



Good Luck Animals

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This curriculum unit is recommended for:
Art and Literacy/Grade 4

Keywords: Jun Kaneko, low relief tiles, good luck, Tanuki, beckoning cat, Yin and Yang, visual notetaking, balance, left and right brain

Teaching Standards: See [Appendix 1](#) for teaching standards addressed in this unit.

Synopsis: This curriculum unit looks at the cognitive functions of the brain and how it shapes our perceptions of good/bad fortune primarily focusing on popular Japanese folklore. This unit will analyze the connections between Yin and Yang, feminine and masculine, right and left brain functions and good and bad fortune. This unit focuses on a Japanese Ceramic Artist, Jun Kaneko, and the geometric shapes and line designs he uses in his work. Kaneko creates large sculptures called Tanukis. Tanukis are from Japanese folklore believed to be tricksters that morph into other objects and are said to bring good fortune. The culminating project will be a large low relief tile installation of the students good luck animals. There will be a literacy component that enhances the connection between good fortune and the right and left brain functions. This curriculum unit will strive to strike a balance between the nurturing and intuitive right brain with the critical and logical left brain. This will be accomplished by reading two books, the Beckoning Cat by Koko Nishizuka and Momotaro and the Island of Ogres by Stephanie Wada, as well as playing interactive reading comprehension games and hands-on activities, such as creating ceramic tiles of good luck animals.

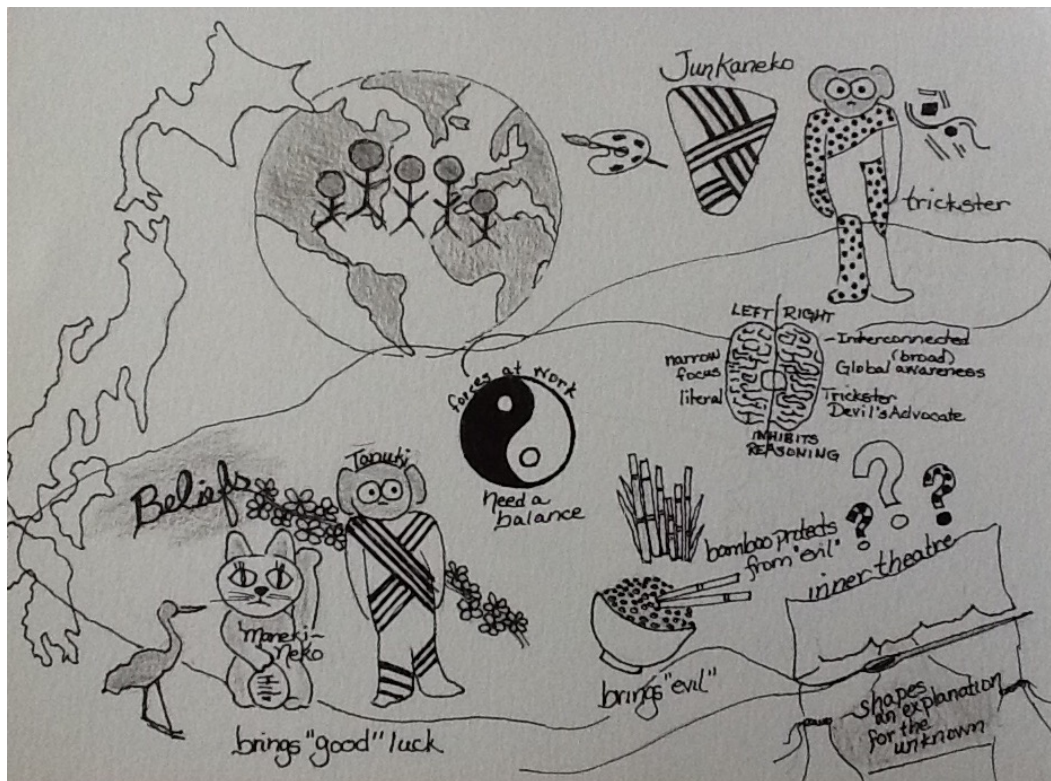
I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 110 students in Art/Literacy Grade 4.

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Good Luck Animals

Teresa S. Strohl

Introduction



(A new way of taking notes, Visual Notetaking!)

Visual Notetaking is the initial inspiration for this curriculum unit. Last year, my students worked closely on taking visual notes in their interactive art journals instead of traditional notetaking with words. My students enjoyed the process of visual notetaking; it is part of the growth mindset idea of taking ownership of your learning. Visual notetaking enhances learning and improves understanding because a person recalls an image more than words on a page. Over the summer, I used visual notetaking in a week long class called Crafting Freedom. I sent out my visual notes by email to the staff and I had very positive feedback.

When I had the opportunity to apply for a National PTA matching funds art grant, I planned the grant by taking visual notes. To my amazement, I was awarded the grant! As I was writing the grant I realized the common thread between the pairs of good and bad fortune, Yin and Yang, and feminine and masculine is balance. The ideas would tie in

nicely to the proposed seminar on “Supernatural Figures in Theatre, Film and the Brain” with Dr. Mark Pizzato. As I attended the seminar, I added to my thinking to include the left and right brain functions once again as another pair. These pairs are connected by balance; one without the other would not give a sense of wholeness. This unit will bring in many components such as two easy read books, Beckoning Cat by Koko Nishizuka and Momotaro and the Island of Ogres by Stephanie Wada, ceramic artist Jun Kaneko, Eastern beliefs in Yin and Yang, good/bad fortune, and left/right brain functions. During the grant writing process I realized that good fortune displayed in Jun Kaneko’s large ceramic Tanukis would be a great example of how our brains have developed a perception of good and bad fortune. The Japanese super-natural figures in folklore, the Tanuki, are creatures that move into the super-natural realm by unconsciously influencing our right brain’s cognitive function of intuition.¹ Using Pizzato’s chart, on right and left cortical functions (given to us in the seminar). I find that the ability to understand Tanukis comes from an instinctive feeling rather than logical left brain reasoning. This curriculum unit will display the connection between pairs as they work in combination, and by complementing one another such as the Eastern theory of Yin and Yang, masculine and feminine, left and right brain, and good and bad fortune.

