



Visual Storytelling: Talking Pictures

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

Keywords: Visual Storytelling, Visual clues, Romare Bearden, Jacob Lawrence, narrative, series, Google classroom, iPads, Visual Thinking Skills, fourth grade, talking pictures, visuals, images, storyteller

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

Synopsis: This curriculum unit explores how visuals in picture books tell a story. I will focus on two artists, Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden, who lived parallel lives in Harlem during the Harlem Renaissance. I chose these artists due to fact that Bearden comes from the Charlotte area and that both lived transient lifestyles similar to many of my students. Lawrence and Bearden moved frequently similar to my economically disadvantaged students. I want to demonstrate that both artists were artists first and illustrators second. I will introduce two books, The Great Migration by Jacob Lawrence and Li'l Dan the Drummer Boy: A Civil War Story by Romare Bearden. The Great Migration came from a narrative series of paintings called "Migration Series" (1940-1941). Li'l Dan the Drummer Boy: A Civil War Story was created over decades and published after Bearden's death.

Students will realize the importance of visual clues in art, picture books, and social media. Visual images open up imagination and communicate a message. Most visuals are purposefully put together to generate a mood, feeling, or communicate a message.

I plan to teach this unit during the coming year to 75 students in Art/Grade 4.

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Visual Storytelling: Talking Pictures

Teresa S. Strohl

Introduction

“What no words! How do I read this book?” says a fourth grade student. Another student says, “Oh it is easy to read! Pictures tell a story.” So I ask the students, “How do visuals communicate a story?” A student answers, “pictures show feelings, mood, and provide information.” Another student pipes up and says, “It is like a talking picture!” I was glad to hear the responses of my students because they seem to understand the importance of pictures in stories. My students are correct, pictures do talk to you. Humans have been doing this since cave paintings in Lascaux, France to current day phenomenon such as Snapchat or Instagram. Visuals do communicate a story and all societies are dependent on this medium today.

This unit will focus on two artists from the same period of time in Harlem, a large neighborhood in New York City. This time in New York City’s history is called Harlem Renaissance. The artists Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden were among the many African-American artists, musicians, poets and writers during this arts explosion in Harlem. Harlem became a cultural center between the end of World War I and the mid 1930’s.¹ Lawrence and Bearden’s friendship grew during this time. Both artists used different mediums in their work but told similar stories of their surroundings. Lawrence painted using tempura on cardboard, a medium that dried quickly so he could paint over it if necessary to display the ever-changing landscape. Romare Bearden used collage, a medium that depicted many underlying stories of his life. My students move from home to home frequently, so they will make connections to the transient life of both artists. The book 7 Keys to Comprehension states that, “A child is much more apt to remember stories, books, and incidents that are meaningful because they connect to other things in his life.”²

I will introduce two books that were illustrated by artist’s Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden. Students will recognize that both were artists first and then used their art to illustrate a book. This demonstrates how easily these paintings tell a story without using text like my student pointed out, “talking pictures.”

Overview

My students come from two different socio-economic backgrounds: one group is the inner city and low-income students while the other is predominantly middle class from the suburbs of Charlotte. The extreme differences in my students’ backgrounds make them a diverse set of fourth graders. My school is Barringer Academic Center; it is an

elementary school located in Charlotte, NC. It is in the Mecklenburg school district, which is very diverse and includes 178 schools. There are 655 students within my 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 of the school. 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. 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, “Visual Storytelling,” will take approximately four weeks to complete. My classroom is a creative space where my students will be inspired. I want to create an environment for my students to feel like artists. I am lucky to have a large art room with eight tables and a large drying rack. I have storage for supplies, three sinks, access to a class set of iPads, and a separate room for the kiln. My students are able to create an array of 2D to 3D projects. I frequently display student work in local banks, office buildings, and YMCA to foster a sense of pride in my students. To further express the value of collaboration in the art community, I will incorporate an interactive blog site for students to comment on each other’s work. This will foster a partnership between parents, students, and community. There is a strong belief that students will retain more information if parents are informed and reinforcing what is learned in the classroom. Deborah Davis states in an article titled, “Supporting Parent, Family, and Community Involvement in your School that “The family makes critical contributions to a child’s achievement.”³ A parent who participates in a child’s education sends a message that school is important and worthy of attention.

