asked. Suzanne goes into detailed explanations of each image. When she finishes, I replied.

"I really like the way you have thought of several possible memories to work with." Suzanne and I talked about where she could add more details to her drawings. I

told her I was appreciative of her hard work and that I understood what hard work drawing can be.

We began this unit by giving students choices. When students are offered choices, such as subject matter or working style, they are able to get to know their own personal writing processes—a goal of the writing workshop (Ray, 2001). Kelly realized that she thinks and brainstorms ideas in language, while Suzanne begins with images. By allowing students to choose forms of representation, students became aware of their writing processes, and teachers became aware of the students' strengths. Having choice helps us get to know ourselves and get to know each other, as we share ideas and working styles with our peers as Kelly and Suzanne did. As we get to know each other, we form relationships with our writing peers. These relationships are essential to create a community of learners and writers where we feel comfortable to take risks.

## The Author's Chair

I picked up bits of broken crayon off the floor while counting down from five. Another fifty minutes had flown by and it was time for our first graders to clean up their materials. In between each number I called, I spoke with Corinne, the cheerleading queen. I wanted her to share her writing and drawing that day.

"Five," I called, signaling to students for them to put the finishing touches on their work. Corinne, as usually, was ahead of the game. Her area of the table was spotless. "Corinne. I am so proud of the hard work you have done for your memoir. Would you be willing to share today during sharing time?" I wanted to give students the option not

to share; I tried to always leave room for choice. "Four," I called in a slightly quieter voice. A few students remained working while others got the hint to start cleaning up.

I turned back to Corinne, who was all smiles. She nodded her head and said that she would share.

Her smiles were contagious. I smiled. "Great! Thank you so much!" I turned my head to the class. "Three," I said in an even quieter tone. This caused a small frenzy among the students as they rushed to the crayon bin and nudged their neighbor to hurry. Those students who were "clean" helped their peers, rather than sitting and waiting.

I turned back to Corinne. "Why don't you hold onto your drawing and writing and practice reading it while the rest of us finish cleaning...two," I said to the class very quietly. At this point everyone helped to put writing in folders crayons and markers in bins. They knew sharing time did not start until everyone was ready.

"One" I whispered as everyone returned to their seats and waited to see who would get to sit in the coveted author's chair. It was actually frightening to see a class work this much like a well-oiled machine. No matter how chaotic the work time or cleanup time was, sharing time was when it all came together. Many students referred to sharing time as their favorite time.

One by one, I called tables to the rug as Ms. Folkerts brought the brilliantly painted author's chair to the front of the class. Once all the boys and girls were seated I sat in a small chair beside the author's chair and told the class that Corinne would be sharing that day. "Corinne, you can come sit in the author's chair" I invited.

Corinne shyly came forward with her drawing and writing clutched in her small hand. She settled in "the chair" and looked at me for instruction.

"Ok. Today we talked about adding to our writing to make it match up with our drawings. Remember we talked about what kind of story we would expect to see with my drawing?" The focus lesson for the day was writing about our images and the goal was for students to write stories that were related to their images. "Corinne, show the class your drawing," she held up her drawing for every one to see. There were ooh's and aaaah's in the crowd.

"Boys and girls, what kind of story do you think Corinne wrote?" A sea of twelve first graders looked closely at the picture. Some got on their knees to examine. I looked at twelve faces that were intensely studying the image before them

"Her memories" someone suggested. I chuckled to myself. While I was happy that this student recognized the unit of study and remembered that we were writing about our memories, I wanted to push the discussion further.

"Ok. Yes, we are writing about our memories. But what makes Corinne's memory different that Suzanne's memory. What is this memory about?"

"Football!" some shouted.

"Ok, that's more detailed. Football. Why do you say that?"

**Figure 10: Share Time**

Students pointed to details and called them out loud. Students offered compliments. Some like the cheerleaders, others liked the football. What was striking was that every student was looking at her work. Every one was interested in what Corinne had been working on.

"Boys and girls, let's hear Corinne read her story to you" I suggested as the discussion slowed. I turned and looked at her. I nodded that it was time for her to share.

Corinne looked at her page and read it aloud. "I went to my cousin's football game, and he was the king. I felt happy and it was cold, so I put on my coat. I played at the playground. Every boy wanted his autograph. His name is Brisen. I got to ride in a van. He made a touchdown. I wanted to cheer with the cheerleaders," she read. She pointed with her finger to each word she read aloud.

"Ok, let's give Corinne a ring, ring," Ms. Folkerts said as she pretended to pick up a telephone. All the students recognized the prompt and also picked up make believe telephones. "Soundin' good," we replied in unison.

"So what did we find in Corinne's story?" I asked the class.

"It was about football" a student excitedly replied.

"Her writing was about her drawing" another said.

"Ok, so we can all agree that Corinne did a great job. We would expect to see this writing beside this drawing in a book wouldn't we?"

The students nodded and I had to say my goodbyes. It was getting harder to leave each time. The relationships that I was forming with these students were strong. I could see that the relationships among the students were strong as well; this was evident in the

way they worked together to clean that the eagerness they had to hear each other's memoirs.

When Corinne shared her writing and her artwork, she was putting herself out there and sharing her thoughts, feelings, and creation with her peers. And her peers were attentive and curious to see her work. Not only did they care about their own memoirs, they cared about hearing their peer's memoirs.

