

Lesson Plan:
mixed up animal book



Artist:
Andrea Dezsö

Location:
Bedford Park
#4 Train Station, Bronx

Art Work:
Community Garden
2006, mosaic tiles

Grades:
4-6

About the Art:

“The idea of a Community Garden came to me during one of my walks around the Bedford Park Boulevard station in the Bronx. I did not see such gardens in that neighborhood, and started playing with the idea of creating an imaginary one to decorate the walls of this stop on the 4 line. People leaving the neighborhood or coming back to it will see colors and shapes that are different from the ones predominantly found on their streets. Children will find critters and bugs hidden at their eye level among the leaves which they may never otherwise see in the city: a grasshopper, a ladybug, blue and green beetles.

I approached my subject in a playful way, by combining real creatures with imaginary ones and by working with scale: having monumental size plants and bugs next to a cat of more or less regular size. I hope that my garden will delight commuters and inspire them with its playfulness and intense colors.”
- Andrea Dezsö

Activity Objective:

Students will draw and paint animals from memory and imagination. They will follow instructions to create a mix-match animal book. Students will create a cover and a title for their books.

Questions for Discussion:

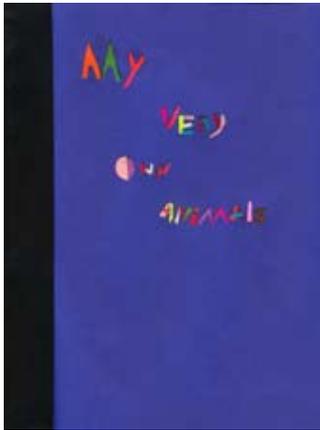
What do you see? Point out animals that you find. Why do you think these animals are so big? Do they look real? What about the cat? Does it look real or like a dream? Why? How is it different from a real cat? Have you ever seen a garden like this one? Why do you think the artist wanted to make an imaginary garden in this train station? How does it make you feel?

Materials:

3-5 copies of page #3 from this lesson plan
construction paper (at least three per student)
scissors
glue
stapler (for the teacher)
pencil and eraser
color pencils or crayons or markers

Procedure:

- Give a demo using a copy of page #3: Draw an animal, looking to the front. The body should line up with the two little vertical lines. The top part of the animal (head, arms, wings) should be in the top half of the dashed line. The bottom part of the animal (legs, tail) should be on the bottom part. If they are going to fill the background let them know that the horizon line (grass, mountains, sea) should be in the bottom part of the paper, while the sky should be the same color in all the drawings (view samples below).
- Pass the pencils, the erasers and 3-5 copies of page #3 to each student. Ask them to draw five different animals from memory, as you did in your demo. Ask them to remember each animal individual features. They could add clothing to their animal (like shoes, a hat, etc.).
- The students color the drawings.
- Pass the scissors. Ask them to cut the drawings through the dashed line, up to where it says stop.
- Give them two pieces of construction paper to make the cover of the book. Pile the five drawings with one construction paper on the front and another on the back. Staple the papers together on the left side.
- Tell them to cut a piece of construction paper in its long half (to make a strip 4.25" x 11"). This is going to be the binder. Fold it in half. Glue it to the part of the book that remains closed, to hide the staples.
- With the rest of the construction paper the students will cut and paste letters to make the title on the front cover of the book. They could also write their names (By _____).



Cover



Mixed up drawings

Extensions:

Students could invent mixed names for their hybrid animals (ex. Chifly or Butterken). They could also write descriptions of the bodies of their animal, dividing them in top and bottom in the book (ex. This animal can fly and have colorful wings (top butterfly) **and** it has two gummy legs and a feathered tail (bottom chicken)).

Closure:

Share the work of the students with other classmates. Let them talk about the various imaginary animal. Ask them questions about bookmaking: Just one person make a book, but how many people can read it? How do you think writers feel when they finally see their books published? There could be a publication of the books celebration, to share with other schoolmates.

New York City

Strands of Art Education:

1. Arts Making
2. Literacy in the Arts
3. Making Connections
4. Community and Cultural resources
5. Careers and Lifelong Learning

National Art Education Learning Standards:

1. Understanding and applying media, techniques and processes
2. Using knowledge of structures and functions
3. Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols and ideas
4. Reflecting upon and assessing the characteristics and merits of their work and the works of others
5. Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines

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