

Arts Assessment For Learning

VISUAL ARTS — 4TH GRADE

REFLECTION: PRINTMAKING: COLLAGRAPHS PRINTS

Without judgment, describe what you did. Just the facts:

Students were learning to write goals in an art journal. They started out the year not knowing how to use a rubric or give evidence for the decisions they made. They started by learning how to write a strategy for adding onto their printing plate. When they needed to revise their work, students were told to write in the Art Journals and explain what needed revision and how they planned to do it. They also needed to show evidence for the changes. Students were given a rubric to understand the criteria as the project moved toward completion. Formative assessment (peer and self-reflection) took place through the various lessons. The students were motivated to give themselves levels because they were working towards being able to print. Students had to justify being a level three or four in all the goals in order for their collagraph plate to be ready.

What went well?

Students got into the routine of reflection and gave honest feedback about what they and their partner needed to do to make a successful collagraph plate.

What was so-so?

Some of the higher-level students are just adding on, so they are not reflecting much in their writing. Some of the lower-level students still struggled to give evidence. Sometimes students will write a goal but not actually work on that goal.

What was the most challenging part of trying this?

Capturing the evidence was a problem, because when students engaged in writing they lost some of the art vocabulary they used in verbal discussions. Also, students need prompting to give evidence for their observations. Sometimes students don't follow through with what they say they are going to do. It is difficult to find time to have meaningful reflections and have time to revise in one class period. Although I feel that using rubrics help students understand how to move their artwork forward, I don't see big results the next week that can be captured through a photograph. It may take several sessions to clearly see improvement.

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What was the impact of this strategy on student learning? (specific examples)

The Art Journal developed into a routine that most students responded to. They made a handmade journal this year and are proud of their covers. Usually the goal setting is different every week to keep things fresh. For instance, sometimes there is partner talk or a rubric to fill out. Using the visual rubric strategy, the students did make some changes to their plates. Karen V. changed her hands so that they were bending to show more movement. On the other hand Jeremy just added, he is a top student and doesn't revise much. That doesn't mean he is not learning. He is one of the students that drew ideas in his journal so I had a visual about what he was trying to accomplish. One day we spent the day making a visual rubric with students working in teams to develop all the levels.

Although the technical quality of my videos was inconsistent, they clearly demonstrate that lower functioning students such as Benny, understand levels and goals, but still struggles to accomplish the goals in their own artwork. For instance, Benny knows that he has to add a shoe but makes it a rectangle, which does not fulfill the Shape goal.

What new insights or understandings are forming as a result of this experience? (share with group)

Making the visual rubric was fun for the students even though it took a whole class. We made it after about 3 weeks of working on the collagraph plate. I think the timing for introducing different reflections, takes practice on my part. I would like to make the art journal more dynamic with drawing, but if I send it home some students might lose it or not bring it back. Maybe, I should have drawing days, especially since some of the students find writing difficult.

The whole process works because students want to create a print from their printing plates; it is not just getting an artwork done to a level of completeness. There are specific goals that need to be met and students can achieve them, even if some students take time and revise. I find this is the most successful use of formative assessment.

How do the results of your action plan inform your inquiry question?

Students demonstrated more independence in selecting their collagraph plates and they sought advice from their peers. In general they seemed less dependent on teacher feedback. The Art Journal made their learning visible.

Documentation to bring (student work, photos, writing, teacher journal, etc.):

Videos, journal writing, rubrics