Landscapes in Acrylic & Tissue Paper

A Collaborative Project Integrating Different Mediums

"With many of my books I attempt to bridge the gap between the home and school. To me home represents, or should represent; warmth, security, toys, holding hands, being held. School is a strange and new place for a child. Will it be a happy place? There are new people, a teacher, classmates—will they be friendly?" -Eric Carle

In this lesson students will explore how collages are created, how artwork can communicate an idea or theme, what an endpaper is, and how illustrators use endpapers to communicate themes in picture books.

Mini Glossary

Collage: A piece of art made by mounting various materials to a backing

Endpaper: Either of two folded sheets of paper: one half is pasted to the inside front or back cover of a book, and the other half is pasted to the base of the first or last page

Inference: A conclusion reached on the basis of evidence and reasoning

Process

1. Introduction: Explain that students will explore the art of children's picture books.
    - Check for understanding. Ask: What does an illustrator do?
    - Eric Carle is an author and illustrator. He takes into consideration not only the images in the book but also the designs throughout. Different components of picture books can tell us more about the story. Ask students to name different parts of the design of picture books (i.e., cover, typography).
    - This workshop will focus on endpapers. Ask: Does anyone know what an endpaper is? http://ericcarleblog.blogspot.com/2009/07/end-sheets.html
    - For older students (grades 3–5), discuss the word *inference*. An inference is a conclusion reached on a basis of evidence and reasoning—an educated guess. What might we guess about a picture book by analyzing the visual components of an endpaper?

Materials

- White Paper
- Glue Sticks
- Scissors
- White Tissue Paper
- Acrylic Paints
- Black Permanent Marker
- Mod Podge
- Plastic Wrap
- 3 Canvas or Wood Panels (white)

Process, continued

2. Observe and Discuss: Show students sample endpapers and tell them the title of the book. Ask: Looking at the endpapers, what do you think Eric Carle is trying to tell the reader about this book? How are the endpapers similar to or different from the contents of the book?
    - *Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See?:* This endpaper serves as a table of contents. The horizontal stripes of color align with the colors of the animals in the book. From top to bottom, each color appears in order according to the animal that is the same color in the book.
    - *The Very Hungry Caterpillar:* The endpapers show pieces of colorful paper with holes in them. In the book, holes are punched in fruits, leaves, and other foods as the hungry caterpillar eats his way through the story.
    - Show other examples of endpapers from *10 Little Rubber Ducks, From Head to Toe,* and *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*. Ask students: What do you think the story might be about? What do you see that makes you say that?

Endpaper Example: *Papa, Please Get the Moon for Me*

3. Overview of the Project: Students will create a collaged endpaper inspired by the animals found in the region of their project. (Each teacher will be given a unique landscape inspired by the different regions of Texas upon project sign-up completion.) The below prompts are for discussion purposes, but the endpapers should focus on the region.
    - **K–2: Color and Pattern Focus:** What colors do you see in the image? What patterns stand out to you in the animal or its surroundings? Do you notice any shapes? Create an endpaper that uses those colors, lines, shapes, and patterns. Your goal is not to draw the animal but to provide hints about what the animal might be.
    - **3–5: Story Focus:** What might the endpaper communicate about the animal? What might it tell the reader about the story? Suggested questions to ask students: Where might the animal live? What would the story's setting be? What colors stand out to you in the picture? What characteristics about the animal stand out? What do you think this animal would like to eat or to do? Do not draw the animal on the endpaper: your endpaper should provide clues that leave the viewer wondering what the story will be about.

Step 4: *Students can paint directly on tissue paper to create their endpaper.*

Process, continued

4. Art Making: Provide an overview of the available supplies. Explain that Eric Carle creates images in his picture books using pre-painted tissue paper. He saves and uses every scrap of his paper and organizes it by color. Each student should make their endpaper on a piece of white tissue paper. They can use paint directly on the tissue paper or adhere scraps of pre-painted tissue paper onto it. The class can decide (if region appropriate) if they would like to include sky in their piece.

5. Art Making: Take all of the endpapers and glue them on the canvases using Mod Podge and water. Overlap them a little and work quickly because the tissue paper rips if you wait too long. Dry time is 20 mins.

6. Art Making: Using similar techniques from making the endpapers, have the students make animals and plants found in this region on tissue paper and cut them out.

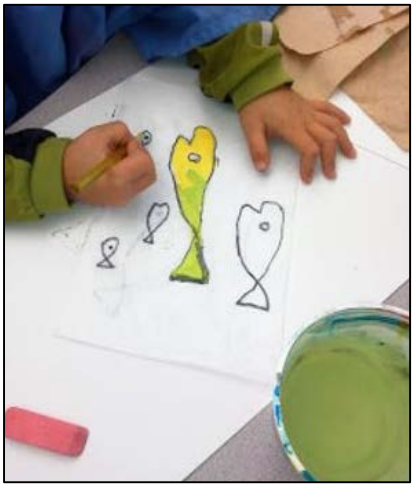
7. Art Making: Take all of the animals and glue them on top of the endpaper covered canvases using Mod Podge and water. Again, work quickly because the tissue paper rips if you wait too long. Dry time is 20 mins.

8. Closing: Ask students to clean their tables and organize remaining scrap paper by color. If time allows, ask for volunteers to share their designs with the class. Ask students to share which animal the endpaper was inspired by. How did he or she communicate something about the animal in his other design?

Modifications

- When showing students the endpapers, emphasize that the animals are not pictured.
- Integrate additional age-appropriate concepts such as mood, plot, and theme.
- If the student were to write a story about the animal, what would happen? Where would the animal go? What would the animal do? Do any patterns, shapes, or colors stand out about the animal? Encourage students to use answers to these questions to inspire their collages.
- Prompt students to consider various attributes of their chosen animal. How would the animal feel if you could touch it? How might it move? What might it eat? What type of habitat might it live in?

Step 5: *Take all of the endpapers and glue them onto the canvases using Mod Podge and water.*



Step 6: *Have the students create animals found in this region on tissue paper and cut them out.*

Step 7: *Take all of the animals and glue them onto the endpaper covered canvases using Mod Podge and water.*