“Art is literacy of the heart.”
Using art to enhance Kindergarten writing performance.

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2010-2011 Gray’s Woods Elementary School Intern
Kindergarten
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Teaching Context

In my Kindergarten classroom there are a total of nineteen students, composed of ten males and nine females. Our classroom has little diversity in terms of ethnicities represented among students. In the class, there is one Indian student and the rest of the students are Caucasian. We have three students who leave the classroom in the morning to receive additional instructional support each day for reading and letter sounds, called Response to Intervention and Instruction or RtII. This instructional support takes the students away from the classroom for about thirty minutes. The class is without any social or academic issues that prove problematic to instruction. Some students have trouble focusing and remaining attentive for the entirety of a lesson. However, these attention and focus ideas seem to be more characteristic of the kindergarten age, rather than an issue. Also, sometimes students struggle with starting work independently and staying on task.

Each day in the classroom, writing is scheduled for twenty minutes in the morning and another thirty minutes later in the afternoon. Students participate in “Kid Writing” which consists of students using “sound spelling” to write, accompanied by “book spelling” written by a teacher, when a student is finished writing. During writing time students begin first by illustrating a picture using crayons, markers, and/or pencils. The next step in this writing process is a student using “sound spelling.” This is when students write all the sounds they hear in a word. Finally, a teacher writes “book spelling” for the student’s story, which is the conventional spelling and mechanics of writing. This is done after the student writing is completed and with the student present to help support and instruct students during the writing process. The writing time in my classroom has
become quite independent, as we have approached the end of the school year. More
support and assistance was necessary in the beginning of the year to prompt and direct
student writing. Every morning, as students arrive in the morning, they find their writing
folders on tables in the room to begin this independent process of writing. During a
writing time established in the afternoon of the school day, students may also work one-
on-one with a teacher to practice these growing writing skills.

Writing is incorporated across the curriculum as well, through a variety of
projects. For example, students may research topics in science or social studies and write
about the information and ideas they learn. During a unit on transportation, students
wrote about vehicles and places they would like to travel. In math, students created
pictures made from shapes and wrote to describe the shapes used in their picture. Writing
can be found throughout our school day as students are constantly working on various
subjects and projects that provide different avenues for writing.

Rationale

My passion and strong interest in art has led to my inquiry question and how I can
incorporate my love of art into my classroom. I have always wanted to be a teacher, but
was curious as to how art could become a part of my general education classroom. I
decided to explore using art particularly in the area of writing because I noticed an
interest in art through student drawings, as well as much creativity in student artwork
produced in my classroom and the art room. Also, some students struggled to produce
distinguishable illustrations for their writing and I began to wonder if other mediums may
help these students create more meaningful works of art to write about. Since I enjoy art
so much, I would love to share this interest and talent of mine with my students to
encourage including art as a way to express their ideas. As I observed my class throughout the year, I noticed students have not yet begun to think about art as “good” or “bad,” a sentiment many older children and adults may possess. Because my students are young and feel open to explore various possibilities through art, I looked to open their eyes to different ways they can learn to express themselves.

My plan to implement various art projects included a use of an array of mediums. I planned to have students stray from crayon and markers drawings and explore a different use of paper and paint. The projects I used to focus my data on included an acrylic painting, a picture made entirely from construction and tissue paper, as well as a paper mosaic project. For each project, I modeled some strategies and provided an example for students (see Appendix A). Students were directed to create anything with their art, giving them a freedom of expression. Students were also aware these projects would be used for writing, just as their regular “kid writing” illustrations. By incorporating art in conjunction with the current writing program, I hoped to see a positive correlation between art, self-expression, and writing performance.

**Main Wondering**

How can art enhance self-expression and performance in Kindergarten writers?

**Sub-questions**

In what ways can art be used across the curriculum?

How can art enhance student learning?

How can students express their understanding through art?

