The Art of Illustration
The Columbian Exchange: Creative Stories of Beaufortonians

What are the effects of the First Global Age? Beaufort played a major role in the Atlantic trade; new groups of people interacted, with many consequences and log-term effects. In this social studies unit, students are engaged at a personal level, by integrating academic, visual art and creative writing. As fact and fiction merged into a distant historical period, students brought to life the imagery and characters that were here in the Lowcountry of South Carolina during the Colombian Exchange.

two notes: 1) When implemented at Whale Branch Middle School, the student work was published via Blurb.com, where the book is still available and can be found by searching for "Whale Branch Middle School." 2) the creative writing component, handled by Lisa Annelouise Rentz, is **Real Research, Real History** and is available in this document.

Artists credits: Melba Cooper – visual artist (melbacooper@mac.com 828.506.7559)

Objectives: students will…
1. Engage: Utilize their knowledge of the Colombian Exchange to create a story of a fictious character who played a role in the developing society of Beaufort, SC.
2. Build Knowledge: Demonstrate research skills to the writing process to develop and completed historical fiction character story.
3. Build Knowledge: Gather information from a variety of texts.
4. Build Knowledge: View works of local Beaufort characters by the Gullah artist Sam Doyle.
5. Apply: Write multi-paragraph compositions with a central theme and character.
6. Apply: Brainstorm through thumbnail sketches.
7. Apply: Develop a final illustration using basic design elements.
8. Reflect: Edit the final drafts and make selections for publication.
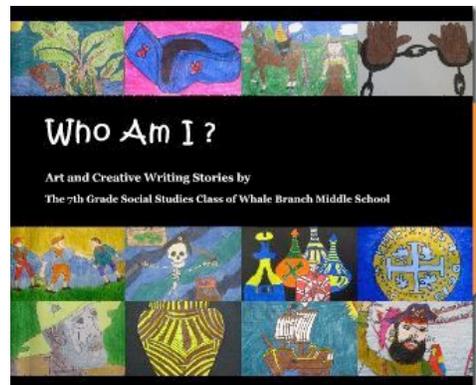
Vocabulary:
Social Studies and ELA: Colombian Exchange, ethnocentric, import, export, balance, mercantilism, enlightenment, scientific method. Students will also be asked to use vocabulary and concepts particular to the subject they write about.
Visual Art: thumbnail sketch, illustration, layout, symbol, background, foreground, contour line drawing, basic shapes, saturated and blended colors, focal point, folk art.

Resources: Library resources, Classroom texts, maps, examples of works of William Johnson and Sam Doyle as examples of local historical illustrators who were inspired by a sense of place, Hormone Jungle (student publication example), Chronicle of American Publications, Pirates: An Illustrated History, Nigel Cawthorne, American Indian, National Geographic, World History Text, Matthew Downer

Teaching Procedure:
Picture the Creative Flow
See also "Student **Illustration Design Problem Checklist**"

Day One
- Talk about the content of the essays. Show the students an example of a self-published classroom book.
- Discuss the purpose of illustration, choose images from student stories, demonstrate drawing methods, make practice drawings.
- Discuss aesthetic styles: Imitative and realistic, Expressionistic and emotionally exaggerated, Abstract and non-representative. Show examples.
- Use visual resources from the texts to look up how their places, people and objects actually looked in the Colombian Exchange Period. Notice costume and detail, background, make the drawings authentic of the period.

Day Two
- Review goals of the project.
- Show students examples of portrait and narrative paintings. We used Gullah artist Sam Doyle and SC artist William Johnson.
- Discuss style and composition.
- Make thumbnail sketches.
- Use stick figures and symbols for possibilities
- Discuss choice of media (colored pencil, mixed media, pen and ink)

Day Three
- Use art language to discuss the compositional considerations of the final drawing.

Day Four
- set deadline for completion.
- Put the finishing touches on final illustration.

Day Five
- Review the process
- students complete self-evaluation and reflection
- Digitize finished products to be used in sharing or publishing the final version.

How to Create an Illustration
materials: drawing paper, pencils, colored pencils, sharpies.

Vocabulary:
1. Illustration: A picture combined with a story that illuminates an aspect of the story. It is both informative and artful.

2. Thumbnail Sketch: small loose drawings that explore possible visual ideas and how to arrange them.

3. Study: sketches that help you understand how things look through close observation of line, shape and details.

4. Shading: using the light, medium and dark tones of a color to show light and shadows.

5. Line variety: using thin/thick and light dark lines to create a visual flow and emphasis in the drawing.

6. Color: choosing colors that work together to create a feeling and mood a well as to record information. Colors can be blended and intensified with controlled application of the media.

7. Background: What is behind your main object.
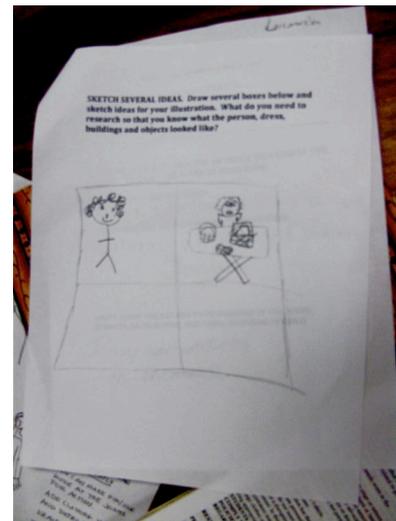
8. Foreground: What is in the front of the picture. Usually the focal point.

