



Visual Journal/Process Journal-Process to Product

By Kelley Hund Shelley, 2016 CTI Fellow David W. Butler High School

This curriculum unit is recommended for Intermediate, Proficient, and Advanced Visual Arts, Grades 9-12

Keywords: art critique, artist statement, bookmaking, Coptic Bound Book, craftsmanship, end paper, Japanese Stab book, journal, line quality, mark making, Orizomegami, personal voice, process journal, signature, spine, visual journal

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

Synopsis: This curriculum unit explores journal making/book making and assisting the development of a personal voice in student writing and art making. The students will be creating a Japanese stab book/Coptic bound book to use as a visual/process journal. Students will use these process journals as a basis for larger, more detailed works of art. The journals will allow students to take notes, annotations and sketches, assisting them in finding/researching numerous solutions prior to creating these works. Students will learn the basics of bookmaking and its history prior to making their own process/visual journal.

I will provide the students with a variety of writing and art prompts for use in their journals. These prompts will help spark memories about important events and/or beliefs in the student's life. We can use these writings, photos, drawings, and assemblages as starting points for a variety of art works dealing with personal voice. Developing a personal voice and style of one's own is one of the most important aspects of creating meaning in one's art. As educators, it is our responsibility to act as the provocateur for our students, pressing them to analyze persons, places and things that impact their daily life using art as a creative springboard.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 80 students in Proficient, Advanced, and Intermediate Art in Grades 10-12.

I give permission for the Institute to publish my curriculum unit and synopsis in print and online. I understand that I will be credited as the author of the work.

Visual Journal/Process Journal-Process to Product

Kelley Hund Shelley

Introduction

When I applied to take this seminar I was hoping to find a way to get over my fear of writing and sharing my writing with others. I compare this to the immense trepidation I feel when I share my artwork with others. Writing and art are both intensely personal endeavors that make me feel vulnerable and force me to open myself up to others through the sharing of my work. When I ask my students to write about and share their own artwork, it has reinforced my view that most of them are also hesitant to share. My hope is that by writing and developing ideas on a daily basis, these students will become less reticent to share their work.

The idea for my curriculum unit is to have the students create their own sketchbook/process journal. Students will create a Coptic bound sketchbook or a Japanese stab book to use for their visual arts journal. During this first stage, the students will have the opportunity to learn about the history of book making from simplistic journals to books as art. These visual journals will serve as a springboard for all the activities that will follow. It is my hope that these visual journals offer an insight into the way individual students' process and develop ideas for final bodies of work. In addition, it will provide insight on how students develop the understanding of self and how they can incorporate personal meaning into their work. In the exhibit ARTEXPRESS, the authors suggest these journals assist the students in developing technical interests and risk-taking, beliefs and interpretations and allow for reflection, evaluation and assessment.¹



Examples of Japanese stab bound books with various types of bindings.

Parent, peer influences and developing a sense of personal identity are all important aspects of developing a sense of self. Young adults are inundated with thousands of sounds, images, and words on a daily basis. Having a safe place (their journals) to share this information will give the students the opportunity to decipher the meaning from these multitudes of influences affecting them on a daily basis. Hopefully, the students will then use these thoughts, images and ideas to create their own artwork with personal meaning.

I believed this seminar would provide me with innovative and creative ways to promote writing within the arts curriculum. Writing is a large part of the visual arts including composing art critiques as well as artist statements. By further developing this skill in myself, I will be able to provide my own students with better strategies to improve their writing skills.

Bill Wheeler states that, “Good writing is clear thinking made visible.” Clear thinking and developing a visual idea are closely linked concepts. McComb believes that by analyzing and wrestling with ideas students care about, they learn how to prioritize their evidence, empathize with their audience and play with language creatively.”¹ Assisting students in becoming comfortable in trusting their own ideas and words is paramount to their success in the visual arts.

Rationale:

My rationale for choosing this curriculum unit is my visual arts students’ lack of understanding/exposure to brainstorming, working through an idea, and coming up with multiple solutions to one problem. Hopefully my classes can use the process journal as means to accomplish this. By assisting the students in developing a process journal where they can assemble items, drawings, paintings, writings and photographs I am providing them with the opportunity to record their growth, ideas, successes and failures.

