

Example Paper Picker Press Structure

With each program we take into consideration the diverse circumstances of space, time, available instructors etc. The following is a sample to consider and adjust as you see fit.

To ensure that students get a multiplicity of arts we try, whenever possible, to have artists in different mediums work with the students.

Two days per week during hour and a half sessions for ten consecutive weeks. The same lead artist teaches or directs each session of the Paper Picker Press. Once every week or every other week, the class includes two artists (lead artist plus visiting artist who will come at least 2 or 3 times) so that students can explore a single text through multiple art mediums.

Getting Started:

1. Invite teachers and artist educators who may want to participate in the Paper Picker Press to a daylong workshop, to present the program and to identify promising collaborators.
2. At the introductory workshop, engage participants in making books and in creative interpretation of literature, for two hours in the morning. After a lunch break, participants are encouraged to try out their own activities on the group. Instructor creativity is an important element for a program that recognizes and values creativity in students.
3. Identify opportunities for PPP programs and availability of instructors who best understand and interpret the approach. Then design the series of workshops, assigning one lead artist to each series and varying the lessons with visiting artists.
4. Lead artist and coordinator develop the bi-weekly lesson plans with enough clarity to plot advances, and enough flexibility to allow for new developments.
5. An eye toward a culminating event will help to shape the program and, in the best cases, to involve parents and community allies.

Example Paper Picker Press Exercises:

Journal construction: While students listen to a story being read, or just after, they create a notebook, or frame for their future versions of the story. Recycled cardboard, string, decorating materials, etc. will be available and instructions/help will be given to students. If the bookmaking follows the story, the piece of paper used for commenting, drawing, etc. can be incorporated into the journal.

Setting-Switch: Inspired by Rudyard Kipling's *How the Whale Got His Throat*, one class crafted new and improved settings out of recycled materials. They grounded their very own "How the..." stories within these new, imagined worlds.

Character-Chaos: Exploring narration led one group of fourth graders working with Ray Bradbury's *All Summer In A Day* to create original narrators of their own. Using life-sized

drawings with cut-out faces, the students “tried on” different characters and created point-of-view performances.

Back to Back portraits of characters: Students sit in pairs, back to back, while one describes a character to the other who is drawing from the description. The roles then switch, and the drawer becomes the describer. At the end of 15 or 20 minutes, all students have a portrait to hang on the wall. The facilitator will lead them to note that even when the same character appears more than once, he/she is different. One observation will be that describing and drawing are interpretive exercises. They re-interpret reading which cannot avoid interpretation. Reading is always active.

Literature on the Clothesline: A good Latin American tradition, “literature de cordel,” invites students to hang their version of a story, poem, portrait, etc, so that all participants can read, appreciate, and discuss contributions with one another.

Recipes To Live By: Moved by Patricia Polacco’s *Thunder Cake*, a room full of kindergarteners interviewed family members and fashioned personalized “recipe” books detailing strategies to overcome fears.

How Would Your Grandmother Narrate?: Some students come from bilingual homes, or from families with non-standard styles of speaking the language of the text. As a way to honor the variations, and understand them as stylistic elements in literature, students can translate the text into the voice of a family or community elder.

Score for the Movie Version: Students will listen intently even to unfamiliar or “difficult” music, if they have a creative purpose to construct a musical score. Choices about which piece of music fits particular scenes of a story can lead to subtle explorations of mood and meaning.

Perform Metaphors and other Rhetorical Figures: Students can play “statue” to represent a metaphor or other figure that catches their attention. One student can sculpt another to produce the representation.

Forum Theater: The story can serve as material for skits that represent conflict. The students from the “audience” play spect-actors to individually go on stage and replace a character to play the role differently in order to derail the conflict. This is an effective technique for identifying and avoiding crises.