



How Modes of Expression in the Arts Give Form to 21st Century Skills

SUMMARY

Through interviews with kindergartners in New York City, plus accompanying stories, artwork, and haiku, we catch a glimpse of the creative thinking, interests, and discoveries of young learners. The teaching process is described in rich detail and highlighted with student artifacts. The author also documents connections with current theories about how children learn, the Common Core Shifts in English Language Arts, and the new National Common Core Arts Standards.

It is often difficult to know what comes first, the visual form, the dance, the music, the character on stage, or the verbal idea or feeling. The arts make the intangible tangible. Arts processes by their very nature incorporate multi-modal opportunities for students to discover and solve problems independently and/or collaboratively. “All modes of communication are codependent. Each affects the nature of the content of the other and the overall rhetorical impact of the communication event itself” (NCTE, 2005, p.1).

Art forms are more evocative than literal. Ella Baff, Jacob’s Pillow executive and artistic director, explains that “like music, dance has no linguistic equivalent. Dance is an art form of the body. It is nonverbal and therefore imbued with unique capacities to communicate across language” (personal communication, August 2014).

Work by leaders in the fields of arts education, education, developmental psychology, behavioral science, business management, and visual art clarify the connection between 21st century skills and arts education. Eisner (1992) explains, “Those who draw or paint do all their thinking within the medium in which they work” (p. xiv).

Trilling and Fadel (2009) present an art unit that demonstrates how the process and content of an art lesson contributes to the development of 21st century skills. It explains that “Critical thinking and problem-solving, communication and collaboration, and creativity and innovation are three top-drawer skill sets in our toolbox for learning, work, and life in the 21st century” (p. 60). The authors further explain that the 21st century skills of creativity and innovation are not in the curriculum guide but need to be engrained in the teaching process.

Joan Davidson is president/chairperson of the New York City Art Teachers Association. She is a past president of the New York State Art Teachers Association. She taught art at all levels, kindergarten through college, for 38 years.

**Joan Davidson,
United Federation of Teachers**

The arts education teaching process by its very nature provides experiential opportunities and skills to think creatively. Eisner states,

“In the process of creation the arts stabilize what would otherwise be evanescent. Ideas and images are very difficult to hold onto unless they are inscribed in a material that gives them at least a kind of semi-permanence. The works we create speak back to us, and we become in their presence a part of a conversation that enables us to see what we have said (Eisner, 2002, p. 11).”

Tim Brown (2009) illustrates the need and importance for this image-making practice, “When I use drawing to express an idea, I get different results than if I try to express it with words, and I usually get to them more quickly. I have to have a whiteboard or sketch pad nearby whenever I am discussing ideas with colleagues. I get stuck unless I can work it out visually” (p. 48).

Over the past decade, The Partnership for 21st Century Skills (p. 21), a coalition of the business community, education leaders, and policymakers has identified and brought to the forefront a comprehensive set of skills that, along

continued on following page

An Interview with the Young Artist

**Birds fly to Manhattan
A falling star awakes
the New York City morning.**



Maya, a 5-year-old artist, reveals her critical and creative thinking and spotlights the delight she experiences as she watches her ideas and discoveries take form on her paper. Her thinking process is fluid and pregnant with possibilities.

Interviewer: How did the image come to your mind?

Artist: I was thinking about birds doing something and I thought about birds flying.

What gave you the idea to put the star?

I wanted to make a star that was falling. (Maya gets up and makes falling motions until she ends up on the floor). I wanted to make the star dropping from Manhattan.

Tell me about these (points to the front boxes).

They are trampolines for people to jump on. There are people in the picture. (Maya points to the people).

What came first, the trampolines or the star?

The trampolines.

Tell me about this yellow part.

The yellow part (she points to the yellow on the building) — that is the crack where the star touched the building.

Tell me about this green line.

Oh, that is to outline the buildings.

Did you look at your neighbor's picture to get ideas?

No. I wanted to make my own picture. I don't like people copying me so I didn't want to copy them.

How did the haiku come to your mind?