"Worlding a World"

Heidegger writes "the work makes public something other than itself" (pg. 19-20). Artworks have a "thingly" quality to them that makes them exist, but there is something else that makes them "works of art" (Heidegger, 1971). This "something other" is the experience that the audience/viewer has; it is the "worlding of a world" (Hiedegger, pg. 25). The artwork's ability to world a world is its ability to take the viewer to another time and place; to be "in" the artwork.

When Ms. Folkerts' students heard and saw Corinne's writing and art, they were for a moment, seeing the world as Corinne saw it. When students see and hear personal works of writing and art that a peer has created, they gain new perspectives. Seeing the world from another perspective is one way to build community and create empathetic understanding in the classroom. The civic minded person is one who can identify, empathize, and relate with others. Civic mindedness is not something that we can measure on a standardized test, but is something that is essential to be an active member of society. It is essential to be a positive being.

Building Bridges

Both teachers of art and teachers of writing are concerned with creating community in the classroom because it promotes risk taking, which can lead to empathetic understanding. Teachers of writing and teachers of art can learn from each other. The creation of civic minded citizens happened through an integration of art into the writing workshop. Through the creation of a works of art, we are "worlding a world" for our peers to enter (Heidegger, 1954, pg. 25). But this world cannot be entered with out time to share and time to talk, something that does not always happen in the art room. Civic mindedness does not happen when the artist is alone in her studio; we must share our work. We do not learn to work together by creating a color wheel; we learn to be civic minded as we create personal meaning in our work. Being in relationships with our peers is a result of putting our personal work in a public space for others to see and respond to.

An arts-based writing workshop is unique in the fact that it presents opportunities to create individuals that are civic minded. Through creating art and sharing it through our writing in a community setting, such as a classroom or a workshop, we do not learn about civic mindedness, we practice civic mindedness.

Civic mindedness and cooperation skills are essential; to create students with these skills is the purpose of education. School should be a place where students learn how to be in relationships with others, for we work, create, and live in community settings. A democratic nation will flounder if its citizens are not trained to work, respond, and relate to one another. An arts-based writing workshop can teach for such a learning outcome as it presents opportunities for students to choose and to work in

*various* communicative methods to create personal meaning and share that meaning with others.

## Chapter Five:

## Reflections

One of the reasons a writer writes, a poet composes, or a painter paints is to gain clarity, or to construct meaning. Our urge to create stems from a yearning to make sense of our world. As we create to in order to understand, we gain insights that will help us in our future quests. For this reason, the role of dialogue and reflection are crucial to the teaching profession. While we learn so much from students, we also learn through the process of writing and reflecting about our experience.

In writing this applied project, as I tried to capture an experience and share it with you, I gained insights about my teaching that will help me perfect and improve my practice. But, these insights can also be shared with you, reader. These insights I will share are but one piece to a larger puzzle, but will hopefully guide you if you choose to integrate art and writing in your classroom.

Sometimes insights do not come immediately; often, we gin insight through experience and reflection. This may take days, weeks, or even years. I remember the day I had an insight about this experience that changed my perspective. It was November, 29th, a few weeks after I had completed this unit and it happened in JoBeth Allen's Writing Pedagogy class at the University. In this class, I was asked to write differently than I have ever been asked to before; I had to write a *memoir*. I had to write what I asked the students in Ms. Folkerts class to do. Writing my memoir required a vulnerability that I did not appreciate until I experienced it for myself.

Perhaps what was even more difficult than writing my memoir was sharing my memoir with the class. On November 29th, the day I had planned to read my memoir, I

felt sick. Part of me is still that second grader who feels insecure about her writing, and about reading aloud to her peers. Being asked to do both together is still somewhat unnerving. All day my palms were sweaty and my throat was dry. I kept thinking back to the students in Ms. Folkerts' class. I had a deeper respect for them as I was experiencing what we asked them to do.

As I read my memoir, I had that same shaky voice that I picked up in second grade. But, this time, my attitude was different. I was not sharing my writing because I was being punished; I was sharing because that's what writers do. What a difference this makes. While I was still nervous and emotional as I read my memoir to my class, I considered it as a way for me to learn about my writing. After I shared, several of my classmates came and talked to me after class, commenting that they liked my piece. And I responded to them about their writing. We had a connection that was a result of us "putting ourselves out there".

As I mentioned, I use this experience to strengthen my writing. But more importantly, I used it as a way for me to learn about my teaching. The experience gave me an understanding and *appreciation* for the students in Ms. Folkerts' classroom. I think that the insights gained through the writing in this applied project would not have come unless I had experienced for myself what I asked these students to do. When I saw Paul erase his drawing, I could relate. As an artist, I find it HARD to erase something I have spent time on. I could also relate to the struggle that Jon experienced with his writing, as I struggle as a writer as well. And, when Corinne read her memoir to the class, I was impressed and thought it was great. But not until I shared and read my own

memoir did I fully appreciate the courage that she had and the bond the students must have felt with her.

So this is my advice to you—for you to experience what you require of your students. Classroom teachers, if you are interested in integrated art into your writing workshop, make art! Art teachers, if you are interested in integrating writing into your art room, write! This experience will help you gain insights into your teaching as you experience what you ask your students to do. Not only will this experience help you empathize with your students, I also believe it will affect how you view your students.