How will students feelings and thoughts about writing change?
Data Collection

Survey Data Description

Before I started to integrate my various art projects into the classroom and writing process, I conducted a survey to gauge student interest in both art and writing. Questions included in the survey ranged from asking about attitudes towards writing, and their favorite writing topics, to questions created to get an idea of student interests in art (see Appendix B). I decided to use a survey and subsequent interview questions to assess student feelings, as a whole class and individuals towards writing in our classroom. These questions were based on the use of the traditional method of “kid writing” in my classroom. The survey was used before the process of my inquiry began, and again at the end of the inquiry to see how students’ feelings and thoughts about writing could have changed through this inquiry process.

Rubric Data Description

As a main wondering I was looking to see how student writing performance and self-expression was enhanced through the use of art, so it was necessary to assess writing performance, an essential piece of data. I began to compare writing samples to a rubric. I needed to look at early writing to find a baseline to compare to so I could see how students writing improved through the year and with the incorporation of art. I generated a rubric based on end of year objectives for kindergarten writing. This rubric was made to assess the writing and art samples I chose. The rubric was used to measure complete thoughts used in a story, proper mechanics, understandable sound spelling, and detail in illustration. The main purpose of this rubric was to see if any change occurred from using art as a way to enhance student writing (see Appendix C). When using this rubric to
assess student performance, I chose a cross section of my class to analyze data collected. This selection included six students with varying writing abilities. These include students who draw detailed pictures and write longer, more detailed stories, students who struggle with creating detailed illustrations and stories, along with students who fall in between these two extremes of writing performance.

**Artifact Data Description**

Another powerful and key component to my data collection became artifacts. These included collecting examples of students’ “kid writing” throughout the year prior to incorporating art, as well as samples written with the integration of art projects (see Appendix D). “Kid Writing” in kindergarten looks rather immature, but in fact tells a great deal about a student’s writing abilities. At the beginning of the year, many samples of “kid writing” may seem unreadable without the proper book spelling, but these artifacts began to show how greatly students changed throughout the year. Prior to my inquiry, samples of student writing included a picture, drawn before writing, using a choice of markers, crayons, or colored pencils. All writing employed students’ “sound spelling” strategies. Then, with the addition of other forms of art to write about, students continued the same writing process and provided more artifacts to show their developing skills as young writers.

**Data Analysis**

**Survey Analysis Process**

The student survey process conducted before I began my inquiry provided me with my first set of data. From this I learned a great deal about my students as far as their
attitudes towards art and writing were concerned. Students revealed specific writing interests and dislikes along with a strong interest and enjoyment of art. When talking specifically with a few students based on their survey answers, I was able to dig deeper and find out particular reasoning behind feelings and struggles with writing. I questioned students that responded with a negative feeling towards the writing process, and some students expressed feelings regarding the difficulty of writing, and a few students felt it to be a tedious process. Implementing these survey questions with students led me in a direction to assess student feelings and attitudes about my inquiry, one of my sub-wonderings. Although, the data gathered from this survey did not lead to a claim directly related to my main wondering, I discovered that the majority of my class enjoyed writing and an even higher percentage had an interest in art (see Appendix E). Asking the same questions at the end of my inquiry process showed little or no change in responses and attitudes about writing and art, providing no solid evidence for a change in feelings towards writing for art in my classroom.

**Rubric Analysis Process**

After learning so much about students’ feelings about writing, I began to look at student writing samples evaluated using the rubric I created. I searched for a change in student writing performance and expression over time. My rubric assessed both performance and artistic expression of student writing. I compared writing using this rubric to see how students developed writing skills and to see how the incorporation of art improved writing. I found there to be a positive correlation when scoring student work with the rubric, looking for writing performance improvement, based on mechanics and expression, as well as artistic representation and ability (see Appendix F).
Artifact Analysis Process

Another method of collecting data that I analyzed was looking at artifacts of student writing. When analyzing a cross section of my class I hoped to see a visual improvement in both the look of illustrations as well as the look of student writing, i.e. distinguishable artistic representations along with better sound spelling and handwriting. I found there to be an amazing and drastic change in student work just by looking at these artifacts. Seeing student handwriting and drawings from the beginning of the year next to drawings from the middle and current part of the school year showed much improvement in writing performance and artistic expression (see Appendix G). I began to find these artifacts to be crucial components of my evidence-based claims as they showed both visually changing illustrations along with improved writing performance based on a rubric.