This “Visual Storytelling” unit will be implemented in the 4th grade. Because I teach both academically gifted and general education students, it is imperative that I differentiate my lessons to keep students motivated and challenged in my art room. Incorporating literacy in the art room is a large focus in many districts across the nation. Some of my students struggle with reading; they rely on visual images to decode what they are reading. Adding picture books will strengthen their reading skills and build upon a process that is being emphasized in their general classroom. Art brings forth a level of excitement and enthusiasm in most students and these fourth graders are no exception! Producing art taps into the critical mind-set of students allowing them to describe, analyze, interpret, evaluate, conduct research, make meaningful connections, communicate, show beauty and practice creativity.

Rationale

My unit will build on the general classroom instruction by giving the fourth graders one more important figure in North Carolina history, Romare Bearden. Students will make the connection to Romare Bearden’s life and subject matter primarily because he is from

the Charlotte area. Jacob Lawrence is another artist that my students will relate to, coming from a single family home and moving from place to place. Bearden and Lawrence created using different mediums. Bearden used collage and Lawrence painted using tempura and acrylics, while both created a series of narrative pictures. The series of narratives they created lent easily to illustrating picture books. Romare Bearden illustrated and wrote Lil Dan, the drummer boy over decades and Jacob Lawrence illustrated The Great Migration, Harriet and the Promised Land, and Aesop Fables. I want students to realize how important visuals are in telling a story. Through these artists students will recognize how visuals sharpen and stimulate their imagination. Both were artists first and illustrators of children's picture books second.

All people listen to stories using their senses; they observe the pictures with their eyes which makes the story a real object. Early readers rely on pictures to assist with sounding out words and advanced readers need pictures to imagine different objects they may not be familiar with. Pictures develop a student's imagination; pictures become a universal language. Students will listen to a story using their ears when a story is read aloud or when a student reads silently. Readers listen to a story with their heart reading the emotions on the faces of the characters, the interaction between characters, and identifying with the characters. Pictures make a lasting impression on the reader, assisting with recall and comprehension. Students listen to stories using their personal experiences such as relating to a culture, seeing self in certain situations, or connecting with what they see. My students will realize reading visual images are a central part of any children's book. There are specific reasons why colors and typeface are used in a book. The book cover illustrates a particular story on its own referring to the "talking pictures" quote from my students. The size and shape of a book, the placement of the type and pictures, and the color of the end pages all contribute to the construction of a book.

This unit will look at how pictures are all around everyone every day, while driving in a car, watching TV, or sitting at a computer. Technology is so advanced today that images are used to trigger your buying impulses. Most of my students' days are spent on some kind of technological device, so discussing how and why the images they see are used will make them more aware of their surroundings.⁴

Objectives

One of my primary objectives with this unit is to establish a need for reading visuals in picture books. Students respond easily to what they see in pictures at any age. Once students understand how to read visuals in pictures books/art they will transfer those skills easily to written text. Reading pictures in books, bulletin boards, and on social media sites, the viewer looks for visual clues to tell the story or communicate a message. Most of the time the viewer doesn't realize that he/she is reading the picture. Strong readers use visualization to gather information and to comprehend what they are reading. Readers draw from all five senses and their own background knowledge to connect to

text.⁵ Classroom teachers are constantly challenged with raising reading levels; showing students a new way to look at picture books through the eyes of artist/illustrators may support teachers in this task.

Students will be introduced to two artists that tell narrative stories through their art work. Students will realize that visuals create mental pictures in their mind and are bombarded with these images through social media today. It is important for students to discern what these images mean.

Visual Background

Some of the first visual images created were on cave walls in Lascaux, France. Hunters painted pictures of their kills on cave walls using crushed berries and rocks. They used the walls to decorate, to celebrate their kills, and to count how many and what kind of animals they killed. Egyptians told stories using hieroglyphics (symbols). Those symbols created will forever have a meaning in today's language. Literature is born from a human need to tell a story. Stories are passed down from generations telling from the past and imagining the future. Visual storytelling has a rich background throughout history.⁶ By introducing the history of visuals, students will recognize the importance of pictures now and throughout history.