Literature on the writing workshop suggests one key to a successful writing workshop is to speak to your students as humans, as writers, and as artists (Ada & Campy, 2004; Ray, 2001; Ray, 2006; Samway, 2006; Wilson, 2006). In order for me to share my memoir after the unit was completed, I was working on the memoir as I taught in Ms. Folkerts' class. The students and I were literally exploring how to solve the same problem: how to write a memoir. It came naturally for me to view the students as co-participants because I was experiencing the same things they were. I think this was additionally important to establish that classroom community atmosphere I spoke about in the last chapter.

Finally, I would like to speak a little to the impact that this experience had on the artmaking. While this particular experience occurred in a general classroom, I believe it would work equally successfully in an art classroom. But surprisingly, much of the criticism of a unit that integrates art and writing comes from art teachers. Many art teachers are apprehensive to use language in their classroom for fear that art making will be compromised because time is dedicated to writing. Artists also resist translating visual

meaning into language because they feel it "diminishes the appreciation of the visual experience" (Siegesmund, 2005, pg. 20). While writing does take class time and teacher support, I do not believe that art making will suffer because time is devoted to writing. In fact, I feel the opposite is the case. When we translate visual meaning into language, we reflect on the process, meaning, and/or technique. This act helps us gain new insights and ideas about our work (Siegesmund, 2006). We are then able to go back into our work and revise, making our visual art stronger and more powerful. We have also gained knowledge that will help is in the creation of new work (Siegesmund, 2006). Just as teachers should reflect on their practice in order to improve, artists need to reflect on their images to improve.

## Summary and Significance

Thinking in qualities before thinking in language is a natural and human experience. Our first contacts with the world are sensory. Allowing students to express themselves through aesthetic forms of representation can help improve the educational experience by helping students relate knowledge between disciplines, engage with their work, and relate to one another. On the more superficial, but still important, level, this will help us pass tests and meet top down requirements. On a more meaningful level, providing access to aesthetic forms of representation will ensure that every student voice will be heard. Allowing students to voice their opinion—whatever the means—demonstrates that we care that they have something to say. I believe that in a "democratic society everyone's voice and perspective is important" (Holbrook, pg. 146).

Focusing only on one form of expression in any classroom—general or art—inevitably restricts what students can say. Classrooms should be set up like small democratic nations, where everyone can participate and have a choice in their learning. Success in our society demands that we can encode and decode language. All teachers—art included—should help students meet this goal. We can meet this goal by using aesthetic forms of representation, which will help students engage with their work to get to a deeper writing exprience and help them realize their experiences are valued and important.

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# APPENDIX A:

# LESSON PLANS

# Unit: Personal Memoirs
# Lessons for Grade 1

**Aim**
Individual Development and Identity

**Goal**
For students to use artmaking and writing to create a personal memoir.

## Lesson One: List it / Sketch it

**Objectives**
Students will:

1. look at a memoir painting, and notice what they see.
2. listen to a personal memoir, and notice what they hear.
3. create an idea bank with details about their memories, using both images and words.
4. consider multiple ideas for their memoir.

**Georgia QCC's**

**Grade: 1**
**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing
**Standard:** Uses imagination and immediate environment, including family, home, and surroundings, as sources for ideas.

**Grade: 2**
**Topic:** Connections
**Standard:** Applies concepts and ideas from another discipline and its topics as sources of ideas for own artworks. (See Introduction: Matrix.)

**Georgia Performance Standards: Language Arts**

**ELA1R6 The student uses a variety of strategies to understand and gain meaning from grade-level text. The student**
a. Reads and listens to a variety of texts for information and pleasure.

**ELA1W1 The student begins to demonstrate competency in the writing process. The student**
k. Begins to use a variety of resources (picture dictionaries, the Internet, books) and strategies to gather information to write about a topic.

**Methods**

**Exemplar/ Illustrated Storybook**
Carmen Lomas Garza *Cumpleanos*

**Essential Questions**
- What are some memories that are important to you?
- What feelings do you associate with that memory?

**Motivator**
Play a simple memory game

**Vocabulary**
**Personal memoir:** a work of expression that is created by and about the memories of the artist or author. A memory has the author's or artist's feelings about the memory.
**Small moment memoir:** a personal memoir about a small moment in your life, such as getting dressed
**Details:** information in the story that describe the colors, setting, time, people, etc.

**Procedures**
- **Focus Lesson: Personal Memoirs (20 minutes maximum)**
  - Memory game: a short game to get students to think about memory.
    - Begin by asking students if they remember what they had for breakfast. Gradually move to events that happen longer ago. Ask about special memories, and get a few students to share.
  - Discussion of memory: ask students why it is important that we remember things? How do we remember things?
  - Introduce vocabulary word: **personal memoirs.** Discuss that artists and authors often create works about their own very special memories. These are called personal memoirs. Can you think of a special time in your life that you remember that you want to share?
  - Sharing the Art/Writing:
    - Distribute a reproduction of *Cumpleanos*, by Carmen Lomas Garza, to each pair of students. As students are looking at the work, read the story *Cumpleanos*, also by Carmen Lomas Garza in both English and Spanish. Have students point to things in the painting as they hear them in the story.
  - Noticings:
    - What was the memory the author wrote about?
    - How did she show that memory to you? Students can list noticings about the memoir. Introduce another vocabulary word: **details.** The artist/author could have written a one sentence explanation of the event. How did she stretch it out into a story? She used details.
  - As a class, brainstorm possible ideas for memoirs. Create a list for all students to see.
- **Independent Work Time: List It / Sketch It (25 minutes)**

- Explain the process of the List it/Sketch it idea bank: students will think of several memories from their past. They can either "list" words or "sketch" images about their memory or memories. It is Ok for students to draw and write, as well. Teachers can share their own list it /sketch it idea banks.
- Students work: conference with students as they work, pushing them to included details in their brainstorming.