In our CTI seminar, *Understanding Memoir: From Picture Book to Digital Story*, the first classes helped us begin to develop an understanding of who we are. We read and wrote our own “I am Who I Am” and then shared it with a partner. I believe that readings such as this would help create a community within my classroom. With various activities such as “I am Who I am” students can learn, understand, and respect the differences of other students in the classroom. These activities will foster collegiality and respect for differences within the classroom.

Ralph Fletcher states, “The writer must have something to say. The truth is that all is meaningless unless the writer can find something interesting and important to say about the subject.”² I compare this statement to a piece of artwork. If the artist can’t find something interesting to share or communicate to the viewer, the artwork will be lacking. Surrealist artists used art to communicate their dreams and the subliminal, Pop Art used everyday mass produced objects to show the industrialization of society, and today’s culture is fascinated with all things digital. Helping students find their personal voice and style with their artwork is one of the most important aspects of growth as an artist/student artist.

Doing an exercise such as bringing in three objects that are significant to you like we did in the Seminar would provide the students with an opportunity to sketch, photograph, and/or draw these significant objects in their visual journal. These sketches could then be written about, giving ideas in which the student could use these significant objects in an artwork and/or a series of artworks. This allows students to have something significant to say in a visual manner.

I see the journals as having a multitude of uses such as developing and refining ideas, developing an artistic voice, providing a timeline of work that can show growth, collecting images and art from fellow students, contemporary artists, and a variety of art periods. Using these journals to brainstorm, draft and practice our craft will assist the students in developing a cohesive body of work. Journals provide the opportunity to see how thoughts, ideas, works of art germinate and change over time. Having the ability to see the development of ideas over time in these journals provides the students with the ability to revisit ideas and interpret them in new works.

Demographics:

My school is David W. Butler High School, which is located in Matthews, North Carolina. It is in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School District. Our school has 2135 students.

My students come from many socio-economic backgrounds, ranging from homeless students to upper middle class. In 2014, David W. Butler High School was recognized by US News and World Report as the #1 high school in CMS and the 5th highest rating in North Carolina. The graduation rate in 2015 was at 91.4%. Current student enrollment is 2135. Ethnic breakdown as follows: White 44%, African-American 30%, Hispanic 19%, American Indian 1.8%, Asian 5%, and Pacific Islander 0.2%.

I am a visual art teacher at David W. Butler High School where I teach Beginning Art through Advanced Placement Visual Art 2D, and AP Drawing. The AP classes are primarily composed of students that plan on majoring in an arts related field in college.

This is my thirty-fifth year of teaching and my sixth year in the Charlotte Mecklenburg School District. I have taught every grade level from Pre-K to college, as well as in a Montessori program. I have multiple certifications including Elementary Education, Gifted & Talented, English Language Learners, Math, Reading, Administration, and I am a National Board Certified Teacher. I love to learn and experience new ways to bring information to my students. Teaching in a new state with different standards and expectation, I have been pushed to incorporate other disciplines within my subject area.

My classroom is in the Fine Arts wing along with three other visual art teachers, an orchestra teacher, a choral teacher and a band teacher. Our hall is separated from the rest of the school by the commons area. All the fine arts teachers, physical education teachers and the ROTC instructors are on an A/B day block schedule rotation. All other school programs are on the block schedule. I currently have two hundred students with classes ranging in size from 39 to 25 students. With my larger classes, it makes it difficult to get know my students as well as I would like to. It also makes it difficult for the students to work on larger projects.

I have a large classroom with 10 tables, a printing press, three sinks, and access to a Chrome cart with 35 computers, a separate kiln room, a damp closet and several storage closets. My students have the opportunity to work in a variety of mediums including drawing, painting, printmaking, glass, ceramics, sculpture, weaving and collage. Despite having large classes, I believe that I have created a work-space that facilitates creative expression. I have student work displayed in the hallways, glass cases, and in numerous venues around the community. This year students are sharing their work with me and their peers on CANVAS. CANVAS is a new online platform that is being used by teachers and students to share work, discussions, assessments and grades. Students are able to peer review their classmates' artwork, write comments/ask questions, and submit artist statements, critiques, and questions using their phone or a computer/tablet.