Content Background

I will read aloud two books, one illustrated by Jacob Lawrence called The Great Migration and the other book written and illustrated by Romare Bearden called The Li'l Dan, the drummer boy: A Civil War Story. Both artists, Lawrence and Bearden were friends growing up in Harlem and were part of an arts organization called the 306 Group. The 306 Group is a group for artists that shared studio space, collaborated on ideas, and displayed their work in art shows.⁷ Lawrence told stories using tempura paint on cardboard and Bearden told stories through photo collage. Both artists used different mediums but similar subject matters such as their Harlem arts community. Lawrence and Bearden both painted on a series of panels. Painting a series of images naturally creates a story about the subject. Both men were artists first and book illustrators second. The series of narratives that they both created easily told a story.

Jacob Lawrence (1917-2000)

Jacob Lawrence was an African-American artist who painted during the Harlem Renaissance. Lawrence enjoyed telling stories through his paintings. He often painted large panels as in "Migration Series" (1940-1941) that eventually turned into a picture book called The Great Migration. Lawrence painted many pictures through his life and had much recognition during his lifetime.

His mother was from Virginia and his father was from South Carolina. They married in Atlantic City, New Jersey. The Lawrences expected life to be easier in the North but finding a job was difficult. When Jacob was seven years old his father left the family so it was up to his mother to find work. She left Jacob and his siblings in Philadelphia to find work in New York City. She soon sent for them and moved them to an apartment in Harlem. Jacob's mother signed him up for an afterschool art program at Utopia Children's House. The director of the art program was Charles Alston; he inspired Lawrence to paint. Soon Jacob Lawrence enjoyed his afterschool program more than school. He entered into the Government Art Program which paid for his materials and gave him \$23.86 per week, more money than many jobs during the Depression. He had to paint two paintings a week; he painted many more than that. Jacob Lawrence became known for painting stories he was familiar with and painted pictures of his surroundings. He went off to serve in World War II and painted the story of the war through the eyes of the soldiers fighting such as in his "War Series." His most famous works are "Migration Series" (1940-1941) and the "Builders Series." He illustrated three books: The Great Migration, Harriet and the Promised Land, and Aesop's Fables.⁸

Lawrence painted using simple shapes, minimal colors, and black outlines. Artists create art to tell a story, capture a landscape or simply arrange colors on a canvas to create beauty. The images he painted were perfect for children's picture books; they were painted using simple shapes, brightly colored and easily identifiable. When an artist, such as Jacob Lawrence, created a painting he had a purpose for the color he used, the placement of the images and facial expression or lack of facial expression. Artists are visual thinkers continually observing, arranging and refining their work. "Jacob Lawrence was no different he was an observer and storyteller who focused on the struggles for freedom and justice in America from Civil War period of the 1860's through the civil rights movement of the 1960 's to the end of the 20th Century."⁹

Lawrence sums up his work: "Most of my work depicts events from the many Harlems that exist throughout the United States. This is my genre. My surroundings. The people I know ... the happiness, tragedies, and the sorrows of mankind ... I am part of the Black community, so I am the Black community speaking." As this quote states, Lawrence worked from what he saw in his community. My students will use images from their surroundings since they are from the inner city and primarily African-American.

Here is a link to the Migration Series.
http://www.phillipscollection.org/migration_series/. Viewing this series of paintings you will find how Lawrence was a natural storyteller. Lawrence's paintings are created in an order with a beginning, middle, and end which naturally tells a story. Each painting is easily understood by using simple block images of people leaving choosing to go North for better opportunities. The background and setting conveys the hard work African-Americans had to do to survive. The colors are as simple as the shapes. There are distinct differences in people: the whites are portrayed as evil and the blacks are hardworking

laborers. Lawrence uses overlapping images to create depth. He repeats colors and textures to give the notion of a hard difficult life. Each panel is framed and numbered convenient to place in a book.

