

Relating Children's Visual and Written Expression:

The Fusion of Two Ways of Knowing

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Abstract

In this paper I have written a brief summary of the idea of visual art and writing as independent ways of expression and knowing; then I explain the benefits of combining them together. After that I have written a paragraph on the process of creating visual art and writing. Then, I write about my own experience and understanding of creating and merging these two forms of expression. Finally, I write about how I could bring this into a classroom of young students and how I could change my approach to better fit older students as well.

Combining Two Ways of Knowing

Literacy and visual literacy are more closely related than some may think. Although one is about reading, writing and speaking, and the other is about making and understanding art; both are ways of knowing -a way to understand and a way to be understood. A person can express thoughts and ideas through both visual images and words. By combining these two ways of knowing students will not only be able to experience a deeper and richer form of communication, but they will also be able to better appreciate other peoples ability to do so. This is why fusing these two forms of expression together is beneficial.

Creating Using Two Ways of Knowing

There is a process present when creating both visual art and writing. During the processes, stages are often ongoing, overlapping, and repeated. Although they differ in some ways, creating written word and visual images both require inspiration and a vision for a finished product. During this first stage, students will decide on what they want to communicate, investigate, or represent and decide why and how they want to do so (i.e. what medium of visual art, and what style or form of writing). Then, both will require drafting, critical revisions, and final refinements. It is important that the critical feedback is given throughout creation, rather than at the end before it is too late to change. Finally, the last step is exhibiting and presenting the work.

Internalizing the Fusion of Visual and Written Expression

I totally agree with what this chapter has to say about visual art and writing both being ways of knowing. These are my two of my favourite ways of knowing (which is why Visual Arts Ed is my major and Secondary Literature is my minor). I also agree with how it says that it would be beneficial for students to combine these two ways into their work. I know for myself, I did not realize and fully appreciate art as a way of knowing until my highschool career. Up until then, I only enjoyed drawing and viewing art that I thought looked “cool” (as in monsters and twisted letters that is common in

graffiti). I look back on my old sketchbooks and almost *none* of my artwork had any content behind it until I reached grade eleven. Then in grade twelve I started to take school more seriously and I joined the AP art program because of the encouragement of my two art teachers. In that class, I really started to explore arts ability to communicate a narrative. The concentration that I chose to explore in the AP class was the story of the stages of my highschool life from grade nine through to twelve. Before that I just “liked” art but after that class I was hooked.

It was also not until my grade twelve year that I realized how valuable and important english class was. I learned then that the ability to read, write, and speak effectively and efficiently was a priceless skill that is used in *all* aspects of life. To me, it just makes sense to make art with a reason then write about, or at least speak about the reasons for making the art.

Bringing This Marriage of Expressions Into The Classroom

The beauty about writing and drawing, is that we do it at all ages and throughout most (if not all) of the grades in school. The idea of writing and drawing out stories or ideas could be done at any grade level. However, I would change my expectations of the complexity of the stories and the depth of the feelings and meanings behind them accordingly to age levels. For example, I could get students from k-3 to illustrate their favourite foods or out of school activities on a piece of paper and then write an explanation of what it is and why they like it. For high school students we could go a little deeper and get them to represent a particular emotion felt during a pivotal time in their lives. I would give them directions to use one of or a combination of the genres of art (i.e. expressionism, impressionism, symbolism, or realism). I could grade them on their ability to represent whichever genre they chose. Then for the write up I would expect them to be able to explain the form they used as well as the content behind their work.