- **Share Time: Small Group Share (15 minutes)**
  - Divide the class into groups.
  - Have students share their ideas with their group. Ask students to suggest ways that students could strengthen their stories and urge them to write or sketch the suggestions. The teachers can also make suggestions and should definitely share his/her own List it / Sketch it worksheet!

**Materials**
List it / Sketch it worksheet
Pencils
Crayons

**Resources**
Reproductions (one large and several small) of *Cumpleanos En Mi Familia*, by Carmen Lomas Garza
Teachers completed List it / Sketch it worksheets

**Assessment**

| Objective-Student will: | High Performance | Average Performance | Low Performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| look at a memoir painting, and notice what they see. | Student looks at painting and points to details while hearing the story. | Student looks at painting while listening to story. | Student does not look at painting (does not participate) |
| listen to a personal memoir | Studentlistens to the exemplar memoir and can identify the vocabulary word personal memoir. | Student listens to exemplar memoir but is unable to define identify the vocabulary word personal memoir. | Student does not listen to the exemplar memoir and cannot define identify the vocabulary word personal memoir. |
| create an idea bank with details about their memories, using both | Student lists memories with several supporting details, using both image and words in their list. | Student list memories, but uses few or unconnected details to support their memory. | Student lists no details. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| image and word | | | |
| consider multiple ideas for their memoir | Student lists three or more memories—OR—lists several details for one memory. | Student lists one or two memories—OR—lists a few details for one memory. | Student does not list any memories. |

# Lesson Two: Draw a Memory

**Objectives**

Students will:

1. use overlapping in the creation of their visual memoir.
2. associates specific details in artworks with feelings.

**Georgia QCC's**

**Grade: 1**
**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing
**Standard:** Uses a variety of art materials and techniques to model, construct, and compose original artworks. (See Introduction: Matrix.)

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding
**Standard:** Recognizes how artists overlap shapes to create a sense of depth.

**Georgia Performance Standards: Language Arts**

**ELA1W1 The student begins to demonstrate competency in the writing process. The student**
**a.** Writes texts of a length appropriate to address a topic and tell a story.
**c.** Rereads writing to self and others, revises to add details, and edits to make corrections.

**Methods**

**Exemplar/ Illustrated Storybook**
Carmen Lomas Garza, *Cumpleanos*
Teacher benchmarks

**Essential Questions**

- How can I tell the story of my memory using both art and writing?

**Vocabulary**
**Overlap:** when some objects in a work of art are in front of or behind others
**Space:** a sense of depth or area in a work of art.
**Details:** information in the story that describe the colors, setting, time, people, ect.

**Procedures**

- **Focus Lesson: Overlapping (10 minutes)**
  - Review from last week: Who remembers what the word for a work of art or writing that is created by and about the memories of the artist or author? Review noticings
  - Tell students they will begin their own memoirs today, and just like Carmen Lomas Garza, they will get to create the images and words for their own book. Show and discuss the first two pages of the teachers' benchmark memoirs
  - Demonstration and Discussion of vocabulary words: **overlap** and **space. Overlapping** can be shapes, objects, or colors. Show overlapping by drawing; also do a kinesthetic example of overlapping so students can see it in two ways. (visual, auditory, and kinesthetic examples)
  - Tell students that overlapping is a way that artists create a sense of space in their art work, and can help artwork look more realistic. Tell students they can use overlapping to create a drawing of their memory.
  - Go over methods: draw in pencil first, then trace in black marker, then color with crayons. Stress the importance of erasing lines. Relate to writing: if you misspell a word, you erase it to spell it correctly. If you mess up on your drawing, it's ok to erase before you outline in black marker. Tell students they will write their story after they draw, and they should be thinking about how to tell the story with their drawing. Tell students to draw big and overlap.
- **Independent work time: Creating Personal Memoirs (40 minutes)**
  - Images (25-40 minutes)
    - Draw in pencil (push students to overlap, fill the page, and use lots of details)
    - Outline in black marker
    - Color with crayons
  - Writing (0-15 minutes)
    - Students who finish their drawing may start writing their memoir.
- **Share (10 minutes)**
  - Some students share their artwork and point to how they used overlapping.

**Materials**
Completed List it / Sketch it worksheets
Pencils
Black Markers

Crayons
2 sheets of 8X5 white paper for each student

**Resources**
*Cumpleanos*
Teachers' benchmarks

**Assessment**

| Objective-Students will: | High Performance | Average Performance | Low Performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| use overlapping the creation of their visual memoir. | Student uses overlapping in more than one area of their artwork. | Student uses overlapping in one area of their artwork. | Student does not use overlapping in their art work. |
| associates specific details in artworks with feelings. | When asked, student can associate most of the details in their artwork with feelings and emotions. | When asked, student can associate some of the details in their artwork with feelings and emotions. | Student cannot associate any details in their artwork with feelings or emotions. |

# Lesson Three: "Spicy" Words

**Objectives**
Students will:
1. write a memory that uses "spicy" words.

**Georgia Performance Standards: Language Arts**

**ELA1R5 The student acquires and uses grade-level words to communicate effectively.**

**ELA1W1 The student begins to demonstrate competency in the writing process. The student**
**a.** Writes texts of a length appropriate to address a topic and tell a story.
b. Describes an experience in writing.

