

Arts Assessment For Learning

VISUAL ARTS—KINDERGARTEN

REFLECTION: ROBOT STAMPS – CAREFUL COLORING

Without judgement, describe what you did:

I created a visual rubric containing examples of careful coloring as well as techniques that I thought would lead to student improvement.

Students colored a few shapes with one color.

We looked at coloring samples and assessed them as a class.

I discussed the qualities of careful coloring (even, within the shapes) and demonstrated how to do it (slow, finger coloring). I used the visual rubric as a reference.

Students used smaller copies of the visual rubric to rate their coloring.

Students finished coloring their shapes.

What went well?

I noticed that students really understood the goal. The student almost immediately used the language of the assessment. “I am coloring slow like a turtle”. “I am coloring like ‘A’”. Students were engaged in the process. I noticed a big improvement in the students coloring. It seemed that students were reflecting on the qualities of their work, rather than just enjoying the physical sensations. The criteria gave me something I could clearly speak about. I also noticed the students using the criteria to informally comment on other classmate’s work.

What was so-so?

Some students circled all of the qualities. Some just wanted to color in the rabbits and the turtles. However, even in these cases, I feel the coloring improved, even if the assessment tool wasn’t used properly. I think most students were more aware of their actions and work. A few of the student’s comments to each other could be considered mean.

What was the most challenging part of trying this?

It is difficult to know what will make in difference in student work. Teacher experience might be the best guide for developing solutions and suggestions for improvement. In this case, I knew that I could point out scribbling to students, but what would I say to them to help the remedy it?

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

I noticed that the scribbling basically disappeared. Students were more careful. Students seemed to enjoy filling out the assessment tool. As I watched the students, I noticed their working habits improve; they slowed down and were coloring carefully.

What questions were raised for you as you implemented the assessment practice?

How can I gradually bridge this tool into longer and deeper assessment tools?

Can kindergarteners develop a culture of reflecting on their work?

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

Solutions

I found that most students could see the gaps in their work. However, sometimes students don't have the experience to know how to fix their work. For example: A student could recognize that their work is unclear, but they might not know how to clarify their work. This is where my experience as an artist and educator can be helpful. I might suggest outlining the drawing with a black marker. Or erasing or painting over parts that are not essential to the overall work.

Tool Design

Mixed responses: I found that creating tools that allow for varied responses work well. For example include visual response, multiple choice and short response. Remember that writing take a long time. A complex written response can easily take an entire class period. I chose to keep the written responses short and essential to give more time for art making.

Familiarity: Assessments tools that resemble formats that the students already know save time because you don't have to invest time in teaching how to use the tools. Being aware of the formatting of the assessments in other parts of your school can be helpful. For example: If your school uses a lot of short written responses, mirroring that in your own assessment would save time.

Materials

Visual art is a great discipline because there are so many materials available to use. However, some materials are more flexible for revision. It is easier to erase and revise a pencil drawing than a scratchboard drawing. Sometimes mixing media can create revision opportunities. For example a mistake in an oil pastel drawing could be remedied by

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collaging a piece of paper over it. Working with media that are easy to revise makes life easier!

Students played a more active role in their learning. Students observed and noticed their work more carefully. Student work improved with practice.

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

I will continue to investigate ways of co-creating the criteria with the students. The results made me very optimistic of the effectiveness of formative assessment, even with younger children.

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

Photographs of student work - Videos of students working - Student interviews.