Students will start to understand super-natural beliefs of good/bad fortune by examining their own beliefs in good luck. They will explore their own personalities and relate their personality characteristics to a certain animal or other objects that they believe displays good fortune. Students will focus on the large ceramic installations of Jun Kaneko, primarily Tanukis. The Japanese culture believes that these playful tricksters, called Tanukis bring good fortune. According to Japanese folklore, Tanukis are an example of super-natural figures said to be tricksters that morph into other objects such as a teapot. The trickster brings awareness to the right hemisphere’s devil’s advocate inhibiting the logical left hemisphere. The right and left hemispheres of the brain are interdependent in a somewhat similar way to the Yin and Yang of Eastern (Taoist) philosophy. Yin and Yang work together in the universe to create balance too much of one weakens the other. Balance is likewise important in other human aspects such as male/female and right/left sides of the brain. According to Pizzato’s chart the right side of the brain is more nurturing, intuitive, and has a longer attention span while the left side of the brain is angry, more literal, and has a more focused attention. The right side of the brain is more feminine with caring functions, more complex emotions, and holistic senses that aim at harmony. The left side of the brain is more masculine with logical, literal, rule-based, and analytical functions.² According to Pizzato’s book the “mysterious forces in the environment, within and between bodies, and in the brain’s anatomy were figured as the binary battle between God and Lucifer/Satan” in the Christian tradition of the West, similar to the forces of Yang and Yin in the Taoist tradition of the East, relating also to masculine and feminine, and left and right hemisphere aspects.³

East Asian Buddhism involves a belief in Karma. This theory stresses the value of your own action. If evil has been done to someone, karma says evil will come back

sometime in the future, in this life or the next, and reflect that evil on to that person. This relates to the Taoist theory of Yin and Yang: together they become whole, but separate they upset the balance of life. The energy of Yin and Yang is similar to how the right and left brain functions are dependent on one another. Yin and Yang balances the universe while the right and left brain balances the person. If you use more right brain or left brain functions, it may upset the mental balance by giving more feminine attributes than male attributes, but eventually balance will be restored. My students will look at a Japanese print that illustrates this idea of Yin and Yang.⁴

Human perceptions are real and life changing. I will show our perceptions of good and bad fortune by primarily focusing on popular folklore developed in Japan. This includes the super-natural trickster-like character of a Tanuki. Tanukis shapeshift into other objects and are believed to bring good luck to the observer.

It is instinctive for people to want an answer to the unknown. This unit will use examples of good luck objects (such as the Tanuki) to evoke the caring and intuitive, though also trickster-like, right side of the brain. In turn, this will assist in developing the students' more feminine (Yin) side of their inner theatre. The male (Yang) or left side of the brain is more literal in its beliefs in folklore. Repeated exposure to objects such as the Tanukis and beckoning cat will allow students to begin to identify these objects associated with good fortune. This will assist in emotional, intuitive learners gaining a deeper understanding of the right (Yin) side of the brain.

According to Pizzato's book, good and bad fortune is shaped to some degree by what we see, hear, and question.⁵ In folklore, a person hears stories and questions the real versus the imaginary. This curriculum unit will strive to strike a balance between nurturing, intuitive, right-cortical brain functions and critical, logical left-cortical. This will be accomplished by hands-on interactive learning through students reading and re-reading the texts as well as creating ceramic tiles of their spirit animals.

Biography

Jun Kaneko, Japanese Ceramic Artist

Jun Kaneko created the set designs for Madama Butterfly, presented in Charlotte a few years ago. Kaneko is an international artist, originally from Japan, and known for his large clay sculptures and public art installations. He studied with Peter Voulkos when he came to California to attend college. Voulkos studied in North Carolina at Black Mountain College, with the Japanese master artist Hamada. Kaneko is largely inspired by myths and hero journey's stories. His home base is in Omaha, Nebraska where he has a large studio space. Take a look at his website <http://www.junkaneko.com>.

He has many kinds of ceramic sculptures such as large vessel like forms glazed with different lines and patterns. He creates larger than life Tanukis a beloved character in

Japanese folklore. The Tanukis take one year to make, they stand seven feet tall and are a popular outside attraction. The Tanukis are brightly colored with big eyes and large bellies. Jun Kaneko's studio in Omaha, Nebraska will be Skyping with my 4th Grade class. The students will have prepared questions for Jun Kaneko's apprentices. This will give my students the opportunity to see how artists work.⁶

Background

Barringer Academic Center is an elementary school located in Charlotte, NC. It is in the Mecklenburg school district, which is very diverse with 178 schools. There are 655 students within the school with a wide range of academic abilities. Barringer Academic Center is a partial magnet school providing specialized public education. Language Immersion Talent Development for the academically gifted is the focus. The school promotes excellence in student achievement and growth. There are 37 classrooms with 100% fully licensed teachers, 85% are highly qualified.

