

Passports: Day in the Life of an Illustrator
Grade: 5-8

Description:

Students will learn first hand about the profession of illustrating from a children's book illustrator/graphic designer. Hearing about the illustrator's background and passions will inspire students to follow their creative interest! Students will learn all about the techniques and methods utilized by an illustrator to complete colorful creative drawings.

Preparation for the Excursion

To ensure the most meaningful learning experience for your students, it is recommended that students engage in activities prior to the excursion. The excursion is intended to complement a comprehensive unit. The video resources provide students with a context for the virtual excursion. The additional resources and activities offer opportunities for curricular connections and integration within your larger unit of study. During the excursion, classes will be asked to share their response to the challenge question and the expert will provide feedback. Select a class response for the challenge question.

Video Link: Use the following link to introduce students to the illustrator Taffy Corbett – http://www.21-learn.com/authors/taffy_corbett/index.htm

Challenge Question:

As an investigative challenge, use the challenge questions to introduce students to the Passport topic. Present the questions to the students in advance of the excursion to ensure they have enough time to research the answers to the questions. The presenter will activate students' prior knowledge by eliciting responses from the participants.

1. What is an illustration?
An illustration is an artist's rendering of scenes from a book.
2. What tools does an illustrator use to make drawings?
Pens, pencils, markers, paints, crayons, and computers.
3. Who is your favorite illustrator? Explain your choice.
Have students review books in the classroom to get a feel for different illustration styles
4. How do illustrations enhance a story?
Have students think about the way text and images work together to tell a story.

Vocabulary:

- sketch
- character
- perspective
- organic
- geometric
- pattern

Lesson Outcomes:

The students will:

- understand the techniques and tools used to create an illustration.
- create a sketch.

Lesson at a glance:

Students will explore the different techniques utilized by illustrators to create characters for books. It is important to enable students' creativity by encouraging their illustrations. Children's literature illustration has been in existence since the early 17th century, but its sophistication developed in the 19th century with artists such as Walter Crane, Kate Greenaway, and Randolph Caldecott.

Illustrations were initially drawings and etchings inspired by the author's writing to enhance the reading experience of children. Drawings required patient observation and constant practice. Illustrator Arthur Rackham produced a host of magnificent books beginning in 1900 with *The Fairy Tales of Grimm*. His work is noted for dramatic and detailed composition. Ernest Shepard's drawings for A. A. Milne's *Winnie-the-Pooh* (1926) and for an edition of Kenneth Grahame's *Wind in the Willows* (1931) are warm and humorous.

The tools of illustration have evolved with technology. Featured illustrator, Taffy Corbett, uses drawing with pencils, pens, and markers to sketch her characters, but the computer assists with completing her work. Computer programs are the new artistic tools introduced to art students to develop their careers in a technological era.

Activity 1 – Creating an observational drawing

Materials: drawing paper, pencils

Procedure:

Discuss that it is important for an artist to observe their surroundings in order to draw picture. Describe how drawing is a skill that can develop over time with practice. Explain how there are different types of drawing.

Next, divide students into two groups. Each will group will be given an object that they will observe and draw. Remind the students that cannot move the object and should draw from their perspective.

Evaluation: Students will be assessed according to their ability to follow directions. Also, students will be evaluated on their implementation of the drawing technique.

Activity 2 – Define the Line

Vocabulary: Point, perspective, line, geometric shape, organic shape, and pattern

Materials: drawing paper, crayons and/or markers, and scissors

Procedure: Each student should have four sheets of drawing paper. On the first sheet of drawing paper, the students should draw different types of lines. Explain to the students that lines have different sizes and shapes.

After the students have created different lines, ask the student to define the word “shape”. At this point, describe the different shapes found in art and nature. How does an artist recreate the shapes seen in nature? Explain to the students that shapes in nature are called “organic shapes.” Other shapes are “geometric” and this concept should be explained as circles, triangles, cubes, etc. The student should practice drawing geometric and organic shapes.

The next step will allow the students to describe the word “pattern”. Elicit responses from the students and have the student draw patterns on the third sheet of drawing paper.

Finally, the students will utilize their knowledge about lines, shapes and patterns to create a mask. It is important to show different types of masks and ask the students to describe the lines, shapes, and patterns they see.

With the final sheet of drawing paper, have the student fold the paper in half – without creating a crease. Beginning with fold in the right hand, the students will cut along the fold. The cut will begin the left corner and continue around to create different facial features for the mask. When the student finish cutting, instruct them to begin drawing the mask using different lines, shapes, and patterns. Remind students that masks have symmetry, just like face.

Evaluation: Critique other students’ work. Describe how the different features in the masks.

Activity 3—Comparing Illustrations

Materials: three (3) illustrated books per student, illustration graphic organizer

Procedure: Students will select a book based on the illustrations. Using the first column in the graphic organizer, students will write descriptions of the illustrations.

Questions:

1. *How would you describe the illustrations? Realistic, natural, supernatural, sophisticated, folk art*
2. *What types of lines does the illustrator use?*
3. *Do you like the illustrations? Why? Or, why not?*

After students complete column one, the students will exchange the books and complete column two answering the same questions. Complete the same process for column three.

When the students have completed their graphic organizers, discuss the differences and similarities found among the different illustrators. Discuss the interpretations of the stories based on the illustrations. Ask the students if they would have produced different illustrations to the story and why.

Comparing Illustrators

Name _____

Date _____

Title:	Title:	Title:
Illustrator:	Illustrator:	Illustrator:
Author:	Author:	Author:
Observations:	Observations:	Observations:

Bibliography

Books

Mike Artell. *Cartooning for Kids*. (2002). ISBN 140270111X

Josephy Bruchac (author/illustrator). *A Boy Called Slow*. (1998). ISBN 069811616X
Crazy Horse's Vision. (2000). ISBN 1880000946

Tomie de Paola (author/illustrator). *Strega Nona*. (1979). ISBN 067166606
The Lady of Guadalupe (1980). ISBN 0823403734
The Night of Las Posadas (1999). ISBN 0399234004

Patti Bongiorno. *My Dad's Footsteps: Illustrations Developed in Close Collaboration with Kid Art Experts, Rebecca, Samantha and Lucy*. (2002). ISBN 0971581983

Kathleen Krull and Yuyi Morales (illustrator). *Harvesting Hope: The Story of Cesar Chavez*. (2003). ISBN 0152014373

Yuyi Morales (illustrator). *Just a Minute: A Trickster Tale and Counting Book (Pura Belpre Medal Book Illustrator Awards)*. ISBN 0811837580

Faith Ringgold (author/illustrator). *Tar Beach* (1995). ISBN 0517885441
Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky. (1995) ISBN 0517885433

Websites

National Museum of American Illustration – <http://www.americanillustration.org/index2.html>
This web site offers the biography and samples of illustrations from 15 illustrators from the United States.

Tomie de Paola – <http://www.tomie.com>
With biographical information, this web site will allow students to research a renowned children's book artist and author.

Mark Fiore – <http://www.markfiore.com/>
Using illustration to convey political sentiments, this web site features the work of a political cartoonist.