Objectives

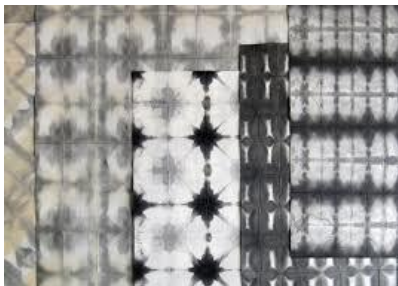
This unit is taught according to the North Carolina Essential Standards for High School. During the first quarter, the students are taught a two-week lesson focusing on the I.V.I visual arts standard which states the student will use the language of visual art to communicate effectively by using arts vocabulary and analyzing images. In the process journal/visual journal unit, the students will use appropriate vocabulary focusing on the elements and principles of design when they write, discuss, assess artwork and personal objects. Students will use a variety of writing prompts and questions to help facilitate more in depth writing and drawing. Students will use Wisdom cards, Ways of Seeing cards and others as prompts for their writing.³

The students will become aware of the social purpose and significance of cultural artifacts. Students can share their own items of significance and be exposed to their classmates as well. Students will have the opportunity to interview their family, friends, and peers to develop a personal history. The students will create their own book that will be used as a process journal. Students will have the opportunity to use a variety of art mediums to decorate and add images their journals'.

The student will recognize the influence that stereotyping can have on one's response to artifacts of a different culture or society. When students have a better understanding of different cultures, they are more understanding of differences within our

school community. Most of my classes have student from a minimum of three different cultures. Providing students with the opportunity to learn more about their peers will foster a better understanding and appreciation of their differences.

The student will explore connections between cultures and societies. Students will learn about the similarities and differences of various cultures within our school through discussions, readings, writing and art. The students will make and create a Japanese stab book. The students will be using Orizomegami to dye the paper and decorate the outside of the book. Orizomegami is essentially paper that has been folded and then dyed to produce a pattern when the paper is unfolded. If you work with fabrics, you might notice similarities between Orizomegami and the Japanese fabric dyeing techniques of shibori or itajime. This technique is simple, producing beautiful papers and fabrics. Orizomegami has a life of its own and you can only control the final result so much. The students will be creating and using a Japanese stab book as a journal to record this work. Students will be creating a cover using the Japanese folding and dyeing method called Orizomegami.⁴ We will also discuss color and color symbolism in different cultures. The use of symbolism in art is well documented throughout history. The students can use colors to express mood, emotions and ideas in their visual journals.



Example of Orizomegami showing various folding techniques.

The students will be exposed to artworks from a variety of artists, as well as artwork reflective of the students' different cultures.

We will also focus on I.V. 3, which states the student will create art using a variety of tools, media, and processes, safely and appropriately. By designing and creating the visual process journal, students will have the opportunity to use a variety of tools, media and processes. Students will have the opportunity to use a variety of media including watercolor, inks, colored pencils, pastels, rice paper, sumi paper, collage and paints. The students will be exposed to these materials earlier in the year so they will feel comfortable using them in their books.

Content Research

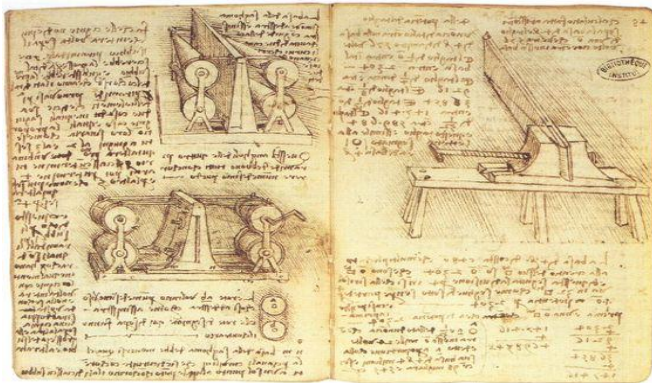
“The unexamined life is not worth living.” Socrates (470-399 BCE)

You can go into any big box store, book store or drug store and find various types of journals. In our busy world of emails, texts, social media people are still finding the time to write in all types of journals. Journals can be used for planning, writing, goal setting, and daily reflections. All of these different types of journals show us that the examined life is a worthwhile goal for all of us.⁵ Journaling provides all of us with the opportunity to develop, plan and execute ideas. My art students will be using these journals to percolate a multitude of ideas and mediums before creating artworks from sketches and writings

Visual journaling has existed throughout history as a process of reflective thinking, and as a record of image making. Throughout history great thinkers have recorded and reflected on their ideas using a variety of visual journaling techniques.⁶