Explanation of Findings

Claim 1 – Students are able to include detail and realistic representation in their artwork.

Looking at student writing samples from the beginning of the school year compared to where they are now, near the end of the year, I have seen a significant change and improvement in artistic abilities. Placing artwork side by side, of samples pulled from different times in the school year, shows much improvement in artistic abilities alone. Students who at one time only drew a picture of indistinguishable subjects and lines of colors now create beautiful masterpieces as the foundation for amazing and detailed stories. One student in particular, who has grown tremendously in his writing,
has also shown extraordinary improvement in his illustrations. In September, this student
drew a picture using just squiggled lines of crayons, a drawing of nothing distinguishable
except for a design. Now by April, this same student has been able to include vast detail
in his illustrations and artwork with realistic objects. For example, one illustration
specifically includes a frog catching a fly, a bee flying through the air, away from his
beehive on a tree, and a robin sitting at the top of that tree. Among other artwork, this
student is now able to draw detailed people doing various activities. In one of his art
projects, this student depicted himself racing his dog, a bird in the background, along
with a setting for the story (see Appendix G). These traits have become evident amongst
other students as well who have exhibited struggles in producing realistic and
distinguished representations in their illustrations.

Another student’s artistic abilities have blossomed terrifically as I introduced
various art projects through my inquiry process. This student has developed a stronger
confidence in her artwork and writing, and began to express her ideas more clearly
through the use of art (see Appendix H). In the beginning of the year, her artwork was
expressive and usually represented her written stories. However, after I introduced
several mediums of art to work with this student began to find multiple ways to express
her artistic strengths. Previously, the student included fairly distinguished objects in her
illustrations, but after observing her artwork during my inquiry, I found her creating
crisper drawings and more detailed illustrations. From my inquiry I am able to
successfully say that as students created illustrations using other methods of art, they also
developed a stronger ability to create meaningful, detailed, and realistic representations in
their artwork.
Claim 2 – Students’ writing expression expanded through multiple art experiences.

As students have been more exposed to various art and writing experiences throughout the year, their writing expression has improved and expanded. For my inquiry, I have defined writing expression as the use of a variety of sentences, detail, and the inclusion of describing words in stories. Students are now able to create works of art and convey many ideas in a single piece of writing for a drawing or art project. Because they are able to include more detail and ideas in their illustrations, the writing expression of my class has gained momentum, and really “taken off” as students include much more detail in their writing. Even if students do not write about every detail they have included in a drawing, they now have the opportunity to revisit their writing to edit and add detail to the story.

Part of these multiple art experiences that students have been a part of not only include the art projects they participated in, but also my own use of art throughout our daily routines. Everyday I write a note on the white board to practice students’ many reading strategies and include a picture I draw for each note. I also provide students with other ideas to create art, by producing step-by-step drawings for students to follow or art examples for projects. By doing so, students have been exposed to more art experiences and have become more comfortable and confident in their own artistic abilities.

The absolute most powerful artifact I collected while conducting my inquiry came from one little girl, who before the implementation of art projects, created the average and expected pieces of writing for kindergarten. Many of her writing samples include a simple illustration with little detail. Her writing skills have grown as the year progressed and she slowly started to include more detail in both her artwork and writing because she
was developing more ideas to include in a story. With the inclusion of varying art projects, this student’s ability to include detail improved greatly. A painting crafted by this student clearly shows an expansion of her writing expression through her many art experiences. I sat down with this student to start the writing process for her artwork and began to hear some ideas for the story. At this point in our writing routine, it was time to transition to the next activity, but I let the student finish her thoughts and complete her writing. To my delightful surprise, when I returned to see what she had worked on the entire eighteen inch long paper was covered in a beautiful story! (see Appendix I) Because this student usually included only a few sentences that stated what was happening in her illustration, I was curious to see how an art project may enhance her writing. She included many thoughts and details in her story, providing evidence for improved expression. This story provides much expression in this student’s writing as she included a beginning, middle, and end to her story, telling the reader what the man was doing first, second, and then what happened to him at the end of the story. Not only are there these detailed parts of the story, but also many ideas in the story were elusive and not explicitly included in the painting. For instance, things the man likes and traits describing him such as “silly” were included in this extremely detailed story. From this example, I am able to successfully say that this experience with art led to an enhanced expression in this child’s writing.