**Methods**

**Essential Questions**

- What is an important memory to me?

**Procedures**

- **Focus Lesson: "Spicy Words" (10 minutes)**
  - Quickly review: what is a memoir?
  - Teacher demonstrates writing her memory using "spicy words". Spicy words are more descriptive and exciting (example: elated rather than happy).
- **Independent work time: Writing about another memory (35 minutes)**
  - Students work on their memoirs. They can either start a new memory, or add to the memory they begun earlier.
  - Teachers conference with students
- **10 minutes: Sharing Time**
  - Select a few students to share their writing. Ask students to notice spicy words in the author's piece.

**Materials**

Pencils
Writing folders
Paper

**Assessment**

| Objective- Student will: | High Performance | Average Performance | Low Performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| write a memory that uses "spicy" words. | Student writes a memoir that uses several "spicy" words. | Student writes a memoir that uses some "spicy" words. | Student did not attempt to use any "spicy" words in his/her memoir. |

# Lesson Four: Face of Emotions

**Objectives**

Students will:

1. associate specific details in artworks with feelings and emotions about their written memory.
2. draw a self portrait that shows an emotion.

## Georgia QCC's

**Grade: 1**
**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing
**Standard:** Uses a variety of art materials and techniques to model, construct, and compose original artworks. (See Introduction: Matrix.)

**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing
**Standard:** Uses imagination and immediate environment, including family, home, and surroundings, as sources for ideas.

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding
**Standard:** Describes feelings in response to looking at artworks.

## Georgia Performance Standards: Language Arts

**ELA1W1 The student begins to demonstrate competency in the writing process. The student**
**a.** Writes texts of a length appropriate to address a topic and tell a story.
b. Describes an experience in writing.

## Methods

**Essential Questions**

- How can I show emotion in my visual memoir?
- How can I communicate my feelings about my memory?

**Vocabulary**
**Self portait:** a image created by the artist of some aspect of her/himself

**Procedures**

- **Focus Lesson: Emotion in Self Portraits (10 minutes)**
  - Quickly review from last week: what is a memoir?
  - Reflection time: Ask students about the second memory stories they started. Have a few students share what they were writing about.
  - Discussion of memoirs: Memoirs tell about the author's memories, but they also reflect on those memories by including emotions. Read my benchmark and stress the emotional aspect of my memoir. Next, show my self portrait that communicates an emotion.
  - Discussion of self portraits: Tell students that the first drawings were images containing several details of their memory. Today they will be zooming in on their faces to show the emotion associated with their memory.
  - Students return to seats and read over stories. Distribute mirrors. Students can practice their emotion faces in the mirrors. Distribute facial

expression worksheets. Students can see the various ways people draw emotions.

- **Independent work time: Drawing Self Portraits**
  - Teacher models how to draw the shape of the head, neck, eyes, and nose. Students are encouraged to look in the mirrors to find the shapes in their faces. Students draw their mouths various ways to show expression in their portrait.
    - Draw in pencil first. Stress erasing lines students do not want.
    - Outline in black marker the lines students want to keep
    - Color with crayons
  - Teachers conference with students: Stress to draw what they see, not what they think they see
- 5 minutes: Clean Up
  - Collect art materials
- **Share (10 minutes)**
  - Select a few students to share their self portraits. Ask what emotions were conveyed in their self portraits.

**Materials**
Completed List it / Sketch it worksheets
Stories started on 10/13
Mirrors
Pencils
Black Markers
Crayons
1 sheet of 8X5, white paper for each student

**Resources**
Teachers completed benchmarks
Facial Expression worksheets

**Assessment**

| Objective- Students will: | High Performance | Average Performance | Low Performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| associate specific details in artworks with feelings and emotions about their | When asked, student can associate most of the details in their artwork with feelings and emotions. | When asked, student can associate some of the details in their artwork with feelings and emotions. | Student cannot associate any details in their artwork with feelings or emotions. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| memory. | | | |
| draw a self portrait that shows an emotion. | Student draws a self portrait that displays an emotion | Student draws a self portrait. | Student does not draw a self portrait, refuses to participate. |

# Lesson Five: Writing about Art

**Objectives**
Students will:
1. compose a written expression of the memory that was visually communicated.

**Georgia Performance Standards: Language Arts**

**ELA1W1 The student begins to demonstrate competency in the writing process. The student**
**a.** Writes texts of a length appropriate to address a topic and tell a story.
**c.** Rereads writing to self and others, revises to add details, and edits to make corrections.

**Methods**

**Essential Questions**
- How do my writing and artwork relate to one another?

**Vocabulary**
**Details:** information in the story that describe the colors, setting, time, people, ect.

**Procedures**

- **Focus Lesson: Writing memoirs that are related to our images (10 minutes)**
  - Review: Who remembers what type of memoir they are working on?
  - Demonstrate the connectedness of images and stories by looking at various images and asking students what type of story they expect to read about their images. Read stories from teachers' benchmark memoirs and ask what kind of image they expect to see.
  - Connect art and writing: Tell students that just like they revise their artwork by erasing lines they do not like and adding details they want, they will be revising their writing. They can replace boring words with spicy words, or they can add on to what they have. Artists and writers work at different paces. Those who have not started to write can start a story that is related to their drawing today.