I teach Visual Arts at Barringer Academic Center once a week for 45 minutes to all students. Due to the nature of the topics and the limited time with students, most of my lessons require at least two or more class sessions. This specific unit "Good Luck, Animals" will take approximately six weeks to complete. As an art educator, I inspire my students by exposing them to famous artist masterpieces that relate to the themes I am covering. I routinely look for ways to connect my art lessons to the subjects that the students are focusing on in the regular classroom setting.

I am lucky to have a large art room with eight tables and a large drying rack. I have storage for supplies, three sinks and a separate room for the kiln. My students are able to create an array of 2D and 3D projects. My school website has student work displayed and a blog page for families to post comments about student work. I frequently display student work in the community.

This unit "Good Luck Animals" will be implemented in the fourth grade. Because I teach both academically gifted and general education students, it is imperative that I differentiate my lessons to keep the students motivated and challenged in my art room. Art brings forth excitement and enthusiasm of most students and these fourth graders are no exception! I will be teaching these lessons to four separate classes. Producing art taps into the critical mind-set of students as they develop answers to questions, conduct research, develop comprehensions skills, make meaningful connections, communicate meaning, show beauty and practice creativity.

Rationale

How do Yin and Yang, feminine and masculine, right and left brain functions, or good and bad fortune work in combination to create a balance?

According to Dr. Pizzato's chart, the inner theatre element associated with the left brain is critic-scripter because verbal cues come mostly from the left hemisphere. The right hemisphere brings in the mime-improviser, including metaphorical language, spatial awareness, and a sense of wholeness. When the two are combined, they contribute to the idea of good fortune. There must be a reason why objects become associated with good fortune by relying on the right side's emotional intuition. The intuitive right side of the brain in combination with the optimistic left side shapes our beliefs and cultural ways of viewing the world. According to the book, The Geography of Thought by Richard E. Nesbitt, Westerners tend to view individuals as independent and separate from the society around them. Easterners view people as more interdependent with each other; they are not just individuals. This is the reason why many Asians believe that there must be an external force at work to bring you good fortune. Good luck helps to explain prosperity, growth during harvest, and success in hunting. In Japan, luck is described as a mode of action.⁷ Good fortune is intertwined in Japanese culture through religion, environment, and history. Westerners have a logical approach to reasoning; if this happens there must be a reason. Our sense of self is more independent, based in fixed personality types and consistent, logical trends, in contrast to Easterners, who tend to believe more in situational influences and changing fortunes, according to Nesbitt.⁸

Belief in good and bad fortune relates to the optimistic left side of the brain, along with right-brain intuitions, in looking for the good associated with familiar objects. Thus, the left side may embrace unrealistic thoughts even while knowing that good fortune is not found in an object; this is a belief repeated in many popular cultures, East and West..

In order to be a global citizen our students must be aware of the world around them, studying a certain culture such as Japan will foster an interest in Eastern culture and its beliefs. A society's belief in good or bad is rooted in its culture and history. By creating this feeling of connectedness with another culture students will be inspired to learn more. The right side of the brain, with its nurturing, holistic functions, supports a sense of interconnectedness across cultures. The left side narrows the focus to a certain culture such as Japan and narrows it more by relating Japanese culture to a student's own beliefs at home.

Many people in all cultures believe in a higher power, whether it is a Spirit, lucky numbers, or good luck objects. Giving an explanation for the unknown seems to make life a little easier. One of the cognitive functions of our brains is the ability to shape perceptions through learning and memory. Perceptions are interpreted by networks in our left and right brain inhibiting or complementing each other.⁹ By bringing examples of good and bad fortune such as Tanukis, the Japanese trickster, the right side of the brain triggers the "inner trickster" temptation and inhibits the logical rule-following "inner critic/scripter" in the left brain. By reading the stories about good luck objects, my students will recognize where the trickster thoughts come from in their brains, but also become more aware of the rule follower side.

The belief in interconnectedness in Eastern cultures also relates to the brain networks between the amygdala and hippocampus. According to Louis Cozolino, the amygdala is the part of the brain that heightens the emotional awareness of specific aspects of the environment. The hippocampus with its memory function is vital for conscious, logical and cooperative social functioning. The integration of these two parts of the brain impact the balance of emotional and social behaviors. These parts of our brain shape our thoughts and beliefs. But it is not only the brain that shape our perceptions of the world but also the environment in which we live and our past experiences.¹⁰ The left side of the brain stores our individual beliefs and is inhibited by the right side bringing in the social and emotional influences. The right side stores our sense of responsibility. For example, are we responsible for our own luck or is it the object we are holding onto? The nurturing right side of our brain may want to believe in good luck so it can give an individual more confidence in one's abilities.

I will show many examples of large installation Tanukis and other pieces from the Japanese born ceramic artist, Jun Kaneko. Tanukis in Japanese folklore are considered to be tricksters who cause trouble and mayhem in both the human and super-natural worlds; but they also represent prosperity, growth, and good fortune.¹¹ The trickster trait of the Tanuki brings in the inner theatres improviser which disrupts the rule bound inner scripiter, yet this brings a new balance to the energy of Yin and Yang, once again showing how these forces work in combination with each other. The Tanuki from Japanese folklore is believed to cause trouble and this relates, in my view, to the right side of the brain, which inhibits the logical left side's sense of self and luck. The left side of the brain perceives the Tanukis as angels of good fortune, a direct contrast to the playful trickster or devil's advocate right side of the brain. The Yin or feminine side is similar to the right brain which is much more intuitive and perceptive. The Yang or masculine side is analytical, competitive and literal which has similar attributes to the left hemisphere. The logic of luck lies with a belief in optimism, if an object is repeatedly associated with luck, then the person holding the object will be more confident and optimistic of the outcome.