Claim 3 – Students are able to demonstrate improvement in writing mechanics, using a rubric based on end-of-year kindergarten objectives.

Students in my class have shown improvement in writing mechanics over the process of my inquiry. At the beginning and middle of the year, students struggled with
certain mechanics of writing. These include using upper case letters at the beginning of a sentence and lower case letters inside the sentence, putting spaces between words, forming complete thoughts, sound spelling, and including a period at the end of a sentence. Students improved these skills as they had continued experiences with writing. With the incorporation of art and seeing an improvement in written expression, I had also seen an improvement based on the rubric used to assess student writing. This improvement was proved through students’ ability to use more conventional writing mechanics. In the beginning of the year, and prior to my inquiry, students struggled with using upper case letters correctly and adding detail to stories (see Appendix F). Although not perfect across the class and in line with writing abilities, many students in my class are showing beginning signs of improvement in writing mechanics when I used my rubric to assess performance.

For example, one student who easily drew detailed illustrations for his writing, scored lower on the writing performance rubric prior to the inclusion of art. After he had different experiences with art mediums, this student began to create more detailed stories, and showed improvement in writing mechanics. In a story written at the beginning of the year, the student scored a nine out of a possible twelve points on the writing performance rubric (see Appendix F). When this student wrote a story based on a painting he had created, the student scored eleven points out of twelve on the writing performance rubric (see Appendix J). By having new media to express his ideas, this student began to show improvement in his writing mechanics. These examples became characteristic of other writing samples this student had created when using art to enhance his writing.
At the beginning of the year, other students were writing stories with little specific detail, using vague words like “this” and “that,” rather than describing a specific subject of the story. As the year progressed and with the inclusion of many art projects, students’ work told an actual story. With an exposure to art in my classroom, another student improved significantly when comparing his work to the writing performance rubric. His first sample of writing included little detail and did not tell anything specific about his illustration. Around the middle of the school year, this student’s writing mechanics began to improve. A sample pulled from December shows this student’s improvement in writing, as it was assessed with the rubric. This sample of writing scored nine points out of the possible twelve. When this student wrote about an art project he created, the student’s writing performance clearly improved with the incorporation of art. The writing sample about his art project had a rubric score with the highest rating, getting all twelve points for writing performance (Appendix K). Overall, the six students I decided to focus on for my inquiry showed improvement in their writing performance when they had the opportunity to write about the varying and beautiful artwork they created.

Reflections for Future Teaching

Based on the findings from my inquiry, this would definitely be something that I would include in my future classroom. I would use art earlier in the year as I saw how students took well to the idea of art and I learned about their positive attitudes towards art. At their young age, these students were so receptive to art and had yet to formulate opinions about “good” or “bad” art. This is something that I found interesting and wonderful for someone like myself who has such a strong passion for art. Even the
students struggling artistically, were not concerned with someone drawing better or not being able to draw something exactly as it looks. By being able to expose my students on a daily basis to my interest in art, it seemed as if I was able to give them motivation and a desire to improve their own artistic expression.

From this inquiry I have seen the power in exposing students to your own passions and as a teacher this is something I find valuable and important. When investigating my wondering, I found myself sharing with my students my strong interest in art and I hope to inspire future artists and allow students to remain artistic with the freedom to do so, as they continue through their lives. A favorite quote of mine was once said by Pablo Picasso that, “Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once he grows up.” From my inquiry I have seen the power and importance art can have in a classroom. I hope to continue these strategies I have formed from doing this inquiry in my future classrooms.

Another thing that I found helpful both in my inquiry and in the writing process in our classroom was using a writer’s checklist with students. This was something that helped students self-regulate their own writing to a certain extent. The checklist was a verbal, non-concrete way for teachers to work with students on editing their writing. By continuously using this strategy, some students began to edit their work on their own using the checklist. As students worked through the “kid writing” process, a teacher reminded students of four very important parts of their writing. These mechanics of writing included having students print their name at the bottom of the paper, using upper case letters at the beginning of a sentence and all the rest lower case, putting spaces between words, and using proper punctuation at the end of every sentence. I also think
this was something that led to more of my findings as students became more aware of the mechanics of their writing, which showed me an improvement in writing performance. The checklist we used in our classroom is something I would include my future teaching practices because I believe it really helped to authenticate and give students a stronger role in the writing process.