- Think, pair, share: Distribute first art pages. Ask students to look carefully at what they made. Have students choose a partner to talk about their drawing with and how they will use their writing time.

- **Independent Writing Time (30 minutes)**
  - Students write their memoirs
  - Teachers conference with students about memoirs
- **Share (10 minutes)**
  - Select students to share by reading their writing and showing their image.

**Materials**
Completed drawings from 10/10
Pencils
Paper

**Resources**
benchmarks

**Assessment**

| Objective- Students will: | High Performance | Average Performance | Low Performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| compose a written expression of the memory that was visually communicated. | Student writes a memoir that is related to the image created. | Student writes a memoir. | Student does not write a memoir. |

# Lesson Six: Revising our Writing

**Objectives**
Students will:
1. Revise their memoir to include emotion.

**Georgia QCC's**

**Grade: 1**
Topic: Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding
Standard: Describes feelings in response to looking at artworks.

**Georgia Performance Standards: Language Arts**

**ELA1R5 The student acquires and uses grade-level words to communicate effectively.**

b. Recognizes grade-level words with multiple meanings.
c. Identifies words that are opposites (antonyms) or have similar meanings (synonyms).

**ELA1W1 The student begins to demonstrate competency in the writing process. The student**
**a.** Writes texts of a length appropriate to address a topic and tell a story.
b. Describes an experience in writing.
**c.** Rereads writing to self and others, revises to add details, and edits to make corrections.

**Methods**

**Essential Questions**

- How is my memoir reflective?
- How can I make my memoir better?
- How does my memoir express an emotion?

**Procedures**

- **Focus Lesson: "Emotion Words" (10 minutes)**
  - Quickly review: what is a memoir?
  - Teacher demonstrates writing her memory using emotion words. As a class, brainstorm a list of emotion words for students to use in their memoirs.
  - Remind students that their drawings and writings should be related. Distribute the self portraits and the second memoirs. Students can included the memoirs from their self portraits in their stories.
- **Independent work time: Revising my memoir (35 minute)**
  - Students revise their memoirs by adding emotion words. Students refer to their self portraits to remember what emotions they were feeling.
  - Teachers conference with students
- **10 minutes: Sharing Time**
  - Select a few students to share their writing. Ask students to notice emotion words in the author's piece.

**Materials**
Pencils
Writing folders
Paper

**Assessment**

| Objective- Student will: | High Performance | Average Performance | Low Performance |
|---|---|---|---|

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Revise their memoir to include emotion. | Student adds emotion words to their memoir. | Student adds to their memoir, but does not included emotion words. | Student does not revise memoir. |

# Lesson Seven: Publishing our Books

**Objectives**
Students will:
1. collage endpapers for their books using an assortment of patterned and solid papers.
2. assemble the various pages of their memoir into accordion book.

**Georgia QCC's**

**Grade: 1**
**Topic:** Artistic Skills and Knowledge: Creating, Performing, Producing
**Standard:** Uses a variety of art materials and techniques to model, construct, and compose original artworks. (See Introduction: Matrix.)

**Topic:** Critical Analysis and Aesthetic Understanding
**Standard:** Recognizes how artists overlap shapes to create a sense of depth.

**Methods**

**Exemplar**
Teacher benchmarks
Assorted Eric Carle books

**Essential Questions**
- How do I want my cover to look?

**Vocabulary**
**Collage:** an art technique which involves pasting paper onto a surface

**Procedures**
- Preparation: before the lesson begins, teachers can:
  - type stories for students so they can paste them into books
  - fold paper into accordion book format
  - copy student handwriting and cut into puzzles
- **Focus Lesson: Publishing our Books (10 minutes)**

  - Tell students that their writing has returned from the publishers and today students will be assembling their writing and images into a book form.
  - Introduce collage. Demonstration of collage as well as discussion of vocabulary word. Show examples of end papers that have been collaged in Eric Carle books. Stress that end papers cover the entire cover of the book.
  - Go over instructions for independent work time:
    - Create end papers
      - Front end paper is original collage
      - Back end paper is assembled puzzle of their own writing.
    - Glue pages inside accordion books. Be sure that the correct image and writing go together.
    - Glue on string and buttons.

- **Independent work time: Finishing our Books (40 minutes)**
  - Students collage front cover
  - Students assemble puzzle and glue on back cover
  - Students glue their two drawings and two writings into their book.
  - Teachers help students hot glue their buttons and string onto their books
- Sharing Time: due to a tornado drill, we were unable to share our books with the class☹. But, the lunch room was turned into a large exhibit, where the students books were hung for all too see.