I looked at my picture. Here are the buildings and they are different buildings that go all around and are connected. I was thinking of Manhattan and the wind. (Maya makes sounds of the wind. During the lesson students were asked to make different sounds described in the haiku and to act out what was described.) It is Manhattan and the birds are flying to another part of Manhattan.

Do you think it is a good idea to write about your work?

I think it is a good idea to draw pictures and tell about it because then you begin to learn how to make stories and you can make a book.

What is the benefit of a book?

You can look at the pictures of the other children, and parents like to see the book.

How Modes of Expression in the Arts Give Form to 21st Century Skills



with content mastery, are what all sections agree are essential for success. The 21st Century Skills Map describes how 21st century skills are integrated in the arts discipline. “Business leaders and visionary thinkers concerned about preparation of students for the future know that the ability to be creative — a key 21st century skill — is native to the arts and is one of the primary processes learned through arts education. The examples in the 21st Century Skills Map illustrate how the arts promote work habits that cultivate curiosity, imagination, creativity, and evaluation skills. Students who possess these skills are better able to tolerate ambiguity, explore new realms of possibility, express their own thoughts and feelings, and understand the perspectives of others” (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2014).

Creative Thinking

For young children it is their willingness to enter into the artist’s world and to express their feelings about the work that stimulates them to give form to their ideas. Gardner (2006) explains, “All young children partake of the elixir of creativity. They are willing to transcend boundaries of which they are at least peripherally aware; they throw themselves into their play and work with great passion...” (p.50).

The unit on Image Making and Haiku is introduced by examining four art reproductions, and this activity sets the context for the unit. It gives a sense of importance to the image-making. The activity requires an openness to feel and see the work and then an understanding of the symbols and language of the arts discipline. Observation, discussion, and reflection on works of art (visual and performing arts) contribute to creative thinking, critical thinking, and communication.

The process of drawing in conjunction with writing expands the creative and critical thinking process, supports the English language arts and literary Shifts, and gives parents an opportunity to understand what and how their children are thinking. The process can be likened to putting two disks in a computer, an art image-making disk and a telling/writing disk. Each disk gives an opportunity to see something from a different perspective. Davidson (2008) explains, “The drawing and writing process involves documenting layers of thought and using each layer as a stepping stone to another layer. Picture a delicate, smooth-skinned red onion, whose aroma gets more pungent as you peel away each circular, slippery layer” (p. 36). As children draw and as they tell stories about their work, multiple ideas become solidified and other images/stories come to

mind. The haiku structure encourages further discovery as students explore a personal impression that emerged as a result of describing their image.

Literacy in the Visual Arts strand explains that “the careful observation of a work of art resembles the close reading of a text — one that includes making observations and drawing inferences. The visual arts provide students with inexhaustible subjects about which they may read and write, as well as engage in accountable talk” (The Blueprint for Teaching and Learning in the Visual Arts, 2007, p. 4). The resulting unique artwork documents that the children have the ability to make a transfer, to be energized by what they feel, observe and notice, and though they might not be able to verbalize their process, they engage in critical thinking and want to communicate their ideas.

Young children are active and exuberant explorers. Artistic images capture the physical and sensory aspects of their discoveries. They love to express the movement, feeling and tactile qualities of animals, places, and people. They tell stories by combining their observations with their inner worlds of fantasy and include details that capture the important parts of their ideas. Art-making becomes an important spur for the use of imagination (NYC DOE, 2007).



In Central Park
Two birds fly into a heart
And nest there.

AUBREY



Engagement in the arts prepares students for lifelong learning. Tharman Shanmugaratnam, former Singapore minister of education, explained that the goal of education is “to give students the room to exercise initiative and to shape their own learning. The students have to become engaged learners — interested and proactive agents in the learning process” (Darling-Hammond, 2010, p.186). In addition to project work visible in nearly every Singapore classroom,

continued on following page

How Modes of Expression in the Arts Give Form to 21st Century Skills

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children were extensively involved in music, arts, calligraphy, physical education, sports, and an amazing variety of clubs and self-initiated activities aimed at building creativity and entrepreneurship.