However, after completing my inquiry I was left with a few wonderings. Did my art make as big of an influence because it was implemented in when a specific writing program and routine was already in place? Or, was improvement from developing writing skills? Also, how do developmental characteristics play into my findings? When thinking about these future wonderings, I am focusing on how much students development during this first year in school, *i.e.* at the age of five and six-years-old, students are still developing academically, socially, and physically. They are beginning to develop finer motor control, something that could account for the ability to create more realistic representations in their artwork, as well as engaging in more academic tasks to develop and learn new writing skills. Overall, I discovered so much from this inquiry and the power art can have in allowing students to become more expressive as well as more confident writers. Another fascinating component of my inquiry was my ability to share a passion with students and develop stronger creativity in my classroom. This was a successful and authentic process that provided me with insight into the power of art, as well as implications for use in my future practices.
Appendix A – Art Projects

These are the examples I provided to students of the art projects we created during my inquiry.

Paper Mosaics (pre-cut squares and rectangles of colorful paper were provided to students in order to create any image desired; students glued the paper to a plain sheet of 9”x12” paper)

Cut Paper Pictures (students used scissors to cut shapes from construction paper to create an image made entirely from cut paper, glued to a plain sheet of 8½ “x11” paper)

Painting (students had an option of paper sizes: 12”x18” paper or 9”x12” paper. Students also had a variety of colors to choose from and mix for their artwork)
Appendix B – Student Survey

Name ___________________________________________ Date __________________

1. Do you like writing?
2. Do you like drawing pictures to write stories about?
3. Do you like art?
4. Do you like writing about make-believe? (Fiction)
5. Do you like writing about real life? (Non-fiction)
6. Would you like to write more?
7. What are your favorite thing(s) to write about?

Scale:
## Appendix C – Rubric

### INQUIRY PROJECT 2011 – RUBRICS FOR STUDENT WRITING & ART

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric – Art</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Detail</strong></td>
<td>Illustration contains detail – more than one object; page filled with artwork</td>
<td>Mostly detailed illustration; only one or two objects in drawing</td>
<td>Very little detail; small illustration doesn’t cover whole page; one object/nothing in drawing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Distinguishable</strong></td>
<td>Illustration has distinguishable subject/object present; can see what student meant to illustrate and matches story</td>
<td>Illustration has some characteristics of object/subject, but needs student explanation</td>
<td>No distinguishable object in illustration, does not match story</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric - Performance</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spaces</strong></td>
<td>Spaces between ALL words</td>
<td>Spaces between <em>most</em> words</td>
<td>No spaces between words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UC/LC letters</strong></td>
<td>Entire story has upper case first, all the rest lower case</td>
<td>Mostly UC/LC letters in story; needs improvement</td>
<td>No evidence of UC/LC distinction in story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complete, Detailed Thought</strong></td>
<td>Sentence(s) contain complete thoughts; makes sense; includes detail in story</td>
<td>Most or all of story makes sense, but includes very little detail; may contain <em>some</em> incomplete thoughts</td>
<td>Story does not contain a complete thought; does not make sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sound Spelling</strong></td>
<td>Can read story based on sound spelling</td>
<td>Can read <em>most</em> of sound spelling; few words difficult to decode w/o student explanation</td>
<td>Cannot read student’s sound spelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix D – Artifact Examples

“Kid Writing” Sample - Marker Drawing (November)

“I am going to ride my bike.”

Art Project Writing Sample – Painting (April 2011)

“The cat walked away from the beach.”
Appendix E – Student Survey Results

Seventeen students in the class were surveyed on their feelings about writing and art. These results portray the number of responses for each question.