**Materials**
Folded accordion books (one for each student)
Patterned paper for collage
Tissue paper for collage
Construction paper for collage
Glue sticks
Copies of student's writing (handwritten) cut into an 8X5 puzzle
Completed, typed students' stories (2 for each student)
Completed students drawings (2 for each student)
Small strips of paper for students to sign their names
Black Markers
Crayons
Buttons for each student
String for each student

**Resources**
Eric Carle books
Teachers' benchmarks

**Assessment**

| Objective-Students will: | High Performance | Average Performance | Low Performance |
|---|---|---|---|
| collage endpapers for their books using an assortment of patterned and solid papers. | Student created an interesting and original design which filled most of the space of their cover and using a good variety of papers. | Student create a cover that used half or less of the space of their cover, and used one or two types of paper. | Student did not fill much of their paper or did not collage a cover. |
| assemble the various pages of their memoir into accordion book. | Student assembles pages in their book in accurate order. They can associate drawing and writing that correspond together. | Student glues pages in their book, but puts drawings and writings together that do not correspond. | Student does not glue pages in their book. |

# APPENDIX B:

# PPRINCIPLES OF UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR INSTRUCTION

# Principles of Universal Design

| Elements of the Writer's Workshop (Ray, 2001) | Universal Design for all learners | How this was applied in my project |
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| **Reading that supports writing** | • Culturally diverse literature<br>• Books on tape | There are several Hispanic students in Jennifer's class; latina's appreciate reading memoirs that are grounded in experiences similar to their own (Samway, 2006). I choose *Cumpleanos*, a painting and story by Carmen Lomas Garza about her birthday, because I felt all the children could relate to a birthday. In *En mi Familia,* one of Garza's books, the painting *Cumpleanos* is reproduced with both Spanish and English versions of the corresponding story. To introduce memoir, I read the English and Spanish version to the students. I also had a large (poster size) reproduction of the painting for all students to see. Additionally, I had several small (8 X 10) reproductions of the painting for students to hold as I read the story. Students shared a copy of the painting with a partner, and pointed to things they heard. I chose the work of Garza because students could see one author who explored the genre of memoir through two forms of representation: painting and story. I also had a variety of child's memoir books for student's to refer to if they wanted additional examples.<br>**Benefits for all:** Hispanic students benefit from hearing the story in their native language, but English speakers may also learn some Spanish. |
| **Mini lessons, whole group "focus" lessons** | • Use a variety of teaching strategies (visuals, props, | As I mentioned above, I used a range of teaching |

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| | kinesthetic activities, books, etc)<br>• Time for brainstorming (both whole class and individual)<br>• Think, pair, share | strategies, such as the use of images and words, to explain the concept of memoir. To explain the concept of overlapping (lesson two), my team teacher and I used physical examples to show overlapping with our bodies, in addition to talking about and drawing overlapping. Appealing to different types of learners reaches a wider audience than simply delivering the instruction in words only.<br>Additionally, this unit had several opportunities to brainstorm. We brainstormed possible ideas for memoirs as a class. The first lesson was devoted to students brainstorming ideas for their memoir, which they were able to share with a small group and receive and give feedback. **Benefits for all:** For students who had no idea what they wanted to share in their memoirs, brainstorming gave them ideas and feedback. Brainstorming also helped the students who knew what they wanted to do, because it introduced them to ideas they might not have thought of; these students then had to choose their topic and utilize critical thinking skills. |
| **Study Units** | • Relate to student's personal lives and community<br>• Allow for student choice | It was difficult for me to allow for student choice in the unit of study. The curriculum planning team selected the study of memoir because it would relate to the student's personal lives; every one has memories. |

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| | | **Benefits for all:** Sharing our memories is a way to get to know our fellow community members, but also reflect on our own experiences and get to know ourselves. We are more aware of others and ourselves. |
| **Choice** | • Allow students to choose different forms of representation<br>• Allow for students to choose topics or genre | The idea of choice is crucial in the creation of a community of learners. Students were able to choose whether they wanted to work in images of words to brainstorm their ideas for memoirs. Students were also able to choose what they topic of their memoir would be, rather than the teacher stressing a theme for everyone's memoirs.<br>**Benefits for all:** Students who struggle with the language based nature of schools were given an alternate form of expression. Students who are successful in schools, were given the option to develop another form of literacy. |
| **Environment** | • Designate classroom areas (quiet, talking)<br>• Make sure all students can access materials easily<br>• Students can sit, lay on the ground, at tables, choice of location | Ms. Folkerts, the team teachers, and myself encouraged students to make themselves comfortable in the classroom space. Some students sat in front of the word wall; others worked at their tables. Students were able to choose the most comfortable working environment for them. Each table had the same materials on it, so all students had equal access.<br>**Benefits for all:** All students become aware of their own unique working style. |
| **Time to talk about writing** | • Small group time vs. whole | Talk is essential to the success |

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| | group time (some students may feel uncomfortable sharing with a large group—have a balance of these)<br>• Choice: students can choose whether they want to share | of a writer's workshop (Ray, 2001). There were opportunities for students to talk with a partner before writing/drawing. There were also times when we brainstormed ideas as a whole class. When I shared my own memoir, I talked about my thought process and decision making.<br>**Benefits for all:** The talk helped students who were less directed in developing their ideas. The students who were more directed could further develop their ideas. |
| **Time to write** | • Opportunity for revision<br>• Sometimes have prompts, other times no prompts<br>• Always have time | This unit allowed the students to create, whether it be images or writing, every day.<br>Revision was an integral part of the work time. For their images, students worked in pencil, before outlining in black marker. This allowed them to changed their initial marks before finalizing their decisions with a black marker.<br>Additionally, students were able to revise their writing. In some instances, students added onto their stories. In others, they would replace ordinary words with "spicy" words. **Benefits for all:** Revision is something all artists and writers engage in, and therefore benefits all students as they undergo realistic, everyday processes of writers and artists. |
| **Conferences** | • Ask questions dependent on student; try to get to know them individually<br>• Stay on schedule to get to | Because of the collaboration between one classroom teachers and four preservice teachers, it was |