Tanukis are a combination of a raccoon and dog with big eyes to perceive the environment and help make good decisions with a friendly smile. Japan has a common theme regarding good versus evil in fables; some animals display unselfish qualities but other animals display evil qualities. At times the good and evil qualities are displayed within the same animal. Having students work in the same manner that a particular artist did or does allows them to experience another culture through the eyes of an artist. By working in a similar way to Kaneko, my students learn about their own inner tricksters (and the older-evolved, animal areas of their brain) through imagery of the Tanukis.

Artists display balance in their work whether it is the amount of shapes on one side of the canvas versus the other or the colors chosen for the piece. The left and the right brain functions work separately but in balance, akin to the Eastern theory of Yang and Yin.

This interconnectedness is demonstrated in the Japanese print, *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* by Hokusai. It is an image of a rolling wave in the foreground and Mt. Fuji in the background. There seems to be a boat that is surviving the tsunami-like wave. This painting is a great example to Yin and Yang. Yin (female) is symbolized by water, while aggressive and violent tsunami-like waves represent Yang (male). Yang (male) is also shown with the analytical, focused expertise of the fisherman navigating the wave.¹² This painting demonstrates the pull between Yin and Yang the universe needs balance to be complete.. In life we strive for have an answer to the unknown; similar to analyzing a painting, we often feel there must be an underlying reason why the artist painted this particular picture. Artists enjoy leaving a mystery surrounding their painting. Every person views the painting, but one person uses more of the logical left brain and the other person may use more of the emotional right brain, so the interpretation of the painting will be different.

Objectives

The unit will focus on the Japanese ceramic artist Jun Kaneko who creates the beloved Tanukis from Japanese folklore. The Tanukis represent the trickster similar to the perceptions from the right side of the brain, the devil's advocate. The left side is the more logical side of the brain. The left side of the brain perceives the Tanukis as angels of good fortune, a direct contrast to the right side of the brain. As teachers if we analyze the functions of the brain, including the attributes of left versus right, maybe we can better understand our student's actions. This unit will also bring in the Eastern theory of Yin and Yang. There is value in both sides by working together or in parallel. The functions of the left side of the brain are related in Western art to more angelic figures while the right side of the brain relates to more mischievous or devilish ones, with angels often shown conquering devils.¹³ But Eastern art shows more a harmonious relationship between the two forces of Yin and Yang, feminine and masculine, involving the brain's right and left hemispheres. The students will gain an understanding of good luck, how our thoughts are perceived and which part of the brain our thoughts come from. Students will see how the parallels between Yang and Yin, masculine and feminine, left and right brain and good/bad fortune are most effective working in combination with each other rather than individually.

This unit will create student awareness of other cultures, through the process of making a product, and connect the beliefs in Japanese culture to their own lives. By heightening the awareness of other cultures, students will begin to realize that students are similar all over the world in their beliefs, likes, and desires. Students will look at their own personality traits and compare them to an animal that may share those same qualities. Students learn what others may see in them by reflecting on their peers' likes and dislikes.

Students will concentrate on creating a product with their new knowledge surrounding the idea of good luck animals. What animal shares your same personality traits? Maybe that should be your good luck animal. Reading the stories of the Beckoning Cat and Momotaro and the Island of the Ogres will show students how connected we are in our beliefs. After reading these books, students will compete against each other in a question and answer activity called Kahoot. Kahoot is an interactive game that demonstrates student understanding while keeping learning fun.

The students will learn new clay techniques to build their skill set. Clayworks will assist in demonstrating the hand building process along with the finishing process, glazing. The tiles will be arranged as a large collaborative installation that will be mounted on the wall. The students will realize the difficulties Jun Kaneko has with his large scale forms. They will Skype with Jun Kaneko's apprentices in his large ceramic studio.

Teaching Strategies

Here are teaching strategies that I will use throughout the lessons. Each of these strategies incorporates the strengths of the left and right side of the brain.

Read Aloud

One strategy that I will use to open two lessons will be "Read Aloud." The book is called Momotaro and the Island of Ogres by Stephanie Wada. I have created a Kahoot, a competitive question and answer game to incorporate comprehensive and open ended questions to check for understanding. Here is the link

<https://create.kahoot.it/#quiz/abd9636f-47cc-4e50-bbd8-00f546be85ef>.

Read aloud feeds a student's imagination and transports them beyond their home and neighborhood, stimulating both sides of the brain. The right hemisphere identifies complex emotions within the characters depicted. The left hemisphere inhibits the right with analytical, logical thinking. The brain uses both hemispheres to analyze the underlying meanings in the book.