1. Do you like writing?
   
   Yes: 8 students (47%)
   Sometimes: 6 students (35%)
   No: 3 students (18%)

2. Do you like drawing pictures to write stories about?
   
   Yes: 16 students
   Sometimes: 1 student
   No: 0 students

3. Do you like art?
   
   Yes: 16 students
   Sometimes: 1 student
   No: 0 students

4. Do you like writing about make-believe? (Fiction)
   
   Yes: 14 students
   Sometimes: 1 student
   No: 2 students

5. Do you like writing about real life? (Non-fiction)
   
   Yes: 11 students
   Sometimes: 1 student
   No: 5 students

6. Would you like to write more?
   
   Yes: 13 students
   Maybe: 0 students
   No: 4 students

7. What are your favorite thing(s) to write about?
   
   Dogs, animals, home, riding horses, colors
Appendix F – Rubric Scores

Student F – Rubric Score (September 2010)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric – Art</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Detail</strong></td>
<td>Illustration contains detail; more than one object; page filled with artwork</td>
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<td>Illustration has distinguishable subject/objects present; can see what student meant to illustrate and matches story</td>
<td>Illustration has some characteristics of object/subject, but needs student explanation</td>
<td>No distinguishable object in illustration, does not match story</td>
</tr>
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</table>

**Total Score: 6/6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric - Performance</th>
<th>3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spaces</strong></td>
<td>Spaces between ALL words</td>
<td>Spaces between most words</td>
<td>No spaces between words</td>
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</table>

**Total Score: 9/12**
Appendix G – Artifact Analysis

Student writing and art over time

September 2010

“This is tough. That is big. This is scary.”

April 2011

“I saw a frog. The frog a fly. A robin was sitting in a tree. There was a bee. The robin chid it."

April 2011

“Gizmo is racing me. Gizmo is running and I am on a skateboard. I won!”
Appendix H – Student artwork & writing

Student Writing Sample – “Kid Writing” Illustration (September 2010)

“A big apple grew in the garden.”

Student Artwork Samples – Paper Pictures (April 2011)

“The mouse is going away because the sun is going down.”
Appendix I – Student artwork & writing

*Student Writing Sample – “Kid Writing” (November 2010)*

“The man is walking to his work. He sees a flower and he sees a rainbow. He is a silly man. He likes chicken nuggets and he likes watermelon juice. So he got watermelon juice. He wants more and he got more. The man got fat.”
Appendix J – Student writing assessed using rubric

*Student Sample Art with Writing – Painting (April 2011)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<td>Cannot read student’s sound spelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Score:**
Spaces – 3  
UC/LC – 2  
Complete, Detailed Thought – 3  
Sound Spelling – 3  

**Total Score: 11/12**
Appendix K – Student samples assessed using rubric

**Student D – Writing Sample (December 2010)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Spaces</strong></td>
<td>Spaces between ALL words</td>
<td>Spaces between most words</td>
<td>No spaces between words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>UC/LC letters</strong></td>
<td>Entire story has upper case first, all the rest lower case</td>
<td>Mostly UC/LC letters in story; needs improvement</td>
<td>No evidence of UC/LC distinction in story</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Complete, Detailed Thought</strong></td>
<td>Sentence(s) contain complete thoughts; makes sense; includes detail in story</td>
<td>Most or all of story makes sense, but includes very little detail; may contain some incomplete thoughts</td>
<td>Story does not contain a complete thought; does not make sense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sound Spelling</strong></td>
<td>Can read story based on sound spelling</td>
<td>Can read most of sound spelling; few words difficult to decode w/o student explanation</td>
<td>Cannot read student’s sound spelling</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Total Score:** 9/12

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**Student Artwork Writing - Painting (April 2011)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rubric - Performance</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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</table>

**Total Score:** 12/12
In my Kindergarten classroom there are a total of twenty students, ten males and ten females. Our classroom has little diversity in terms of ethnicities represented among students. In the class, there is one Indian student and the rest of the students are Caucasian. We have two students who leave the classroom in the morning to receive additional instructional support each day for reading and letter sounds, called Response to Intervention and Instruction or RTII. This instructional support takes the students away from the classroom for about thirty minutes. The class is composed of well-behaved students, without issues proving problematic to instruction. Some students have trouble focusing and remaining attentive for the entirety of a lesson, as well as some issues with self-regulation. In line with this, some students also struggle with starting work independently and staying on task.