One of the more famous books about Jacob Lawrence's life is called Story Painter, a suitable title for the narrative paintings he painted.¹⁰ Jacob Lawrence's life is documented in this book showing the many layers of his life. His paintings document important stories of enslavement, freedom, and migration.

Romare Bearden (1911-1988)

Romare Bearden had a distinguished career similar to Jacob Lawrence. Bearden was born in Charlotte, North Carolina and moved to New York City as a young boy. His extended family stayed in Charlotte, NC. He grew up in Harlem during the Harlem Renaissance. He began college at Lincoln University then moved to Boston University and eventually completed his mathematics degree at New York University. He was an educated man in mathematics. Bearden also served in the Army during World War II.¹¹

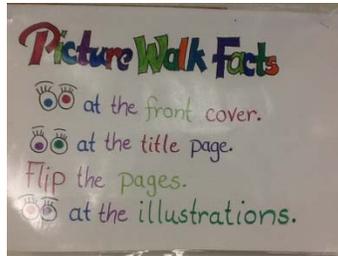
Bearden created photo collages and watercolor paintings about his environment. Many of his paintings contained images from his roots in Charlotte, North Carolina and many paintings were influenced by Jazz music he encountered while living in Harlem. He was most famous for his collage paintings. In many of his collages he added trains, family, and homes always overlapping and outlining his images. These images were important to his storytelling because they illustrated the importance of his surroundings. He used layering in his collages to imply many layers of his life.

Romare Bearden illustrated many books but of one book, Li'l Dan, the drummer boy: A Civil War Story, he was the author and illustrator. This book was not published during his lifetime but it was an ongoing story he wrote over decades in between his other works. This book was illustrated in watercolors unlike his layered collage technique. The setting of the story takes place outside providing the landscape with a softer feel in direct contrast to the violence of war. The paintings are outlined giving the images a defined space. Students will relate to the simple images in this book thinking they could easily create something similar.

Here is a link to the book Li'l Dan, the drummer boy: A Civil War Story. <http://www.beardenfoundation.org/artlife/bibliography/childrens.shtml>. Students will enjoy the busy colorful illustrations within this book. The lines surrounding the images show movement of the characters. Because the images are clean and bright they portray a different idea of war. The images throughout the book are floating giving the reader a sense that the narrator is remembering the story.

Teaching Strategies

The teaching strategies will vary greatly throughout the lessons to ensure all learning styles are met. The students will create an interactive blog to record their projects. This will be a record of their work; our district has implemented a new evaluation instrument called Analysis of Student Work to show measurable student growth. Having all of their work in one place will make it easier to gather evidence of growth for each student.



Picture Walk

One strategy that I will use to introduce this unit will be to read aloud two picture books The Great Migration by Jacob Lawrence and Li'l Dan, the drummer boy: A Civil War Story by Romare Bearden. Students will gather to look at the cover, title page, spine of the book, and flip through the illustrations. The students will make predictions about the story by only looking at the illustrations. This technique is called Picture Walk.

Collaboration

I am not lucky enough to have a formal time to collaborate with my colleagues so organizing, executing, and planning are done after school hours. In my experience the benefits to students outweigh the challenges of planning a collaborative lesson. Students retain much more content when there is an extension into one of the special area classes, especially art. Students are more apt to remember and make connections to the art discussed if they create a tactile project.

This unit will use cross disciplinary teaching strategies. There will be an integration of literacy and visual arts taught throughout this unit. The students are familiar with this type of integration; it is used throughout the district and our individual school. Classrooms like this require planning and cooperation. Creating integrated lessons give the arts greater visibility in the school and community because they create hands-on activity related to the content area. Teachers create more rigorous and meaningful lessons by working together. As teachers, displaying collaboration in their classroom will set an expectation for students to work together and communicate more effectively.

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. I will link the Romare Bearden site, <http://www.beardenfoundation.org> and Jacob Lawrence site, <http://whitney.org/www/jacoblawrence/meet/> to my school webpage. I will set up a Google classroom for the fourth grade classes. Students will be able to view a lesson about visual storytelling and be able to complete the activity at home online in the Google classroom. I will remind students that what is written online will be forever seen on the internet. A great teachable moment!