Visual Thinking Skills



I will grab student's attention by demonstrating visual thinking strategies. The painting I will use during my demonstration is *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* by Katsushika Hokusai. Hokusai is a Japanese artist from the 1800's. This painting demonstrates Yin (female) represented by water against the wave crushing anger of Yang (male). The pull of Yin and Yang without one the universe cannot have balance. The image of Mt. Fuji in the distance is said to bring good fortune. I will tell the students the title, artist and date the painting was painted and that is all I will tell them. Students will look at the picture without discussing it.¹⁴ Then I will be the facilitator and ask three questions. *What is going on in the picture? What do you see that makes you say that? What more can we find?*¹⁵ From the beginning students are also encouraged to back up their interpretations with visual evidence such as night or day, emotions on face or abstract/realism. The facilitator ensures that every response is heard by the class, pointing to what is mentioned as a student talks and then paraphrasing what is said. This approach expands critical thinking skills. Students realize that there are multiple meanings to a painting. At times my students use more of the left side of their brain, with linear and logical functions encouraged in their coursework. During our CTI seminar, I realized that there are parallels between the Yin and Yang, feminine and masculine, and right and left brain functions; all of the pairs have to work in combination for the perfect balance. My students will look at a painting or a sculpture and understand the Yin (female) emotional, caring right side of the brain at the same time look for logical, visual clues from the left side of the brain. Students will understand what neurons are firing when they read a book, play a game, such as Kahoot or create a hands-on project. By bringing in the creative projects or looking at art reinforces the concepts learned and sparks their inner theatres then realizing that their environment or outer theatres plays a significant part in forming their thoughts.

Demonstration

Throughout this unit I will review previous learned material due to forty-five minute blocks once a week. One week is a long time between lessons. All activities are modeled first to demonstrate the art technique. I feel the students have greater success at the activity if they see examples. All four lessons in this unit require hands-on participation so there will be an art product after every lesson. The main demonstrator will be the

mentor teacher from Clayworks and selected 4th and 5th grade students who will act as apprentices. These students will teach the younger students the method of creating clay low relief tiles.

Modeling strategy offers a specific skill such as sculpting with clay. This hands-on strategy meets the needs of the tactile and visual learners. If I model the activity step-by-step, the student feels more successful at each step. By transferring knowledge that can be easily replicated, students will understand logical steps; this will use their optimistic left brain. The optimistic outlook will build students' confidence within their inner theatres and then hopefully that confidence will extend to the outer theatres of their environment making them an all-around better learner.

Word Wall

The word wall that is posted in the art room is divided into modes of creative expression such as clay, fiber arts, drawing, painting, and sculpture with art terminology listed under each category. Vocabulary is an important teaching strategy. Students need to be aware that words have different meanings within different content areas. The left hemisphere identifies words and symbols while the right side comprehends the contextual and emotional meanings of words. This teaching strategy uses the left and right brain to complement each other in order to comprehend and identify words and symbols.

Personalized Learning

Personalized Learning is giving the students choices in their instruction. I use Google Classroom so I have the ability to attach parameters to the lesson along with worksheets and videos. Google classroom gives students remote access and to work at their own pace developing their artistic skills through self-discovery. It is important for students to make new connections and relate learning to their own life it helps facilitate learning. Personalized Learning gives students multiple options for taking in instruction and making sense of it. One component I use often during instruction is visual notetaking. According to psychologist Louis Cozolino, learning is enhanced through multichannel processing; we have an amazing capacity for visual memory, written or spoken information paired with visual information in better recall.¹⁶ There are studies that say visual note-taking is important for the more visual learners. Visual learners comprehend information more accurately by drawing images on paper instead of only writing words. Visual learners are right brains dominate, they learn through visual clues and they learn by doing. Yet visual learners still use their left brain function to identify symbols and words. My students take visual notes in their interactive art journal and it seems to be working their exit tickets are becoming more accurate. Exit tickets are a quick way to check for understanding content. Students answer a question about a topic discussed while exiting the classroom. I have placed a photo of visual note taking at the beginning

of this curriculum unit. It is a great way to introduce a topic and to give students a map of instruction.

Differentiated Learning

Differentiated learning looks different in the art room, than in general education classrooms because having only 45 minutes proves difficult to help all 25 students. I have 3-4 people assigned to each table. There is always a peer helper at every table because when I assign seats I put at least one student at every table that who follows directions the first time. I frequently roam the classroom to assist students with more support. When a student asks for help most likely they want me to draw for them. I solve that problem by drawing with the eraser not the pencil. The eraser technique assists them at the same time giving them confidence in their own artistic abilities.

Technology

Technology will be used as a tool to engage student learning. Students respond well to technology because of the overwhelming use of it in our society today. The best teaching strategies are the ones where students do not know they are learning. They retain more information if they are fully engaged. I will use technology to display Jun Kaneko's website, the Kahoot game activity, and animal research.

Integration

This unit will use cross disciplinary teaching strategies. There will be Literacy, Social Studies and Visual Arts taught within the same unit. The students are familiar with integration; it is used throughout the district and our school. Classrooms that use integration like this require planning and cooperation. Creating integrated lessons gives art education greater visibility in the school and community because it creates a hands-on activity related to the subject area. Teachers create more rigorous and meaningful lessons by working together. Modeling partnerships for students encourages stronger peer relationships. According to Cozolino, learning is enhanced through practice and repeated exposure. The cross discipline teaching in my project strengthens connections by repeated learning which will benefit all learners.¹⁷

Classroom Activities

Introduction of "Good Luck Animals"

I will show how a thread ties together our perceptions of good/bad fortune by reflecting on the right and left brain functions in the brain's internal theatres. I will show the parallels between Yin and Yang, feminine and masculine, right and left brain functions, and good and bad fortune. The mystical forces of Eastern and Western society that create

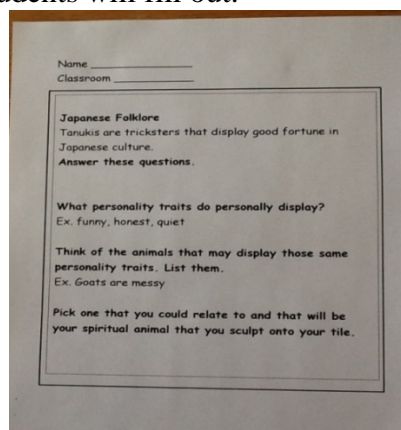
an illusion of good and bad fortune could be explained by examining how the mischievous right side of the brain inhibits the logical left side of the brain once again creating an imbalance. If a person uses more networks in one side of the brain, there may be too much of one trait, not letting the other side balance out one's thinking.