My passion and strong interest in art has led to my inquiry question and how I can incorporate this love of art of mine into my classroom. I decided to explore using art in the area of writing especially because I have noticed interests of students in art in their drawings as well as students who struggle to make illustrations for their writing works. Since I enjoy art so much I would love to share this interest and talent of mine to my students to encourage the use of art in their lives. I have seen from my students that they have not yet thought about one way to do art or if art can be viewed as “good” or “bad.” Because my students are young and feel open to explore various possibilities through art I am looking to open their eyes to different ways they can learn to express themselves.

How can art enhance student performance in writing?

In what ways can art be used across the curriculum? How can art enhance student learning? How can students express their understanding through art?

This is a proposed timeline of how I plan to implement research for my wondering of the inquiry project.

Week 1 (February 7 – February 11)
- Begin to look at “before” data (student work)
- Find resources about art use in the classroom

Week 2 (February 14 - February 18)
- Introduce first art project (cut paper drawings)
- Continue to find resources on the use of art in classroom
- Inquiry brief draft due

Week 3 (February 21 - February 25)
- Complete started art project with writing
- Conduct student interviews/surveys on writing and art
- “Swimmy” lesson plan and art project response to literature

Week 4 (February 28 - March 4)
• Continue art projects with writing
• Compare student work to rubric
  o Before using art
  o Rubric used with first completed art project
• Revised update of Inquiry brief due (March 2)

**Week 5 (March 7 - March 11)**

• Spring Break
  o Catch-up to look at data collected so far and possible future art projects

**Week 6 (March 14 - March 18)**

• Continue art projects with writing (paper mosaics)
• Compare student work to rubric
  o Before using art
  o Rubric used with completed art project(s)

**Week 7 (March 21 – March 25)**

• Continue art projects with writing
• Compare student work to rubric
  o Rubric used to analyze art projects with writing

**Week 8 (March 28 – April 1)**

• Continue art projects with writing
• Compare student work to rubric
  o Rubric used to analyze art projects with writing

**Week 9 (April 3 – April 8)**

• Continue art projects with writing (painting)
• Compare student work to rubric
  o Rubric used to analyze art projects with writing

**Week 10 (April 11 – April 15)**

• Continue art projects with writing
• Compare student work to rubric
  o Rubric used to analyze art projects with writing
• Inquiry paper draft due (April 17)

**Week 11 (April 18 – April 22)**

• Continue art projects with writing
• Compare student work to rubric
  o Rubric used to analyze art projects with writing

**Week 12 (April 25 – April 29)**

• Prepare and practice for presentation at Inquiry Conference
• April 30 Inquiry Conference

**Data Collection**

I will be using three different methods of data collection for my inquiry. These include collecting examples of student’s writing as artifacts for the time before incorporating art, as well as the result of art projects during and after the inquiry. Along with artifacts, I will be using a survey and interview process to gauge student feelings towards writing in our classroom both using the tradition paper and crayon, marker, pencil drawing methods of “kid writing” as well as the art projects I plan on implementing. This survey will
be used both before the process of my inquiry begins and at the end of the inquiry to see how students’ feelings and thoughts about writing may change. I plan to choose a variety of students based on writing performance. These will include students who draw detailed pictures and write longer stories, students who struggle with creating detailed illustrations and stories, along with students who fall in between these two extremes of performance. One other method of data collection I will use as part of my inquiry is generating a rubric to score and rate student performance in writing. This rubric will measure detail students use in their stories, e.g. number of sentences, variety of sentences, etc., use of mechanics in stories and detail in illustration. The purpose of this rubric is to see if any change occurs from using art as a way to enhance student writing.
Annotated Bibliography


This article discusses the positive research found when using artwork as a pre-writing process for students. This article correlates directly with my main wondering of how art can enhance student performance in writing. The authors of this article identified artwork as being a motivator for student writing as well as providing a foundation and focus for student writing with finished artwork. I find this article to be helpful in providing solid research that has already been done on my inquiry topic.