The arts provide opportunities for students to empathize with, and learn from, artists and their peers. In so doing, a lifelong appreciation of the arts is cultivated. The inquiry method for examining works of art encourages critical thinking and awareness of different points of view. Individual and collaborative reflection experiences provide occasions for students to develop and expand their ideas.

This article documents how young artists discover, expand, and clarify their ideas as they engage in one or more of the art-making processes such as image-making, acting, moving, sound-making, storytelling and haiku. The quality and individuality of the included images and writing are evidence that artwork is a form in which students engage in critical and creative thinking. "Students' capacity to create and express themselves through the arts is one of the central qualities that make them human, as well as a basis for success in the 21st century" (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2014).

An Art Education Teaching Approach

Setting the Stage

The art education teaching approach incorporates 21st century skills by providing opportunities for creative and critical thinking and a context in which students are motivated to communicate their ideas in artistic form. A nurturing culture is essential to this. The classroom is structured to create a caring collaborative community of learners. The formation of this culture is intended to sustain the learner's curiosity, love of play and experimentation, and to develop the dispositions of a lifelong learner.

Building a community of learners in the classroom requires a focus on an overall plan and process. Cooper and Jenson explain, "A nurturing culture is one that is open to many ideas and possibilities, but not in the sense of anything goes. The role the teacher takes on is critical. Teachers must still be in charge, still take responsibility for the quality of the curriculum delivery, and for providing a physically safe and disciplined work environment; but they must do this more as a collegial facilitator than as an autocratic dictator." (2009, p.19-20). Gelb describes the working process of Leonardo da Vinci, "Despite mistakes, disasters, failures, and disappointments,

Leonardo da Vinci never stopped learning, exploring, and experimenting” (2004, p.79).

Getting Started

To ground the project, a broad theme is selected. In this unit the theme is connected with our classroom curriculum on the study of birds. Around this, essential questions are posed, and students are encouraged to play with ideas by acting out their image alone or with the help of peers. Risk-taking and experimentation are encouraged. They share their work with peers and ask questions of one another and then listen and respond to peer questions and/or suggestions. By observing, listening, and responding to each other they gain affirmation and encouragement.

Models in the form of art reproductions introduce the lesson and are looked at again in addition to books and stories about birds during a later session to help students get and/or expand their ideas. By examining the many different ways in which artists include birds in their work, divergent thinking is modeled.

To optimize creative outcomes, the working environment must be structured so that both successes and failures are honored. Formative assessment and final assessment

feedback help students clarify their ideas. During sessions in the “Busy Bird and Haiku” unit, students are encouraged in their effort to find ways to communicate their ideas and are encouraged to continue. Students are asked to tell about their picture and are asked questions that help clarify their thinking and keep them on task.

Reflection/assessment times provide an opportunity for students to speak about their work, to explain how their ideas came to them, and to receive feedback. This can be done collaboratively with other students and/or with an adult. Students build knowledge and clarity through discussion of how their image or story/haiku came to be and gain ideas of how it could be improved. Students also build knowledge by viewing other students’ images and listening to other students’ stories/haiku and responses to questions.

Planning

A lot of planning preceded the unit. The central question was: How can we orchestrate an image-making and story-writing activity based upon the theme, suggested by the classroom teacher: Birds? The art teacher began with a mind map, described by Brown (2009) as a way of looking at the whole and discovering connections. In the center of the mind map were the tags:

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How Modes of Expression in the Arts Give Form to 21st Century Skills

Constructing a Haiku



drawing, images with birds, and writing. Planning included developing objectives for each session in the unit; and essential questions to ignite the interest of the students and as a basis for students examining art reproductions and reflecting on their work. For example: Art reproductions are selected to show different ways that artists use birds to communicate their ideas. Though they each contain birds, the content of the following paintings is very different from one other. For this project some of the resources include: *Persian Illuminated Manuscript* by Shahnameh Baysunqur; Faith Ringgold's *Tar Beach II*; Rene Magritte's *The Return*; and Archille Gorky's *Water of the Flowery Mill*. Students ask and respond to open-ended questions about the different

paintings and give evidence in the painting to support their observations. An abstract painting is included to show how artists use the elements of art to communicate a feeling without the picture containing a recognizable subject. As we examine the works together, questions are used to prompt student thinking:

Which work interests you and why?