In most cultures it is instinctive to want an answer to the unknown. I will use examples of good luck objects such as Jun Kaneko's Tanukis and the Beckoning Cat. There will be two books read aloud that talk about Japanese folktales. There will be a large installation of tiles made up of my students good luck animals with the assistance of Clayworks the installation will line the walls of our school. There will be a community night focusing on Jun Kaneko's work and my students will Skype with his studio.

Lesson One: Personality activity/Skype with Apprentices

Goal: Understand the interdisciplinary connections and life applications of the visual arts. I will have my students join google classroom where I have linked documents, videos, and websites. I will talk about the ceramic artist Jun Kaneko. He was born in Japan and one of his large installation pieces are Tanukis in Japan they represent good luck. I will discuss the myth of Japanese Tanukis. Tanukis are from Japanese folklore they are raccoon-dog like creatures they have the ability to morph into other animals. I have linked his website to the google classroom so students will be able to view it while we discuss his lines and geometric shapes. I will discuss where good luck originates. I will ask them what brings good luck. Every society needs to have an explanation for a good or bad happening so over time people will begin to believe in a spirit, numbers, or objects that may or may not bring them good/bad luck.

I want my students to come up with an animal of their choice that brings them good luck. I want students to relate their animal to themselves. Students will analyze their personality traits and see what traits are similar in the animal they chose. Below is an example of the worksheet students will fill out.



Name _____
Classroom _____

Japanese Folklore
Tanukis are tricksters that display good fortune in Japanese culture.
Answer these questions.

What personality traits do personally display?
Ex. funny, honest, quiet

Think of the animals that may display those same personality traits. List them.
Ex. Goats are messy

Pick one that you could relate to and that will be your spiritual animal that you sculpt onto your tile.

There will be a Skype call to Jun Kaneko's Studio in Omaha, Nebraska. The students will prepare questions to ask Jun Kaneko's apprentices. This will give my students a glimpse into a fully functioning ceramic studio. When they finish asking questions they will create thank you notes with a picture of their own good luck animal displaying their personality.

Questions for Understanding, Exit tickets

Where does the idea of good and bad luck come from?

How are you relating to your spirit animal?

What kind of details does Jun Kaneko use in his sculptures?

Lesson Two: Jun Kaneko - Good luck Tiles

Goal: Understand the global, historical, societal, and cultural contexts of the visual arts.

Goal: Create art using the processes of drawing, painting, weaving, printing, stitchery, collage, mixed media, sculpture, ceramics, and current technology.

Goal: Create art using a variety of tools, media, and processes, safely and appropriately.

Students will use their personality traits from lesson one. The students will sketch out their "good luck, animals" so they are ready with a solid idea for Clayworks. Clayworks will come out to our school and work with the students creating a low relief tile sculpture of their "good luck, animal". Clayworks refers to the sculpture of the animal as the thickness of a cookie not a potato chip. This reference point stops students from flating out the clay too thin. The students could crop their animal but they need to fill the space of the tile. I wanted students to keep in mind the geometric shapes and lines that Jun Kaneko uses in his work. Students will learn new techniques on embossing patterns and shaping the animal so it attaches securely to the clay tile. When the students are finished, the tile will be dried to the leather hard stage then will be fired. Clayworks will come back to visit my students to assist them with glazing their tiles. The tiles will be fired once more for the finished piece. The tiles will be arranged in a straight line with grout lines between them. The tiles will be nine high there will be seven hundred tiles when completed.

Questions of Understanding, Art Journal

What does leather hard mean?

What is a low relief sculpture?

What is does the word pliable mean?

Lesson Three: What will your Tanuki morph into?

Goal: Understand the global, historical, societal, and cultural contexts of the visual arts.

Goal: Create art using the processes of drawing, painting, weaving, printing, stitchery, collage, mixed media, sculpture, ceramics, and current technology.

Goal: Create art using a variety of tools, media, and processes, safely and appropriately.

Students will examine their inner trickster. The Tanukis are a popular installation piece of Jun Kanekos, his 7 foot tall Tanukis are in many parks throughout the United States and Europe. The students will create their own version of a Tanuki. What will the Tanuki morph into? I will talk about the process of metamorphosis recalling their knowledge from kindergarten of the caterpillar changing into a butterfly. I want to emphasize the trickster characteristic of the Tanuki. I think my students will relate to the deceptive nature of this fictional character. My students are playful and silly.

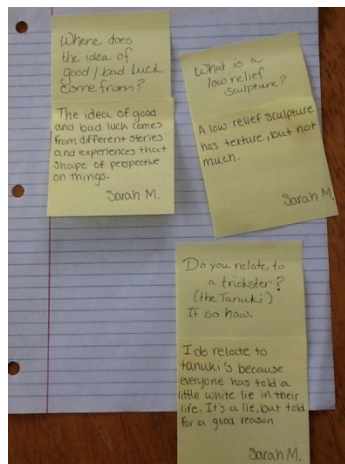
The students will create a drawing illustrating the stages of morphing Tanukis. I will demonstrate an illustration of a caterpillar to a butterfly; the students seem to copy my ideas if I demonstrate a finished picture. The students will add details to their drawing and use the whole space of the paper to complete a well-balanced picture. Students will use colored pencils and sharpie markers to color the picture. Above all, I want my students to use their imaginations to create this new fictional character.