Students will set-up a blog page so they can reflect on their activities during this lesson. When using technology to write a blog and reflect on their work, students will begin to understand the implications of posting on the internet. I will encourage the students to think about what they say before they say it! Blogging is a teaching method that creates meaningful reflections, incorporates reading and writing and the ability to share with others. When students produce something on a technological device they seem to absorb it more easily because students today are modern learners. The best teaching strategies are the ones in which students do not realize they are learning.¹²

Integration

This unit will use cross disciplinary teaching strategies. There will be an integration of literacy and visual arts taught throughout this unit. The students are familiar with this type of integration; it is used throughout the district and our individual school. Classrooms like this require planning and cooperation. Creating integrated lessons gives the arts greater visibility in the school and community because it creates a hands-on activity related to the content area. Teachers create more rigorous and meaningful lessons by working together. Modeling partnerships for students encourages stronger peer relationships. As teachers, displaying collaboration in their classroom will set an expectation for students to work together and communicate more effectively.

Visual Thinking Skills

The Visual Thinking Strategy I will use is called I Wonder. The teacher asks an open ended question *What do you see?* Students will give the answer in their words and the facilitator/teacher will acknowledge every answer. This will create a safe supported student-centered environment. The next question is *I wonder what about the work?* Once again the facilitator/teacher repeats back the answers given in the students own words. Both techniques keep students engaged, let them provide their own answers, and let them explore the art at their own pace.

I will use Jacob Lawrence's "Forward" (1967), <http://artnc.org/works-of-art/forward> for this activity because the fourth graders are familiar with Tubman's story. They will bring prior knowledge to the discussion of this print. They will create a story in their

mind about the painting by using their prior knowledge of Tubman such as her strength, her journey to free the slaves, and her leadership.

I will use Romare Bearden's "Harlem Street Scene" (1973) from the Hewitt Collection at the Harvey Gantt Center. <http://ganttcenter.pastperfect-online.com/38802cgi/mweb.exe?request=record;id=43460729-8551-491E-8204-741246393580;type=101>. This painting illustrates the sense of community in Harlem during the 1970's. My students will relate to this urban lifestyle connecting to a sense of community they see every day.

Demonstration

Throughout this unit I will review previous learned material; this is due to the forty-five minute blocks meeting only once a week. A week is a long time between lessons. All activities are modeled first to demonstrate the art technique; students have greater success during the activity when they see examples. After every visual storytelling activity, students will post to an interactive blog. This will give students a chance to reflect on their art. Posting to their blog serves as a backchannel for students to develop collaborative conversations they may not be able to have face-to-face.

Art Talk

Throughout the school year I encourage my students to speak using art vocabulary. I call this Art Talk. I feel strongly that students should use art words to analyze art, interpret art and reflect on their own artwork. As I set this expectation year after year I see the students use the words correctly not just in the art room but in their classrooms.

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. I start every year with a word wall lesson specific for each grade level. I continually point out the art word that I am concentrating on in the lesson. Students need to be aware that words have different meanings within different content areas. I set this expectation in the art room at the beginning of the year while in my room the students will speak using the protocol of art talk. I will remind them to use their art words. This sets an expectation that the visual arts matter!

Thinking Maps

Thinking maps are a strategy that displays brainstorming about a certain subject. I will write Jacob Lawrence in a bubble and Romare Bearden in a bubble on the white board so

the bubbles intersect. I will have students describe each artist individually then where the bubbles intersect students will brainstorm the similarities about the artists. I use this technique frequently, students need to see compare and contrast visually rather than only hearing it.

Differentiate Learning

Differentiated learning strategies look different in the art room than in general education classrooms. I encourage creative chatter. Having only 45 minutes proves difficult to help all 25 students. I have 3-4 students assigned to each table. Peer assistance is available at every table because when I assign seats I put at least one student who is able to work cooperatively per group. I frequently roam the classroom to assist students with more support. When a student asks for help in the art room, he or she most likely wants you to draw for them; I solve that problem by drawing with the eraser and not the pencil. The eraser technique assists them by giving them confidence in their own artistic abilities.