Da Vinci (1452-1519) carried a visual journal with him at all times so that he could record ideas, impressions, and observations as they occurred. His journals, of which seven thousand pages exist, contained observations and thoughts of scholars he admired, personal financial records, letters, reflections on domestic problems, philosophical musings and prophecies, plans for inventions, and treatises on anatomy, botany, geology, flight, water, drawings and paintings. Evidence of visual journaling throughout art history can also be seen in the visual journals of Norwegian expressionist Edvard Munch (1863-1944), Contemporary artist Eric Fischl (1948- present), and artist Michael Bell (1971-present).⁷

Leonardo da Vinci Journal Pages



Artists have continued to use visual journaling as a way to record evidence of the creative process, and to incorporate practice and theory. Visual journaling encourages students to understand themselves on a more complex, intrinsic level. Journaling is an effective way to break down communication barriers by using the visual journaling process as a form of self-discovery and visual communication. Visual journals document how we believe, which moves us out of our automatic reaction to an event into a focus on the process.

Providing examples of journals from Munch, Fischl, DaVinci, Bell and other contemporary artists will supply the student with examples of visual imagery and writings to study and peruse for ideas. Michael Bell is a visual journal artist who I first saw speak at the National Conference for Art Education in Boston, Massachusetts. I credit him with my interest in journaling as an art form. He talked about using journaling as a safe place for the students to share their thoughts and artwork. Bell also let the students decide if they wanted to share their work with him. One of my goals with this lesson is for the students to feel comfortable sharing and showing respect for their classmates work as well.

I will show the students a variety of websites on Japanese stab books, as well as student/teacher examples of a variety of books. The art of dying paper using a variety of folding techniques is well documented in the Japanese culture. One website we can use in class is https://www.cantonart.org/media/1/5/kimono_bookmaking.pdf⁸ which describes Orizomegami and assemblage of the book and the signature.

There are numerous websites on bookmaking and the visual journal as a vehicle to develop a personal voice and meaning making. One site I find extremely useful is the website of The National Museum of Women in the Arts⁹. The NMWA has an entire section on bookmaking resources for educators. This allows students to see the background as well as the uses for journaling in a historical framework.

Ted Orland looks at creativity this way, “anything you care about has the potential for adding breadth and perspective to your understanding of the world simply by drawing you into areas far removed for your day to day patterns.”¹⁰ I compare this to the artist Leonardo da Vinci though primarily a visual artist, Leonardo actively studied anatomy, engineering, literature and philosophy all of which helped to make him a better artist. By providing my students with knowledge and ideas from other disciplines I am giving them the opportunity to develop new perspectives and ideas on their own. Their journals will provide a safe place for these ideas to germinate and take shape.

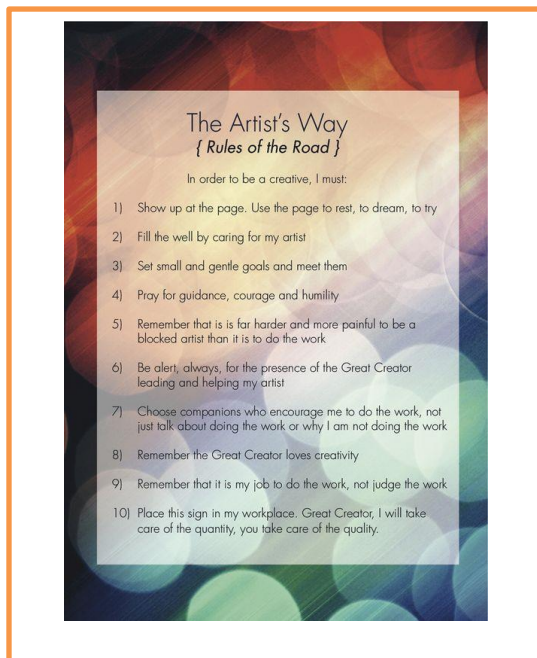
Instructional Implementation

Teaching Strategies

Analysis of Student Work: Peer and teacher reviews of the students' visual journal and/or specific pages of the journals. We can use these reviews to informally and formally assess the students' progress, provide constructive criticism. Using a rubric to assess the student work helps insure student success because the students are cognizant of what they need to do to succeed. Students will also have the opportunity to review a cross section of journals including Leonardo Da Vinci's, Edvard Munch, and the more contemporary artist Michael Bell. I also have a collection of AP students' journal pages that the students will have access to as well.