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| | everyone | realistic that every student got to conference with a teacher every day of the unit. I realize this is not a realistic expectation for most teachers, as classrooms are overcrowded and busy. However, part of the success of the unit can be attributed to the fact that students had one on one instructional time. **Benefits for all:** Even if students do not get to conference every day, it will be beneficial that they get any one on one time at all as they learn from a more capable peer (Vygotsky). Additionally, it was beneficial to me as a teacher to meet with the students. I learn a lot from them! It is a symbiotic relationship. |
| **Materials** | • Have a good variety<br>• All students have equal access to all materials | In the art room, the materials a teacher gives the students play a big role in the outcome of the finished pieces. I aimed to give students materials that would help them to develop their thinking and memoirs in greater detail and clarity. For example, I distributed big erasers to encourage revision of art work. I had mirrors for the students to closely examine their faces, and draw what they saw. I tried to have a variety of materials to work with, yet monitor when they were distributed. For example, I gave markers to students after they drew in pencil, to ensure they would be using erasers and rethinking the lines they initially drew.<br>I also aimed to give choice |

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| | | in materials, as I know that I have certain materials I preference in my own artmaking. Students could choose between fine tip and thick tip markers, and were encouraged to experiment with them to see the difference between the lines. For the books' end papers, students were given a variety of papers, some printed and some solid, to collage with. In short, I tried to balance between selecting appropriate materials, yet allowing students to choose their own preferences.<br>**Benefits for all:** Students who are more experienced with artmaking were able to use materials they prefer, while students with less experience were given necessary guidelines while being exposed to an array of materials. |
| **Sharing** | • Different size groups<br>• Choice of media<br>• Choice pairs | Sharing was included everyday in the unit. We shared our List it/Sketch it idea banks in small groups. Students shared their images before writing with a partner. Finally, students who wished to do so could share their writing or drawing with the whole class. This allowed everyone a chance to share and receive feedback, and also ensured that students who did not want to share with a large group did not have to.<br>**Benefits for all:** Students who share get positive feedback from their peers. Students who listen learn the role of being in an audience, and hear how other students have approached and solved a given |

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| | | problem. |
| **Publishing** | • Flexibility in the choice of material<br>• Time frame flexibility<br>• Computer lab | We allowed for students to revise their writing (tolerance for error). We also typed the stories for the students, rather than having students rewrite their stories (which can be laborious and boring). |
| **Other aspects of being part of a literate community** | • Present different types of literacy<br>• Allow work to be shared with larger community | The aim of this unit was to present different types of literacy. Being literate means expressing knowledge through different forms of representation (Eisner, 2003). Students told their "story" in images and words, two forms of representation.<br>At the completion of the unit, students were part of a school wide exhibition, where every memoir was exhibited. Being part of a literate community means sharing experiences with others. **Benefits for all:** Students see their work exhibited, and take pride in publishing their work. They also learn about others and community, as they see their work as one part of the whole. |

# APPENDIX C:

# INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPLICATION

The University of Georgia
Office of The Vice President for Research
DHHS Assurance ID No. : FWA00003901

Institutional Review Board
Human Subjects Office
612 Boyd GSRC
Athens, Georgia 30602-7411
(706) 542-3199
Fax: (706) 542-5638
www.ovpr.uga.edu/hso

# APPROVAL FORM

**Date Proposal Received:** 2006-07-25 **Project Number:** 2007-10036-0

| Name | Title | Dept/Phone | Address | Email |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Ms. Rebecca Rose | PI | Art Education<br>Lamar Dodd | 2705 Mall of Georgia Blvd Apt 919<br>Buford, GA 30519<br>706-614-0367 | rsrose@uga.edu |
| Dr. Richard Siegesmund | CO | Art Education<br>Lamar Dodd +4102<br>(706) 542-1647 | | rsieg@uga.edu |

**Title of Study:** Collaborations and Connections in Art Education

**45 CFR 46 Category:** Expedite 6,7
**Parameters:**
Permission of one parent sufficient 46.404
Approved for Institutions with Authorization Letters on File;

**Change(s) Required for Approval:**
Revised Consent Document(s);

**Approved : 2006-09-22** **Begin date : 2006-09-22** **Expiration date : 2007-09-21**

***NOTE: Any research conducted before the approval date or after the end data collection date shown above is not covered by IRB approval, and cannot be retroactively approved.***

**Number Assigned by Sponsored Programs:**

**Funding Agency:**

**Form 310 Provided:** No

**Your human subjects study has been approved.**

**Please be aware that it is your responsibility to inform the IRB:**
**. . . of any adverse events or unanticipated risks to the subjects or others within 24 to 72 hours;**
**. . . of any significant changes or additions to your study and obtain approval of them before they are put into effect;**
**. . . that you need to extend the approval period beyond the expiration date shown above;**
**. . . that you have completed your data collection as approved, within the approval period shown above, so that your file may be closed.**

**For additional information regarding your responsibilities as an investigtor refer to the IRB Guidelines.**
**Use the attached Researcher Request Form for requesting renewals, changes, or closures.**
***Keep this original approval form for your records.***

Chairperson or Designee,
Institutional Review Board