Reflection

Rubrics are a strategy that I often include in my lessons. A rubric focuses on a specific skill and places accountability on the student. I find it easy to measure a student's performance through rubrics. I have students glue their rubrics on the back of their art so students and I can easily see their performance over the school year.

This year every student has an art journal; on the inside cover of the journal there is a checklist for their artwork. I have the students glue the checklist in their journals as a reminder to be creative, neat, colorful, and complete.

Another strategy for reflection is called two stars and one wish and it is conducted after a student completes his/her work. The students answer two questions on the back of their work. The questions are: *What two things did you like best about your work?* and *What is it that you might change about your work?* I lead a discussion on the answers that are acceptable to these questions. The expectation in my classroom is while discussing works of art they must cite supporting information about the piece of art. I want students to be aware of how the viewer analyzes art and that it is an opinion of the viewer, there is not a right or wrong answer. My instructional goals for using this strategy are to strengthen public speaking skills, show evidence of answers, and learn to give constructive comments.

Classroom Activities

In the art room, I will start by introducing visual storytelling. I will put a concept map on the white board using the words "visual storytelling." Students will come to the board one-by-one and surround the word books with words that come to mind when the visual

storytelling is mentioned. I anticipate the students having some prior knowledge of storytelling, especially due to the fact that this unit will overlap with their general classroom instruction. They also have the expectation in my class they will have an active and engaging lesson.

Lesson One: Compare Jacob Lawrence and Romare Bearden

Goal: Create art from realistic sources of inspiration. This lesson will compare and contrast Bearden and Lawrence. I will share the history of Jacob Lawrence. Students enjoy hearing about an artist's life. During the discussion of Jacob Lawrence's life I will talk about some of his friends and make a connection to another artist during that time named Romare Bearden. I will talk about the two books illustrated by both artists.

As a whole group, students will look at Lawrence's paintings and Bearden's collages using a teaching strategy called Visual Thinking Skills. Implementing this strategy is easy; a teacher begins by asking an open ended question, *What do you see?* The students will answer the question then the teacher will ask another question *What do you see that makes you say that?* and *What more do you see?* trying to pull out more information about the painting without the teacher stating the facts about the art. Students are coming up with their own supported answers. The students learn by inquiry and active listening.

There is another Visual Thinking Strategy that could be used with this activity. It is called *I wonder...* The facilitator/teacher asks the question *What do you see?* The next question is *I wonder what about the image?* Students answer the questions; this begins a critical conversation about the work. The *I wonder* strategy works better on abstract pieces than narrative works. The second question of the *What do you see?* strategy has a direct response suggesting that there is evidence in the painting that tells a story.

After the class discusses paintings by both artists I will direct students to a Google classroom already set-up to view visual images of their work. There will be a virtual concept map of two images "Forward" (1967) by Jacob Lawrence and "Harlem Street Scene" (1973) by Romare Bearden I want students to instant message back and forth, within the virtual classroom, about the similarities and difference in each artist's work.

There will be another activity, it will be oil with collage painted on cardboard by Romare Bearden called "Mrs. Blanton's October Table" (1983). I will tell my students that a friend of mine owns the real painting not just a copy. They like to hear how my friend acquired the painting, where it is now, and how much it cost. This is an important part of how something abstract becomes realistic for my students. They will realize that they may be able to own one of these paintings we talk about someday. I want my students to view this painting in their virtual classroom and write a story about this painting. I will be able to comment on their stories and so will their peers.

Lesson Two: Series of art

Goal: How do visual images tell a story? This lesson will demonstrate the importance of visuals in storytelling. My students as a group will create a series of narrative paintings on a one subject. I will provide the story outline to each table and as a group they will create a sketch of the part of the story their table was assigned. After the students at each table have a sketch they will create a finished painting by working together. The paintings will be 12" x 12" for each table, at the end of the project there will be eight panels. I will display the eight panels in a line depicting a series of narratives that tell a story.

Students will walk through the gallery with a rubric critiquing the work of their peers. I will talk about the importance of positive, respectful comments. I also want students to reflect on their own work by using two stars and one wish. Students, as a group, will write down two things they did well on in the painting and one thing they would like to change. Students are acquainted with supporting their answers.