*Tap the picture to show how your eye moves around the painting; what sounds might you hear in the *Tar Beach* painting?*

The artist did not use words, so how did the artist communicate to you what he wanted to say?

Haiku are identified that reflect the lesson theme or include sensory experiences (sound, gestures) that the children can act out. Also researched is how haiku came to be and how to communicate the haiku structure to students who do not know how to read or write.

Resources are identified to motivate the students and to provide new directions for thought. For example “sense” objects were put together in small bags for each child to touch the marshmallows, smell pine cone branches, and smell individual tissues full of different spices. A sequence of activities is planned to scaffold the learning experiences, and a plan to organize, distribute, collect, and clean-up selected materials is developed.

Students engage in a number of warm-up activities before they develop their final image. For example, acting out ideas to feel in their own body what the haiku is about and drawing quick sketches based on the five senses and images suggested by a haiku, and experiencing the smell, taste, touch, and shape of distributed “sense” items.

Haiku that lend themselves to familiar images were selected containing movements or ideas that students could help to create images. The haiku form builds on the five senses. The short rhythm can be clapped easily and can describe a moment — something the children can illustrate in one picture (this was an essential activity to help the students understand the structure of haiku since they were not yet able to read or write). It usually contains few actions or sounds and is similar to a painting and other art forms, in that one line affects another line. Haiku is a fun form for students who are sensually based. It is a wonderful form as a vehicle for discovery and expression. According to Howard Gardner’s (2006) multiple intelligence theory, “Some students will learn from linguistic entry points, others from artistic or personal or logical entry points. Through those multiple approaches, one activates different clusters of neural networks. To the extent that numerous networks are activated and eventually connected one obtains a solid and

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Inside the Lesson: What Students Do

Resources: Examination of Art Reproductions on display. Haiku guidelines and samples of haiku were provided.

Materials: Crayons were selected because they give students an opportunity to move and think quickly in their drawing using a variety of colors. Materials were prepared for the students — a 12-by-18-inch sheet of manila paper was folded into eight boxes, held vertically, and numbered horizontally in the upper left corner from 1-8.

Drawing activities: The first session after haiku was introduced included warmup exercises that would encourage students to put their first thought down and see how their drawing represented, more or less, their interpretation of the given prompt. “All engineering, all invention and all innovations really start with a drawing” (Doodle 4 Google 2014 Award Ceremony). Warmup exercises were provided.

Motivation for first session: Examination of art reproductions; introduction of haiku through clapping to the rhythm of haiku; haiku are read and students participate by acting out — becoming a moving character described in the haiku, visualizing the moment by closing their eyes, completing a two-line haiku by adding a third sentence.

Motivation for second session: Comparing warmup drawings; distribution of sense items; to connect students to their senses so their “sense” experiences will be fresh in their minds as they draw their pictures.

Motivation for third session: Summative whole class assessment of completed images and stories and then formative assessment in small groups or with individual students of work in progress. During the last session for the purpose of recognition and reflection, students present their work to the whole class, and the art teacher encourages peers to tell what they like about the picture and ask questions, but not to say anything negative. In this way students learn to offer useful feedback without criticizing. In some cases the art teacher asks students questions such as: Explain how you got your idea; what was difficult about the process and how you solved your problem; what do you like about your work or your process.

Formative and Summative Assessment Questions:

Tell me your idea; What sense(s) are giving you the idea for your picture?; What feeling do you want to express? What colors might suggest that feeling? What details might you add? What might you *exaggerate* to bring attention to your idea or a part of the picture? What can you do to use the whole page to tell your story?

How Modes of Expression in the Arts Give Form to 21st Century Skills

Introduction to Haiku

Teacher reads haiku poems and students act out, move, make sounds in response.

Teacher says:

From a picture you get ideas/feelings you might want to share in words.

