

A Study of Art Integration's Effect on Student Writing:

Unit Plan

by

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Appendix H

Unit Plan

Course:

Grade 10 Academic English

Component	Explanation
DESCRIPTIVE TITLE:	<p>Home is not where you live but where they understand you. The homes, communities, and neighborhoods we live in have a profound effect on our perceptions of the world and how we react to it. When students reflect what places they consider home, why this is, and how this impacts their perception of the world. This unit will help them to reflect on their personal experiences, thoughts, and feelings, organize them, and translate them into an expository composition that is clear, goes into depth, and includes rich detail.</p>
GOALS:	<p>Students Should... (Based on the Ontario, Canada curriculum standards for grade 10 Academic English).</p> <p>Oral Communication 2.3 communicate in a clear, coherent manner, using a structure and style appropriate to the purpose, subject matter, and intended audience</p> <p>Writing 1.2 generate, expand, explore, and focus ideas for potential writing tasks, using a variety of strategies and print, electronic, and other resources, as appropriate</p> <p>Writing 1.4 identify, sort, and order main ideas and supporting details for writing tasks, using a variety of strategies and organizational patterns suited to the content and the purpose for writing</p> <p>Writing 2.6 revise drafts to improve the content, organization, clarity, and style of their written work, using a variety of teacher-modelled strategies</p>
INSTRUCTIONAL CONCEPTS:	<p>Traditional writing strategies guide students to use word-based tools for brainstorming ideas such as mind maps, and graphic organizers, followed by point-form outlines before students begin writing their first drafts of essays and other compositions. Although these strategies are effective for helping writers to organize their ideas, most students do not use them when they not required to, and when they do, they often have difficulty thinking of ideas to use in them. In the research study</p>

that precedes this appendix, the researcher hypothesizes that there are five nested levels of abstraction for writing:

Level 0: The thoughts and ideas in the writer's head

Level 1: A photographic image of the thoughts in the writer's head (impossible to obtain, at least at the present time)

Level 2: A drawing created by the student of the ideas in the writer's head

Level 3: A graphic organizer or mind map of the ideas in the writer's head

Level 4: An outline of the paper they intend to write based not the ideas in the writer's head

Level 5: the paper they write based on the ideas in the writer's head

When the focus students in this study were able to participate in an integrated drawing activity before writing, their average scores for clarity, depth, and detail improved. In most cases, there was a much richer trove of information communicated in the students' drawings than they were able to express in words. The average scores of the control group, those who did not participate in this study declined. This suggests that a disconnect between the ideas in students head and what information they are able to communicate on paper that was bridged by the drawings the students created.

In order to help students to make these connections when they are writing it is crucial for teachers to be able to go beyond the "surface attributes of their students and find out what goes on in their heads and in their worlds" (Simpson, 1998, p. 28). Drawing can help students express what goes on in their heads and their worlds more clearly and with more depth and detail than writing, even when the student is not highly skilled at it. Students can use their drawings as a visual reference to translate their thoughts into words independently, in discussion with a partner or small group, and when conferencing with a teacher.

In addition to the individual drawing activity, Reilly's (2008) "Art Conversations", twenty minute silent visual communications using finger paints will be used in this unit. It will help students demonstrate both comprehension and a shared, deep, introspective nonverbal expression of what the concept of home means to them. This technique has been shown to help English Language Learners write deep and insightful poetry, and in an integrated English classroom (where students of all abilities including English Language Learners and those with special needs) it will help students activate and connect their aesthetic right-brain senses both to express themselves and be inspired by each others' expressions.

LESSONS:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="570 344 1351 632">1) Building on prior knowledge: Students will reflect on the quotation “Home is not where you live, but where they understand you” by Christian Morganstern in their sketchbooks using both drawings and text . Following this, they will use the think-pair-share formula, and pair with a partner to discuss their drawings. Pairs will then share their drawings and ideas will then share their thoughts with the class.<li data-bbox="570 674 1351 1073">2) Students will be paired off with different partners than they worked with on day 1 to engage in a “talking pictures” finger painting exercise about their conceptions of what home means to them for approximately 20 minutes. The “art conversations” finger paintings charts will be displayed around the room and students will engage in a gallery walk to look at everyone’s work before returning to their seats for a class discussion about them. They will create mind maps to record in words, their thoughts and ideas re: what they will write about.<li data-bbox="570 1115 1351 1402">3) Students will use graphic organizers to structure and codify the ideas in their mind maps from lesson 2, and add to their mind maps (and drawings from day 1) if desired. Following this, students will use an outline template to decide which ideas to use in their final paper and where they will place them in its structure to maximize its clarity, depth, and details. During this time, the teacher will conference with the students<li data-bbox="570 1444 1351 1661">4) Students will use their outlines to write the first draft of their paper. They will trade papers with a partner and peer review each others’ work. They will write a second draft of the paper and refer to their drawings and graphic organizers as needed. They will turn in their paper for formal feedback from the teacher.<li data-bbox="570 1808 1351 1879">5) Students will use the feedback from the teacher to write the final draft of their paper, making corrections and

	strengthening their ideas, using their artwork and graphic organizers as needed. The students will turn in their final paper for grading.
MATERIALS	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) 11x17" cartridge paper 2) Markers 3) Colored pencils 4) Chalk pastels 5) Oil pastels 6) Graphite pencil 7) Erasers 8) Fine-tipped black ink pens 9) Finger paints 10) Finger painting paper 11) Lined paper 12) Photocopies of graphic organizers 13) Computer lab with a class set of computers
ASSESSMENT:	rubrics, in-process behavior checklist, guided discussions
REFERENCES:	<p>Reilly, M. A. (2008). Finding the right words: Art conversations and poetry. <i>Language Arts, Vol. 86, No. 2, 99-107.</i></p> <p>Simpson, J.W. (1998). In J.W. Simpson, J. M. Delaney, K. L. Carroll, C. M. Hamilton, S.I. Kay, M. S. Kerlavage, L.S. Janet <i>Choosing to become an teacher of art. In Creating meaning through art: Teacher as choicemaker</i> (pp 3 – 22). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.</p>