Brainstorming: Providing the students with the opportunity to brainstorm a variety of responses to a prompt, artwork, critique, poems, art critiques and personal writings. This can be as simple as having them write down and/or sketch everything they notice (visually, physically, smells) when they sit down in the classroom. Encouraging the students to respond quickly to what they see in an artwork or what they think might happen next in a work of art will foster spontaneity of thought. By writing, sharing and/or discussing the first thoughts that come to mind the students are less likely to censor their response and come up with multiple solutions.

Guided activity: I will provide the students with a series of prompts to extend thinking and in turn drawing/painting/collaging in their visual journals. Artist Way cards¹¹ can be used to spark creativity and thoughts about their work and others. These cards help foster student engagement in conversations that they might not normally address in a typical arts classroom. I often use visual prompts of artworks in the style of art the students are working on in class. These artworks will show the students a historical and cultural context of a variety of artworks and artists.



An example of an Artist's way Creativity card- Rules of the Road Card.

Word Wall: A word wall is an organized collection of words displayed in a classroom and frequently used as an interactive literacy tool for teaching vocabulary. In the visual arts classroom we will target words used in art critiques, the elements and principals of design as well as, words related to specific projects. For purposes of this lesson we will use words related to bookmaking, visual journals, self-assessment and critique. Our word wall will address academic vocabulary and language, identify similarities and differences, read aloud, and hands on learning.

Words included: bookbinding, bookmaking, Coptic bound book, end papers, Japanese stab book, Orizomegami, shibori, haiku, embroidery floss, signature, symmetry, balance, pattern, rhythm, line, shape, value, alcohol ink, whalebone

Lessons:

Day 1-

Orizomegami: Students will study the art of Japanese paper folding and dyeing. The students will complete a series of five different dyed papers. The students will use the paper for the cover for their Japanese stab book.

Introduction of the dyeing process and its multiple uses in Japanese culture. Watch the video on Orizomegami/shibori to provide the students with a variety of ideas on how they can add interest and pattern to their own papers. Here is a list of several videos and websites that the students can use to research the art of paper dyeing before beginning their own papers:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eMeJJiENTo0>¹¹
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KbArX1x9xI>¹²

The list on YouTube for Popular Dyeing and Shibori Videos has over two hundred videos that show the students a variety of folding and dyeing techniques. I will set up a folder in Google classroom and Canvas for the students to peruse for videos that interest them. I will create a list of folding techniques that I want them to look up and/or watch on video.

Materials needed: computers, sketchbooks, television

Day 2-

The students will use a variety of folding techniques to make five Orizomegami/shibori dyed papers after a teacher demonstration of the process. We will discuss how we can use color to add interest and contrast. I will use the handouts from Japanese Book Making Unit from the Canton Museum of art to assist the students in coming up with ideas and plans for their books: https://www.cantonart.org/media/1/5/kimono_bookmaking.pdf¹³ Students will have stations of a variety of inks/dyes/and food coloring to dye their papers.

Once students have completed their papers they can start on their cover page using a design made with their initials. Their design will use colors, patterns, words, drawings, symbols that are representative of their identity.

Materials needed: rice paper, watercolor paper, sumi paper, tissue paper, construction paper, watercolors, pastels, oil pastels, pencils, scissors, dyes, inks, paint brushes, rubber bands, bulldog clips, glue sticks, yes paste, decorative papers, water containers, brushes, computers, ladybug camera to project teacher demonstration onto the board/TV.

Days Three through Five

Day Three

Students will assemble their journals.

- Students will pick an Orizomegami paper to use for the cover of their journal and using glue that will adhere it to a piece of railroad board.
- Covering the boards-teacher demonstration and video
- Punching holes in the board-mark holes ½ inch apart using a guide and an awl
- Punching holes in signatures-fold paper signatures in half one sheet at a time. You can put five sheets together to clamp and punch holes but not more than that at one time. Students will have a total of 30 pages total so they will have six signatures as well as the table of contents and their Initial page
- Once students have finished assembling their signatures they will add a table of contents, end papers (blank or designed papers that go directly behind the cover pages.
- Students will have a variety of stitching techniques that they can use to sew their books together using a round tapestry #3 needle and embroidery thread.

Day Four

The poet Rainer Maria Rilke wrote: “There is only one journey, going inside yourself.” One of my goals with this unit is to provide the students with multiple opportunities to gain a better understanding of their own identity. I am going to provide the students with multiple prompts that focus with on understanding of self.

The first writing prompt will be the “I am what I am” lesson. Below is my example of the verse which I will share with my students.

I am what I am. I am the oldest child, the first of five children of Helen and Ben. I was the example setter, the modeler of the way to do things. I am what I am.