From words you get ideas/feelings you might want to share in a picture

We are going to listen to and act out a form of writing called a haiku: a Japanese poem that has three lines of five, seven, and five **syllables**.

In the verse something happens now in a particular place. The moment is described using two images.

HED: Teacher Background (move to p18)

What are the characteristics of a haiku?

A haiku tells you:
Who, What, Where (location), When-now

Haiku is characterized by:

1. **Present tense-now**, a realization of a moment in daily life. Potentially anything can serve a subject for haiku as experienced through the five senses.
2. **Concrete images** that are fresh and vivid, not similes, metaphors, or abstract words.
3. **Two images side by side**
4. **Unrhymed**, 17 or fewer syllables, usually three lines. No need to hold to 5-7-5 syllable pattern in English

Teacher tells the students:

People would sit around in a circle and one person would start the first line and another person the next line and a third person the next line. It was a game to see who could complete the poem.

We will play a game, too.

enduring mental representation of the topic in question” (p.50).

Motivations in all four sessions engaged students either in examining art reproductions by artists or the artwork that they or their peers created. Playing with haiku by acting it out, dancing it out or visualizing what was happening engaged them kinesthetically in the verse. To heighten their sensory perception, students were able to use the “sense” objects.

Activities were planned as a scaffold to the final activities that were to “Draw a bird or birds doing something in a moment” and to create a haiku to tell what is happening in your picture. The need and interest and excitement to give form to ideas about “birds in a moment” was the result of memory, body, and sense experiences.

Session I: Setting the stage for image making and storytelling and haiku making

First, students *examine* reproductions of artwork. They are encouraged by the art teacher to share their feelings about the paintings. They discover similarities and differences between the paintings and analyze why the artist used the bird(s) in the painting. They identify elements of art (such as patterns) and discover a way to demonstrate how the pattern is created in the painting. They

identify colors that were the same and discover how these colors changed as a result of being next to different colors. They demonstrate by touching the image, a principle of design. For example: how the artist used the repetition of color to hold the painting together, to unify the painting.

Next, students *experience* haiku. After listening to the qualities of haiku and how haiku came to be, students are asked to clap to the rhythm of the 17 syllables and three lines of the haiku. Haiku is read and students respond by visualizing a haiku and acting it out; moving as described in a haiku; completing the haiku after a sentence of a haiku is read. In this way students experience being “inside” a haiku, and this helps them to understand how to create one.

Finally, there is a warmup drawing activity. In response to descriptions given by the teacher they *draw* a picture in each of eight boxes — the first picture drawn in box #1 and the second picture in box #2, etc. The teacher gives students 1 to 2 minutes for each picture so there is little time to get anxious about the work. Students are encouraged to think quickly and fluidly. At the end of the drawing session, students work in small collaborative groups to compare their image with peers. They are encouraged to reflect on the work of peers but are cautioned again not to say negative things, to ask questions of their peers and listen to responses, talk about the differences and similarities they notice in the images and to give praise if they notice something they like and to explain why they like it.

The reflection process provides an opportunity for students to be part of a community of learners in which risks can be taken and unique ideas can come forth and be honored. Giving a visual form (drawing) based on the teacher’s prompts and reflecting on the work engages students in creative and critical thinking.

Sample Haiku Poems

Why does the bird envy the butterfly?
Ah, the sad expression in the eyes of that caged bird
Envyng the butterfly!
— Issa

(Source of an image — see it, feel it)

The autumn wind
Blowing across
people’s faces
— Onitsura

(Source of an image — where might you be?
What insects might you hear?)

No place
To throw out the bathwater —
Sound of insects
— Onitsura

(Act out — see the old pond, see the frog
leap in and listen to the sound.)

Old pond...
A frog leaps in
Waters sound
— Basho

Source: Higginson & Harter, 1985

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How Modes of Expression in the Arts Give Form to 21st Century Skills

The reflection process provides an opportunity for students to be part of a community of learners in which risks can be taken and unique ideas can come forth and be honored.

Session IA

Small group instruction with the art teacher: children draw “Moments in the Life of a Bird or Birds” and work collaboratively to develop a haiku based on their image. Students are empowered when they can help each other and they gain the confidence to think in new ways.