I have chosen to use this book as a primary source for my inquiry because it is the basis of the writing program in place in my classroom. The text provides numerous ideas about implementing writing in the kindergarten classroom. I found this to be an informational book to learn more about the writing program in my classroom. By understanding more about "Kid Writing" from reading about this approach to writing instruction, I was able to understand more about how I could effectively and efficiently implement art projects into the writing curriculum.


I chose this article because it emphasizes the importance of art in early childhood education. The author discusses how young students are able to communicate and express themselves through the use of art, therefore finding an importance to the subject. Because I am inquiring about using art particularly in a Kindergarten classroom to enhance student writing I found this article interesting as it discussed art as a way for students to express their thoughts, just as writing does, so I can see how a connection can be made here.


I chose to utilize this article when thinking about how I can, as a teacher, incorporate art into student work. Although this is an older article, I find the beliefs and ideas written still stand true today. I thoroughly enjoy this article as it discusses qualities an educator in art must possess as well as the relationship between student and teacher through the artistic process. Because I am able to share my art with my students, and enjoy doing so, I found this article to be a wonderful representation of my beliefs about using art in the classroom and the guidance to do
The article, written by a prominent teacher in the field of art education, showcases how wide a realm the world of art is and that art can be given meaning for students when provided with the proper direction and purpose.


This recent lecture given by Elliot Eisner about “what education can learn from the arts” was so intriguing and interesting to me as I began to learn from my students through this process of inquiry and incorporating art in my students’ writing education. Just as we learn from our class and teaching practices through inquiry, it is important to learn about education through the eyes of the arts. Teaching is an art and much as we may teach the arts to children, we should teach all other content in education in a similar way. I found this to be a powerful lecture to read and relate to my inquiry research. Art is a powerful component to education and it can teach us a lot about students and education by incorporating art and its ideas in teaching. So, I chose to include this moving lecture that agrees with my beliefs about the inclusion of art in education.

Langille, M.; Younes, S. *Leo lionni: A resource guide for teachers.*

This is an article all about the artist and author Leo Lionni as well as a resource guide for teachers to use when sharing one of the author’s books. I am planning on teaching the children’s book, *Swimmy,* written and illustrated by Leo Lionni and have found this resource as a great guide to showcase this particular artist and author. The guide provides a connection to art and literature in which I am using to help create a series of lessons on art, writing and literature.

Meyers, J., Meidel, E., Rahn, T., Swaminathan, K. *Artsonia: Just beyond imagination.*

This is a website dedicated to displaying student artwork from around the world. The website is also a place for teachers to share lesson plans with one another, as well as a “museum” of sorts for families to view their children’s artwork. I am hoping to use this as part of my inquiry to give students an audience and a purpose for creating art in our classroom, and in turn perhaps giving motivation to enhance student writing performance.

This article discusses creating a shift in teachers’ attitudes about using art in the classroom as a supportive teaching tool. This article has much research to support its questioning about using art in education and teachers’ attitudes toward the use of art. I chose this article because of its strong ties to research, and the fact that it suggests a push towards educating teachers in the arts in order to provide an artistic avenue for students in the classroom. I believe this article will align with my own beliefs as well as some research and data I will collect in my classroom.


This article delves into the idea of using art in conjunction with academic achievement. The article discusses how various studies have shown that art can improve students’ academic achievement, especially in the area of reading, something closely related to my inquiry topic. I found this to be an interesting article that discusses the use of fine arts in the primary level classrooms. Also, the idea of using art to spark various emotions in students pertains to my thoughts about using art to improve self-expression in writing. Overall, this is an excellent article that directly relates to my wonderings about finding ways to use art as a method of improving academics in the classroom.

http://www.arteducators.org/research/AEP_Arts_Wire_on_NCLB_Sabol_Study_Sept_2010.pdf

I decided to include this article in my resources because it discusses the impact the recent No Child Left Behind Act has had on art education in our nation. Because this is a piece of legislation that affects current teaching and school district practices, I found this article to be relevant and interesting. The study looks into the negative effects NCLB has on art educators and art education programs in schools. I believe that teaching art is an important skill for students to learn during their years in school, as I found in my own inquiry to create a positive effect on student writing performance and expression. This article expresses similar ideas that I hold, and therefore it provided me with a resource in line with my own teaching beliefs and ideas about this inquiry.