I am the sister of John Michael, Ben, Sarah and Carrie. I am the mother of Brittany and Travis. I am what I am.

I am a widow stumbling, laughing, and crying trying to identify with my non-linear life. The absence of my soul mate, my best friend, my husband, a painter, trying to find a way to express my thoughts with images.

To gain a semblance of normalcy in my life. I am what I am. I am a traveler, a lover of the world and visiting new places, meeting new friends. I am what I am.

The students will write their own “I am What I am” poem in their journal on the first page after their “Name Design”. I will do a think, pair, share with the students. Students will share one/one and then share with the class if they wish.

Materials

Alcohol inks-inks with alcohol that overlap easily and are very vibrant

Bulldog clips-large clips to hold the assembled book together while the students sew it together

Colored pencils-pencils with a variety of colors made from wax

Embroidery floss-a woven yarn made of silk and cotton

End papers-papers the go directly behind the cover page and in front of the back page

India Inks-permanent inks that do not fade

Japanese stab book-a sewn book that is bigger but similar to a pamphlet

Masking tape-1/2" tape used to mask out section and to tape grid for holes in place

Orizomegami-a type of paper dyeing used by the Japanese and now used extensively in art classrooms

Paint brush-brushes used to apply paint

Pens-pens used to dip in india ink

Railroad board-a thick board used for the cover of the Japanese stab book

Rice paper-a thin paper that is translucent and holds ink well

Shibori-a type of Japanese paper dyeing for paper that is very similar to tie-dyeing

Signature- papers that are sewn together to make a visual journal

Sumi paper-a paper that is made with strands of thread still showing through translucent paper

Tapestry needle-large, sharp needle used to thread the floss through the book

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⁸ Jevic, Kathy. "Japanese Book Making Unit - Canton Museum of Art." Kimono as Art. Accessed October 31, 2016. https://www.cantonart.org/media/1/5/kimono_bookmaking.pdf. Bookmaking Unit focusing on Orizomegami, bookmaking, haiku's and assembling the book.

⁹ "National Museum of Women in the Arts | Home Page." National Museum of Women in the Arts. Accessed October 20, 2016. <https://nmwa.org/>. Great teacher resources on a variety of types of bookmaking.

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¹¹ *Shibori Tie Dye Methods*. Performed by Christina Ramirez. YouTube. August 26, 2016. Accessed October 30, 2016. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9KbArX1x9xI>. Gives specific instructions for completing several types of shibori tie dying.

¹² Jevic, Kathy. "Japanese Book Making Unit - Canton Museum of Art." *Kimono as Art*. Accessed October 31, 2016. https://www.cantonart.org/media/1/5/kimono_bookmaking.pdf. Bookmaking Unit focusing on Orizomegami, bookmaking, haiku's and assembling the book.

¹³ *Ibid*

Appendix I: Teaching Standards

I.V.1 -visual arts standard which states the student will use the language of visual art to communicate effectively. The students will use arts vocabulary and terms to write about and analyze images. The students will use the elements of art (line, shape, form, texture, color, value, and space) and the principles of art (balance, proportion, emphasis, variety, movement, rhythm, and harmony) when discussing their artwork and the art of others.

I.V.2-visual arts literacy standard which states that the student will apply creative and critical thinking skills to artistic expression. The students will generate innovative solutions to artistic problems. In this project students will decide what dyeing techniques to use, what type of haiku they want to write about, how they can illustrate the P.XC.1.ir book pages and what binding stitches they will use to assemble the book.

P.CX.1-Understand the global, historical, societal, and cultural contexts of the visual arts. The students will address the clarifying objective P.CX.1.4-understand how personal aesthetic responses to art are influenced by culture. Being in a school with a large number of diverse cultures this is extremely important in developing understanding and appreciation for others. By sharing their personal stories the students will develop and awareness of who their fellow classmates are and how they see themselves.

P.CR.1-Use critical analysis to generate responses to a variety of prompts. The students will continue to receive warm-ups/bell ringers that promote analysis of a variety of artworks and prose. Using the clarifying objectives P.CR.1.1 which states that the students will differentiate between personal aesthetic response and objective critical response to art. Working with the students in completing critiques with written prompts to help them get beyond a cursory look at their own work or that of others. This can include think, pair, share, artist way cards, writing prompts, finish the painting prompts, and what happens next in the painting questions/drawings.