Session II

1. Formative Assessment of eight box drawings with the whole class directed by the art teacher. Drawing subject examples: The sound of a bird in the morning; a stretching tree; taking a bath or a shower; flying.

The objectives of the formative assessment of the eight quick sketches are that students will have an opportunity:

- a. to learn from each other by noticing, through guided questions from teacher and other students and by individual reflection of each work, the different ways peers responded to the given problem. In terms of the ELA Common Core Shifts, the students come to understand other perspectives and cultures and can build on others’ ideas.
- b. to communicate their ideas to others.

What the Formative Assessment tells the teacher:

Teacher can use these initial drawings and dialogue as the basis for the “moment” drawings in case the student doesn’t have a clue where to begin.

2. Distribute sense items

The objective of distributing the sense items is to connect students with their senses so they will transfer this recent sensual experience to their art-making experience.

3. Students respond to handling and smelling the sense items.

4. Students draw on the theme:

Moments in the life of a bird or birds.

5. Formative Assessment as students draw to help them expand their ideas.

Question examples include: Tell about your work. Where is this happening? How is the bird feeling at this moment?

Session III

Summative Assessment of completed work “Moment in the life of a bird or birds” (whole class) to communicate their ideas to peers and to get feedback and to listen to ideas of peers. Give students an opportunity to learn from each other.

Students examine art reproductions to expand their drawing ideas.

Listen to a new haiku and act it out to refresh their ideas about haiku.

Students who are finished work on a variety of projects:

Do another drawing and haiku on the same theme; students can tell another story about their same picture; create a drawing and haiku on their choice of theme; create a play to act out their story.

Engaging in arts experiences gives students direct experience with behaviors that are included in the ELA Common Core Shifts. Appendix I shows in a condensed form the sequence of lesson activities and their link to the ELA Common Core Shifts.

How Learning Outcomes are achieved

For curriculum planning and to capitalize on student strengths and engage them in the learning process, teachers must identify how children learn. The following rubric is for the purpose of identifying the graphic characteristics of the students in terms of interpretation of the theme, clarity of image, differentiation of form and size, and inclusion of details. Examining the work in categories such as these informs the teacher

Teacher Rubric Guidelines

Questions

- [1] Does the drawing interpret the theme?
- [2] How clear is the image?
- [3] How well does the story/haiku connect with the image?

Scale

Emerging Effective Highly Effective

Elements

- Clarity of idea
- Differentiation of Form
- Differentiation of Size
- Spacial Clarity
- Details
- Written or verbal statement connected with artwork.
- Student was able to present ideas clearly to audience.

Rubric Key:

Form differentiation: How much form was differentiated from lowest level — a circle to a naturalistic representation.

Spacial representation: Lowest level forms are floating in space with no order; higher level forms give you a sense of an order and setting in the background — maybe even a feeling of three-dimensional space.

Size differentiation: From everything the same size to size as is in nature.

Use of details: Shows the student is able to graphically represent more literally what is observed.

Use of whole page: Ability of child to think of the whole space as part of the story — to connect with the whole world instead of being wrapped up in one little part.

Clarity of image: The ability of the artist to make clear what is happening to the viewer even though the image can be clear to the artist.

How Modes of Expression in the Arts Give Form to 21st Century Skills

Teacher Rubric

Elements	Emerging	Effective	Highly Effective
Form Differentiation	Form of bird not clear.	Fewer than half of forms are differentiated from each other.	More than half of forms are differentiated from each other.
Spacial Representation	Forms are floating in space.	There is a definite order in space relationships and you can see where the activity is taking place, but some things might still be floating in space.	There is a definite order in space relationships and you can see where the activity is taking place. No objects are floating in space.
Size Differentiation	No size differentiation.	Fewer than half of forms show size differentiation.	Most body part shapes and other forms show size differentiation.
Use of Details	No details.	Details are evident in fewer than half of the forms.	Details are evident in most forms.
Use of whole page to tell the story	Can't tell.	Uses most of the page to tell the story.	Uses the whole page to tell the story.
Clarity of image in terms of verbal story/haiku	Image not clear in terms of the story/haiku.	Image is at least 50% clear in terms of the story/haiku.	Image is at least 90% clear in terms of the story/haiku.
Interpretation of the theme	Can't tell.	Theme is the basis of the image.	Theme is interpreted clearly and inventively.

