

ArtReach Curricular Connections and Extensions (with State Standards)

James Castle, an Idaho Artist (1899-1977): Interpreting Visual Symbols

Idaho History

Social Studies Standard 1: History

Goal 1.1: Build an understanding of the cultural and social development of the United States.

Social Studies Standard 2: Geography

Goal 2.4: Analyze the human and physical characteristics of different places and regions.

Social Studies Standard 5: Global Perspectives

Goal 5.1: Build an understanding of multiple perspectives and global interdependence.

- As a class, look closely at and identify the different elements in the Flag of Idaho and the State Seal. Using a chart with three columns, first make a list of the literal objects represented in the Flag and the Seal. Then, in the second column next to the name of each literal object, think about how the artist has chosen to represent that object (i.e. what colors, lines, textures, shapes, scale, etc. has the artist used). Last, in the third column, move towards interpretation of those objects. What do the artists' representation of those objects contribute to the overall meaning of the Flag of Idaho and the State Seal?
- Have students research Idahoans in small groups. In addition to biographical data, have them search for images related to the person: photographs, paintings, prints, newspaper articles with pictures, maps, etc. With these findings, students can create a scrapbook with a biographical sketch and images with captions explaining the importance of each image in the person's life and history.

Social Studies

Social Studies Standard 1: History

Goal 1.6: Explain the rise of human civilization.

Goal 1.8 Build an understanding of the cultural and social development of human civilization.

Social Studies Standard 2: Geography

Goal 2.4: Analyze the human and physical characteristics of different places and

regions.

- Have your class research and study the earliest documented evidence of writing, beginning with the pictographs written by the Sumerians of Mesopotamia. In small groups, students can research a specific type of early writing and create a multimedia presentation. This information can then be used to compare the different types of early writing and the people who used them to express themselves. Then have students create a class timeline of early pictorial writing (and more traditional writing), documenting the major changes in the ways people have recorded and communicated events and ideas throughout time.
- Have students create an autobiographical PowerPoint presentation over a one-week period. Begin by having a class discussion on different forms of communication and how people express themselves traditionally and non-traditionally (one way would be through sign language). Discuss sounds, gestures, mime, pictures, music etc. Then tell students that they are going to create an autobiographical multimedia slide show called “All About Me.”
- Have students research the ways books have been made throughout history and in a variety of cultures. What materials and techniques were used to create the books? How are they similar to or different from the books we use today?

Visual Arts and Language Arts

CCRA.W.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

CCRA.W.3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.

VA:Cr2.1 Organize and develop artistic ideas and work.

Enduring Understanding: Artists and designers experiment with forms, structures, materials, media, and art-making approaches.

VA:Cn10.1: Synthesize and relate knowledge and personal experiences to make art.

Enduring Understanding: Through art-making, people make meaning by investigating and developing awareness of perceptions, knowledge, and experiences.

- Have students look around their homes to find cast-off materials to create their own autobiographical art. Have them save mail, magazines, newspapers, letters, catalogs, wrapping paper, and food packaging for a week. Then ask students to think of a memory or an experience to express pictorially. When they have finished, have them present their work to their peers. See if they can determine what the students are trying to communicate through their art. Ask students why they chose that particular event/memory to communicate information about themselves in their

autobiographical works of art.

- Books can be created by students in all grades. Younger students can write about themselves in simple accordion-style folded books. *Who Am I* books can be interactive with overlapping pages of facts that open to reveal answers. Books can be made to explore basic math or art concepts such as shapes, sizes, colors, opposites, numbers, patterns, coin values, etc. Beginning reader books can be created to explore the alphabet, beginning and ending sounds, short vowels, rhymes, sequences. A lesson plans for creating books can be found here <http://cdn.dickblick.com/lessonplans/handmade-books/handmade-books-handmade-books.pdf>
- In addition to creating his own books from cast-off materials, James Castle also altered existing books. Have students use books that are going to be donated or thrown away. The covers can be altered as can the interior pages. Books may be themed either to be autobiographical or to correspond with a current unit. Books may be created by individual students or in groups. For an interesting idea on a cultural exchange involving creating altered books, visit http://www.dailytarheel.com/index.php/article/2011/01/unc_student_group_works_in_local_middle_school_to_promote_arts_international_ties
- To help students understand the difference between biographies and autobiographies, have students write “about the author” segments for their books. Take photographs of each student, provide examples of “about the author” segments from printed books, and give each student paper and a pencil. Ask students to briefly read a few of the “about the author” segments and to share the type of information found in each. Discuss that some have pictures and some do not. Explain that this information is a biography of the author, and that the voice of the writer is someone other than the author as can be understood by the use of the words *he* and *she* rather than the word *I*. Write biography and autobiography on the board and discuss the differences between the two. Have students write autobiographies and then have them trade autobiographies with their classmates who will then write biographies for that partner classmate. Have students design the layout of the “about the author” segments and decide whether or not they will include the photographs.

Science and Math

Measurement and Data

PS: Structure and Properties of Matter

PS: Chemical Reactions

- James Castle rejected traditional art materials that were readily available for purchase in stores. Instead he created his own art materials, using sticks for pencils and soot mixed with saliva for graphite. Have students research how art materials

are made and what their physical properties are. What are the sources of pigments, clays and pencils? Then have students experiment with a variety of objects to come up with their own materials for creating artwork. What materials will create pigment on paper, etc.?

- Give students a set amount of “money” with which to purchase art materials in your classroom “art supply store.” Have paint, brushes, paper, etc. available for purchase. Also provide items that are recycled or “junk” and cost them nothing. Let students plan, budget their money, add up the purchases + Idaho sales tax and then create their art!

- Create a mathematically precise book. Have students cut cover paper and inside papers to your measurement specifications. Have them cut the cover paper so that it is slightly larger than the pages. Have students place the pages on top of the cover paper and fold the materials together to locate the center. Have students measure and punch three evenly spaced holes down the fold. Have students thread a needle and stitch the book. Have students put the needle through the center hole from the outside first. Next, have students put the needle through one of the other holes followed by the last hole and then back through the first one from the inside. Have students tie the thread together and add beads or tie it into a decorative knot.