Questions for Understanding, Exit tickets
Who are examples of tricksters in Japan?
What does balance mean?

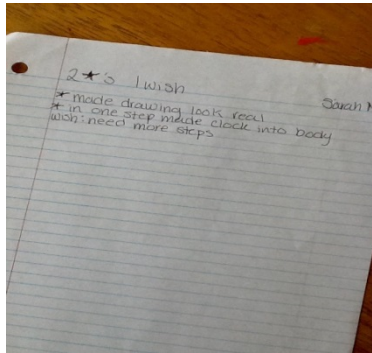
Assessments

Kahoot will be used to check for understanding. Here is the link to the Kahoot site for reading comprehension <https://create.kahoot.it/#quiz/abd9636f-47cc-4e50-bbd8-00f546be85ef>.

Post-it Exit tickets – I create exit tickets on a regular basis in my room. Exit tickets work the best for me because of my fast paced schedule. This is a great way to check for understanding, I post them near the door of my classroom and students pick one and answer it before they leave.



Two Stars and One Wish - This is a self-reflection activity. I use it at the end of some art lessons. As you can see the student understands the idea of changing one thing into something else by saying in one step, "I successfully made it into the clock." The student proves this by illustrating the idea of morphing. There must be evidence in each answer proving that the student understands the process.



In conclusion, by showing my students the pairs of Yin and Yang, feminine and masculine, the right and left brain functions, and good/bad fortune they will be aware of the parallels at work within our brains and the universe to keep us in balance. Students will see how the pairs create harmony and balance in one's life. Students will understand where the belief in good luck objects or animals come from. There are many factors that contribute to the belief in good luck. A person's perception of the world starts in the emotional right brain, bringing the ability to understand something without the need for conscious reasoning. The logical thoughts of the left brain inhibit the right brain, causing doubt. The outer theatres of the brain involve one's environment and the struggle with the inner thoughts of the brain, and they help shape perceptions of one's own beliefs. By believing in good luck objects, a person creates a more optimistic outlook and becomes more confident in one's abilities.

Appendix 1 - Implementing District Standards

4.CX.1 Understand the global, historical, societal, and cultural contexts of the visual arts. Students will become aware of the global importance of studying a different culture. Students will study a ceramic artist Jun Kaneko; they will understand where he came from and how he perfects his craft. Students will Skype with his apprentices at his studio in Omaha, Nebraska. They will look at how good luck is perceived and how it continues in society today.

4.V.3 Create art using a variety of tools, media, and processes, safely and appropriately. The fourth graders will create a 6x6 relief tile with their good luck animal sculpted on it. The fourth graders will learn this process and then they will reteach the younger students

how to create a 6x6 relief tile. They will use embossing rollers for the background of the tile to give the tile the geometric designs that Kaneko uses in his sculptures.

4.V.3.3 Create art using the processes of drawing, painting, weaving, printing, stitchery, collage, mixed media, sculpture, ceramics, and current technology.

Students will sculpt the clay using tools and their hands; they will attach the clay using slip and score techniques.

4.CX.2 Understand the interdisciplinary connections and life applications of the visual arts. Students will learn how the brain shapes perceptions when wanting an explanation of the unknown. One trait of the brain's right hemisphere is interconnectedness. Students will realize how society connects us to beliefs through repetition and rituals.

Appendix 2 - Vocabulary

Bisque ware – The stage of clay after it comes out of the kiln and before it is glazed.

Leather hard – The state of clay before it is fired. The water will evaporate from the clay.

Fire – Clay bakes in a kiln at a certain temperature.

Pliable – The state clay is in before it is dried or fired. The clay will move in any direction.

Slip and score- slip is a combination of clay and water and is used as “glue” to connect two pieces of clay together. Score is roughing up the clay where the two pieces of clay will be joined together.

Describe – tell all about something

Analyze – break something down into components

Interpret –to establish or explain the meaning or significance of something

Evaluate – examine and judge something

Visual Clues –the symbols are linked with each other; words can be used to further clarify meaning.

Visual Notetaking- Taking notes by using text, images and structure. Using pictures in your notes enhances your understanding and memory of the subject. You create the notes your way and it makes more sense.

List of Materials for Classroom Use

Earthenware white clay is purchased through Highwater Clay. Earthenware white clay low fires nicely.

Teachers classroom glazes purchased from Bennett Pottery mix easily and fire creating layers of color. I purchased white, black, red, blue, and yellow so students could mix the primary colors to make secondary colors.

Reading List for Students

Nishizuka, Koko, and Rosanne Litzinger. *The Beckoning Cat: Based on a Japanese Folktale*. New York: Holiday House, 2009. Print.

This easy read book is the story of how the beckoning cat came to represent good fortune in Japanese folklore.

Wada, Stephanie, and Kano Naganobu. *Momotarō and the Island of Ogres: A Japanese Folktale*. New York: George Braziller, 2005.

This is a longer easy read book about a boy born from a peach who befriended a pheasant, a monkey, and a dog in order to conquer the Ogres. The boy became known as Peach boy who brings good fortune to the town.

Bibliography for Teachers

"Clayworks | Adult Classes." Accessed September 23, 2015.