9.Design Problem: How you use the elements and principles of design to organize visual ideas. (Line, Shape, Color, Texture, Value, Space, Balance, Proportion.)

10. Folk art: Art that expresses the traditions, images and culture of a particular community or region by a self-taught artist.

To begin the illustration process students should read their stories and determine the following:
- What Is the critical action point of the story?
- Choose several lines that are tied to an action.
- Match the action to an emotional tone. (sad, angry, happy)
- Brainstorm ideas for images and list them on the visual imagery worksheet (next page.)

Brainstorm!

1. Read the your story.

2. An action scene I like is:_____

3. Close your eyes and visualize the scene in your mind. Write down what you see.

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. List the details to be included in the scene: (objects, background, buildings, people, clothing details)

_____

_____

_____

5. Sketch: In the space below draw a small series of boxes. Make thumbnail sketches of ideas, people, objects, places that you think you might want to use in a illustration. These can be simple shapes and stick figures. They will give you a guide to research the visual information for the final drawings.

Hunting Animals for Survival

Story by Meshunia Fields
Art by Marshall Daise

Student Illustration Design Problem Checklist

Create an illustration that is inspired by an critical action point in your story. The image can be a portrait, an interaction, a place, and/or objects. Research the visual information you need to make your illustration represent the time in which the story took place.

1. Make several thumbnail sketches.
2. Choose your strongest ideas and make a sketch. Keep it simple and bold.
3. Make a careful line drawing of your shapes.
4. Add details using textures and shading.
5. Use shading, color blending and rich color application.
6. Emphasize important lines by making them thicker and darker.
7. If needed add a background to your illustration. (optional)
8. Be sure you have a focal point.

The Choctaw War

Story by Jarseri Mitchell
Art by Polo Salazar

Assessment Rubric for Illustration Design Problem

Look at your drawing and evaluate by checking off what you used:

1. Craftsmanship: Media and Techniques
   _____Made a careful drawing
   _____Used color media
   _____Used techniques of thin/thick lines
   _____Used shading, blending, saturated color

2. Design: Visual Organization of Ideas
   _____Made a careful drawing of lines and shapes
   _____Used shading and color blending for rich color
   _____Used a background and foreground (optional)
   _____Added textures and details.
   _____Has a focal point.

3. Creative: Used original ideas to express a scene in the story.
   _____Brainstormed with thumbnail sketches to try out ideas
   _____Related the illustration to the action point of the story.
   _____researched visual information for details
   _____developed a personal viewpoint or style.

4. Task Commitment: Created a finished drawing.
   _____Researched ideas
   _____Receptive to improvements and suggestions
   _____Overcame difficulties and solved problems
   _____Asked for feedback when needed.

Self Evaluation: Answer in complete sentences

What did you learn about illustration and storytelling?

What difficulties did you have and how did you solve them?

What do you think is most successful about your design?

Artist Commentary from Melba Cooper:

Social Studies teacher, Tracy Rentz is a visionary teacher who understands to value of integrative learning in the arts. She conceived of the idea of publishing a book of illustrative stories, motivating this whole unit. She utilized the grant resources and monies to realize a dream that demonstrates that when students are given a chance to "act as professionals", then motivation, involvement, knowledge and quality dramatically increase as a result. They learn to push through frustration to realize their best work.

Tracy describes the emotional moment when she distributed to each child her own copy of the book they had created. She describes the awe in the expression of the child, who gave her a look of incredulity as she ask "Is this my very own book!" and clutched it to herself.

The creation of the publication of *Who Am I?* is a source of pride. Students became vested as they could write about fictious characters that they could imagine lived where they live now. Everyone worked together in a collaborative and cooperative spirit that is more typical of what we find is necessary in the work of the "real world".

Such a project is a large commitment, of both time and money. Tracy spent many hours of her own time entering data, editing, and learning to use the Blurb.com software. Both teaching artists worked a day with her to accomplish the final editing. Tracy raised some of the money needed for the publication. The grant funded the balance. The cost of such a project is an issue. We offer the following thoughts:

- We found no advantage to hardback covers, the paperbacks actually looked better, given the length of the book. They are also $10 less in cost.

- Other spin offs for this unit that can take it to that "professional presentation" level without the publication cost could be:

1. An exhibition accompanied by reading at a school event.
2. A theatrical interpretation in the form of monologues, dialogues or a play.
3. A narrative mural.
4. Creation of a class Power Point Show
5. The creation of a handmade book that could be housed in the library.
6. An in-school publication of the contents.

The Lowcountry Arts Integration Project
A US Department of Education Arts Education
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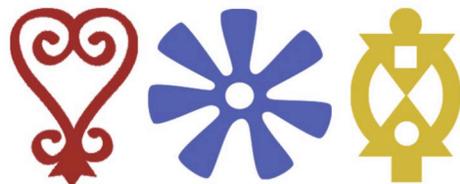
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creative learning + wisdom helps me & lets me help you