about the child's ability to express ideas through the visual arts. Some students are image makers — they work expressively using color, line, form, space, and pattern to tell their story. They differentiate size and form and include lots of details in their work. Curriculum for students identified as

image makers should include activities that capitalize on their strengths, such as responding to how a particular character felt in a story by having the student empathize with the character and show themselves feeling that same way in a setting of their choice.

Evidence of student success/learning outcomes is apparent in an examination of the drawings and writings as well as the successful engagement in the performance standard activities described by the current National Curriculum Core Visual Arts Standards (2014).

Characteristics to be reviewed in the drawings are interpretation of the theme “Moment in the life of a bird or birds”; clarity of the idea in terms of content and details included in the picture that relate to the theme; use of visual elements such as color and pattern; use of principles of design such as rhythm and unity; and use of the whole page to communicate their idea.

Characteristics to be reviewed in the art-making process and in the writing include ability to verbalize, to a peer or to an adult, what is happening in their picture.

Images were collected and grouped based on specific descriptive criteria and a rubric.

Reflection on the Process

Reflecting on your picture can spark new ideas. New ideas come to professional artists and young artists alike, as evidenced in Maya's behavior during her interview. She not only acted out her ideas, she wanted to draw another picture (see p. 13).

In a three-month study by Davidson (2008) of drawings and writing by third graders, she documented "How Drawing in Conjunction with Writing Contributes to the Thinking Process." She showed how formative assessment questions by the teacher, a written description of the artwork and the art-making process or peer interviews based on a reflection questionnaire or a self-assessment questionnaire became a jumping-off point for another picture. Following is an excerpt of an interview with a third grader about her series of work.

The arts give students something to say through an art form and something to talk about and respond to in a verbal form. All the students interpreted the theme, each in their own personal way. Two students used color expressively while most used color literally (as they see the color in nature) or just to distinguish one part from another. Almost all the work suggests a very active rhythm created by color, shape and pattern, and by applying the crayon in a particular direction. All but one student used

Interview with Carisse, a third-grade student

What changes do you notice from drawing #1 to drawing #3?

The bus wasn't in drawing #1. Only two people were in drawing #1; there are six people in drawing #3.

Why did you add the people?

I wanted more characters to be in it. Four characters were not enough.

What does a higher number show?

More characters show action and what they are doing. As I worked I got more ideas about what was happening and what people were doing.

Why did you decide to work from observation in drawing #3?

I wasn't doing my best in drawing #1 and #2, and I decided to do my best. My mother showed me from the window that if across the street looks like that, then my block looks like that. So I decided to draw it as I looked at it.

What is the difference in the drawing of figures comparing drawing #1 with drawing #3?

In #1, my mother is shopping. You can see by the handbag, and I am playing outside.

In #3 two friends, Richard and Jessica, are in the picture and I am behind them.

Which is your best picture? Why?

I think drawing #3. It shows more detail and more action. I did my best in that drawing.

Do you think your artwork helped with your writing?

Drawing tells a story. Sometimes I don't like to write a lot — I love to draw. It's my life. I was surprised at my writing. I never wrote something this long before. For me, writing didn't help my drawing, but drawing helped my writing.

continued on following page

How Modes of Expression in the Arts Give Form to 21st Century Skills

Presenting their work to classmates gives artists an opportunity to develop their ability to verbalize what is happening in their picture and to show how they connect their artistic ideas with personal meaning.

the whole page to tell their story. All but that same child were able to describe a moment in the life of a bird based on their picture.

Presenting their work to classmates gives artists an opportunity to develop their ability to verbalize what is happening in their picture and to show how they connect their artistic ideas with personal meaning. The questioning of the artist by their peers gives the young artist a reason to reflect on their work as they respond to the questions. The process also gives practice to members of the class to ask questions that are relevant to the picture.