Lesson Three: iPad Photos

Goal: Visuals do tell a story. Students will use iPads to take a picture. I will talk about the rule of thirds, filling the frame and perspective in photographic composition. As you look through the lens of a camera, you see three imaginary horizontal lines and three imaginary vertical lines and where they intersect is a great place for the focal point of your picture; this is called the rule of thirds. I will discuss the idea of filling the frame or framing the composition. The last point will be perspective; maybe change your perspective that will change the outcome of the picture. If you do not explain what makes a good composition the students will take a picture of the ground. Students will go out around the school and take pictures with the iPads. I will print out all of the photos then students will trade photos with each other. The students will write a narrative about the photo they received hopefully creating a story in their mind. The background tells where the story is taking place, the characters or focal point of the picture shows action, and the viewer's imagination fills in the blanks of the story. Proving once again how visuals naturally tell a story.

Arts Alive Celebration

Goal: Students will be aware of community involvement. I will have an Arts Alive night, students will show off their artwork and stories to their parents. Students will set-up a gallery so parents can walk through the halls and see their work on display. There will be cheese and apple juice served to create the feel of an art gallery opening.

Appendix - Implementing District Standards

ELA Common Core Standards

RL.4.7 Make connections between the text of a story or drama and visual or oral presentation of the text, identifying where each version reflects specific descriptions and directions in the text.

This standard supports the important connection between text and visuals in literacy. Students will realize how visuals communicate a message in books and through social media.

RL.4.9 Compare and contrast the treatment of similar themes and topics and patterns of events in stories, myths, and traditional literature form different cultures.

Students will compare and contrast two artists Romare Bearden and Jacob Lawrence. These two artists were illustrators as well. I will show how both were artists first and illustrators second.

W.4.9 Draw evidence from literacy or informational texts to support analysis reflections and research.

Through visual thinking strategies students will critique each other's work and reflect on their own work. Students will understand how to look for visual clues. Students will use their literacy skills to infer, predict and analyze picture books.

Art Essential Standards

4.V.1 Use the language of visual arts to communicate effectively.

4.V.1.3 Infer meaning from art.

4.CR.1.1 Use visual clues to interpret the content of art.

Students will analyze and interpret art work by Romare Bearden and Jacob Lawrence. Students will recognize the importance of visual clues in picture books, art, and social media.

Reading List for Students

Bearden, Romare. *Li'l Dan, the drummer boy: a Civil War story*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, 2003.

Lawrence, Jacob, and Walter Dean Myers. *The Great Migration: an American story*. New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1993.

List of Materials for Classroom Use

White Paper
Watercolors
Art Prints
Black Sharpie Markers
Art Journals
iPads
Google Classroom
Chromebooks

Resources

Art Prints: Jacob Lawrence's "*Forward*" (1967), Romare Bearden's "*Harlem Street Scene*" (1973) Romare Bearden's "*Mrs. Blanton's October Table*" (1983), Jacob Lawrence's "*Migration Series*" (1940-1941)

Vocabulary

Storytelling- conveying events in words and images
Imagery – mental picture in your mind
Repetition – repeating something
Visual image– a mental picture; used in seeing an image
Written text- something written
Art Talk- Students will use the element and principle words when talking to anyone.
Word Wall – Art terminology gathered in one place.
Narrative painting – a painting that tells a story
Collage – cutting and pasting of images put together in one picture
Imagination – where your mind can see endless possibilities
Background – the image behind the subject of a picture.
Overlapping- One picture placed to cover a part of another picture
Viewer – the person looking at the painting

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Babcock, Jonathan , and Rebecca Parker. "The Jabian Journal - Spring 2014." Jabian. <http://www.jabian.com/insights/jabian-journal/jabian-journal-spring-2014-main/effective-communication-through-visual-storytelling-article/> (accessed October 26, 2014).
The story of communicating through pictures.

Bearden, Romare. *Li'l Dan, the drummer boy: a Civil War story*. New York: Simon &

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A boy named Dan, who was once a slave. He followed the Union Soldiers through battle.

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