<http://clayworksinc.org/classes-2/classes>.

Clayworks is a clay company that caters to adults, students and ceramic artists.

Clayworks staff is a great resource for collaboration in the Charlotte, NC area.

Col, Giovanni Da. "Introduction: Natural Philosophies of Fortune—Luck, Vitality, and Uncontrolled Relatedness." *Social Analysis* (2012): 1-23. Print. This article looks at good luck is it under our control or not.

Cozolino, Louis J. *The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment and Learning in the Classroom*. Print.

This book examines how the brains functions relate to our students learning.

Daniels, Inge Maria. "Scooping, Raking, Beckoning Luck: Luck, Agency and the Interdependence of People and Things in Japan." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute J Royal Anthropological Inst*: 619-38. Print.

This article looks at how Japan works together as a society and does that have anything to do with their belief in good luck objects.

Dweck, Carol S. *Mindset: The New Psychology of Success*. New York: Random House, 2006. Print.

This book looks at is your ability to change your mindset from fixed to growth for certain situations.

Harada, Violet H. "The Badger in Japanese Folklore." *Asian Folklore Studies*: 1. Print.

This is a Japanese folktale that expresses the idea of working together you will accomplish a goal.

Hokusai, Katsushika, *The Great Wave off Kanagawa* Print.

This is a print of a famous painting of a fisherman in a boat navigating a tsunami-like wave.

"Japanese Prints Working with Shape." *Scholastic Arts* 1 Oct. 2015. Print

Scholastic Arts magazine supplies magazines to schools focusing on artists, art techniques and art styles.

"Jun Kaneko." Web. 21 Sept. 2015. <<http://www.junkaneko.com/>>.

Kaneko's website is a great resource to show students his work.

Kaneko, Jun, *In the Round* Sculpture

This sculpture is an example of Jun Kaneko's large dango sculptures glazed with his signature design elements.

Nisbett, Richard E. *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently-- and Why*. New York: Free, 2003. Print.

This book examines the underlying cognitive differences between Westerners and East Asians. People think about the world differently because of their environment, their past experiences, educational systems, philosophies, and social structures.

Nishizuka, Koko, and Rosanne Litzinger. *The Beckoning Cat: Based on a Japanese Folktale*. New York: Holiday House, 2009. Print.

This is a Japanese folktale that expresses the idea that working together you will accomplish a goal.

Osgood, Charles E., and Meredith Martin Richards. "From Yang and Yin to and or but." *Language*: 380.

Pizzato, Mark. *Inner Theatres of Good and Evil: The Mind's Staging of Gods, Angels and Devils*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland &, 2011. Print.

This book explores the concepts of good and evil, the super-natural figures and the functions of the left and right brain. This book correlates inner and outer brain functions to the good and evil supernatural figures found in film and theater.

Pizzato, Mark. "Inner Theatres of the Brain", chart. Print. Forthcoming *Beast-People Onscreen and in Your Brain*. Santa Barbara: Praeger, 2016.

This chart assists in examining the two hemispheres of the brain and how they correlate to the inner and outer theatres of the brain.

Strickland, Carol, and John Boswell. *The Annotated Mona Lisa: A Crash Course in Art History from Prehistoric to Post-modern*. Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, 1992.

This is a great resource to explain the history of Art.

Wada, Stephanie, and Kano Naganobu. *Momotarō and the Island of Ogres: A Japanese Folktale*. New York: George Braziller, 2005.

This is a Japanese folktale that expresses the idea of working together you will accomplish a goal.

Notes

¹ Pizzato, Mark. *Inner Theatres of the Brain*; chart.

² Pizzato, Mark. *Inner Theatres of the Brain*; chart.

³ Pizzato, Mark. *Inner Theatres of Good and Evil: The Mind's Staging of Gods, Angels and Devils*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland &, 2011: 82. Print

⁴ Col, Giovanni Da. "Introduction: Natural Philosophies of Fortune—Luck, Vitality, and Uncontrolled Relatedness." *Social Analysis* (2012): 1-23. Print

⁵ Pizzato, Mark. *Inner Theatres of Good and Evil: The Mind's Staging of Gods, Angels and Devils*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland &, 2011: 288. Print

⁶ "Jun Kaneko." Web. 21 Sept. 2015. <<http://www.junkaneko.com/>>.

⁷ Col, Giovanni Da. "Introduction: Natural Philosophies of Fortune—Luck, Vitality, and Uncontrolled Relatedness." *Social Analysis* (2012): 1-23. Print.

⁸ Nisbett, Richard E. *The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerners Think Differently-- and Why*. New York: Free, 2003. Print.

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¹¹ Daniels, Inge Maria. "Scooping, Raking, Beckoning Luck: Luck, Agency and the Interdependence of People and Things in Japan." *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute J Royal Anthropological Inst*: 619-38. Print.

¹² Osgood, Charles E., and Meredith Martin Richards. "From Yang and Yin to and or but." *Language*: 380.

¹³ Pizzato, Mark. *Inner Theatres of the Brain*; chart.

¹⁴"Japanese Prints Working with Shape." *Scholastic Arts* 1 Oct. 2015. Print

¹⁵ Strickland, Carol, and John Boswell. *The Annotated Mona Lisa: A Crash Course in Art History from Prehistoric to Post-modern*. Kansas City: Andrews and McMeel, 1992.

¹⁶ Cozolino, Louis J. *The Social Neuroscience of Education: Optimizing Attachment and Learning in the Classroom*. Print.

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