Building an Audience: Community Involvement

The lesson concluded with the art teacher assembling a book of images and writings. Each student was featured in the book, which included photographs of each student and all of their artwork, their story and haiku. A page for each student was sent home with the students for their parents to see.

A bound copy of the book was available at school and on a CD for parents to copy. In this way, parents were made aware of what their children were learning and what they accomplished. Through the book, children had an opportunity to be recognized as

an artist by their peers and their community. Students felt proud of what they had accomplished and carefully put the envelope that contained their page into their book bags. The classroom teacher displayed copies of the book during Parent Open School Morning. Many parents expressed their appreciation of their own child's page and explained they were so impressed by the presentation of the work of all the students in the book.

Closing Thoughts

The project engages students in creative processes that build on how students see their world and in so doing validates, triggers and expands their creative and critical thinking. For kindergarten students and older students the project opens doors to a host of experiential ways of knowing and learning.

As the children tell their story to a scribe, they must add details (evidence) to their drawings. The introduction of haiku into the arts experience expands, in a meaningful way, ideas for imagery and ways of telling and writing expressively. McTighe and Wiggins (2012) explain "A Common Core State Standard is an outcome, not a claim about how to achieve an outcome. While curriculum and instruction must address

established standards, we always want to keep the longterm educational ends in mind” (2012, p. 3). Douglas states, “Artist statements written by children or scribed by adults and older students accompany all exhibited work in choice-based art programs. When adult volunteers assist in the creation of an art show, they have the opportunity to experience the thought processes of the children through their artist statements” (2012, p. 16). This statement shows how parents and other adults are drawn into the experience and provides a viewer’s point of view as to why and how the written work expands both thinking and understanding.

The content and process of this art unit empowered the classroom teacher to continue the work with her young students and to learn about the haiku form and ways to engage her students in talking about their artwork after she saw the products of her students. Pink explains, “. . . it’s often difficult to do something exceptionally well if we don’t know the reasons we’re doing it in the first place. People at work are thirsting for context, yearning to know that what they do contributes to a larger whole. And a powerful way to provide that context is to spend a little less time telling how and a little more time showing why” (2011, p.117).

Preparing for ALL Children

“When a child is having learning difficulties, it is important to understand his or her cognitive modes as accurately as possible”
(Gardner, 2006, p. 59).

The activities in this unit provide many opportunities for unique solutions. However, the English language learner could have problems creating a haiku. With the help of peers who speak the same language, they can make their stories understood. Visual reproductions can be examined by most of the children. As students give evidence by touching the reproductions of the painting or pointing to a specific area, English language learners may understand the concepts being clarified.

Differentiated Instruction suggestions:

Students can:

- Write or tell their story/haiku to another person who will write it for them.
- Use a variety of expressive forms (dance, music, theater arts) to communicate a given theme.
- Work with a partner/scribe/adult to develop their writing or verbal presentation.
- Modify materials. If crayons are difficult, use markers or three-dimensional materials.
- Modify content — encourage students to develop their own art-related task.

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Appendix I: ELA Shifts

ELA Shift #	Activity
Session #1	
2	1. Examine reproductions
2,4,6	2. Read haiku and students respond 3. Distribute art supplies
2	4. Students create eight drawings
Session #2	
5,6	5. Formative assessment of eight drawings with class 6. Teacher explains activities for the day
5,6	7. Teacher distributes “sense” items. Students engage in experience and respond in words to experience
6	8. Teacher asks questions to connect “sense” experience with image-making
2	9. Teacher distributes art materials and students draw
2,6	10. Formative assessment by teacher as students work
2,4	11. Students who completed art work tell their story to an adult or peer and create a haiku with help
Session #3	
2,5,6	12. Formative assessment in a collaborative group to complete drawing and/or story/haiku with the assistance of art teacher, classroom teacher and aide
2,4,6	13. Review a haiku and students respond
2,5	14. Teacher shows resources available
2	15. Students complete, revise image and/or story/haiku or create an image-based performance with a group
2,6	16. Final assessment with class