

Crafting Stone Wall Secrets (2-Day)

Teacher: N. Titchen

Grade Level: ¾

National Content Standard Alignment

Content Standard D

Learner Background

- Before embarking on this lesson, students should have previously made a thorough visual exploration of stone walls. The class will have already completed some stone wall lessons to build student's base knowledge about stone walls and the history that rocks hold. In addition, students must have some writing skills to succeed in this lesson.

Student Learning Objectives

Students will:

- (Social studies) discuss the importance of respect and stewardship of past and present
- (Science) discuss the formation of rocks in earth history
- (Science) hear about earth history, to include: the Big Bang, the glacier age, primitive animals, and meteor shower that ended the dinosaur reign.
- (Art) consider height, width, texture and shape when making rock representations

Skills:

- (Science) construct a representation of a rock to be used in discussions
- (Writing) write a 1st person narrative story
- Practice group skills by discussing ideas in small groups

Assessment

Formal - Students will volunteer responses to book in whole group discussion, write a group story about the history of a rock, work cooperatively in small groups by volunteering and respecting ideas, create a rock representation that has a clear similarity to rocks found in the outdoors, discuss the answers to the following questions: “Can a rock tell a story?” and “why might we respect a rock wall we find outside?”

Materials/Resources

Prior Preparation:

**Day 1 - (approx. 60 min): Blow up a small balloon for each student pair. Draw a circle around the knot with a sharpie pen. Make papier-mache paste and put in big bowls and rip newspaper into 1-inch strips. Cover tables with butcher paper to help keep them clean. Set up area for completed rocks to dry.*

**Day 2 - (approx. 10 min) Glue/tape “rocks” into a wall formation underneath the kidney table. All holes in the rocks should face one direction so the wall is uniform from 3 sides, and has cubbyholes on the backside.*

- *Stonewall Secrets* by Kristine and Robert Thorson
- 14 balloons
- 25 newspapers
- Papier mache paste
- Big bowls
- Butcher paper
- Bucket
- Graphic organizer
- Masking tape
- Lined paper

- Sharpie marker, pencils

Learning Activities (Day 1)

Initiation

(5 min): Students review previous explorations of stone walls that were started in outdoor activities, group stonewall projects, and discussion of rock formation and early town history. Have students think about: “Can a rock tell a story?” Listen to a few student responses as a group.

Lesson Development

1. (20 min) Teacher does a picture walk and narrates story from *Stone Wall Secrets* as a read-aloud to whole class. Teacher will encourage discussion during story about geological concepts will field student’s questions. Teacher will discuss how the clues from the rock tell us information about its history, while emphasizing the stewardship of the issue and the decision that Grandfather must make. Tell students they will be making a rock representation and hiding that rock’s secret inside, which will be collected for a class stone wall.
2. (20 min) Teacher will briefly discuss what rocks look like. Students will then make a representation of a rock. They should work in pairs to make one rock while several adults are circulating to help. Students will paper-mache a balloon, leaving the area inside the circle clean. Teacher models to students how to get strips wet with paste, how to wipe off paste between fingers, how to make texture on the rock and secure it, and how to place pieces in a crisscross pattern for strength. These rocks are placed on a shelf to dry. Teacher encourages students to shape the rock like a rock they have seen, considering height, width, texture and shape. Students are given time to wash and dry hands before next phase. Students work at own pace and move to next step when ready.
3. Students work with their partner to think of a storyline for their narrative. First they analyze the shape of the rock they made, then decide what clues might indicate the rock’s

history. The story will be written from the perspective of the rock. Students fill out graphic organizer as they discuss possible plots.

Closure

Should a group finish early, they can start drafting their story.

Learning Activities (Day 2)

Initiation

Teacher starts a discussion of what the history of a hypothetical rock could have been in the four history categories found on the graphic organizer: formation, places it has been, people who have used it, where it was found moments previously. Teacher helps students to work cooperatively to complete the story using some or all of the information on their graphic organizer in the given time. Content is stressed in this draft instead of a finished product. Teacher monitors to make sure the story is the creative effort of two minds, and not the effort of one student while the other remains a passive on-looker.

Lesson Development

1. The stories are hidden inside the classroom rock wall. Three students can volunteer to share excerpts from their rock stories. The whole class discusses how each rock can have a different hidden story.
2. Discussions lead toward the respect of the class's work, the rock's history and the wall as a symbol of the class's efforts. Classroom teachers encouraged to promote reading of rock wall stories in class and allow time for students to share their story in front of an audience.

Closure

(5 min): Ask students: "Now that you know how important it is to respect our own rock wall, why might we respect a rock wall we find outside?" Share student answers.

Students Needing Differentiated Instruction

Because the reading level of the book is difficult, only excerpts of the story are read aloud by the teacher. Working in pairs allows several ideas to be generated around story possibilities, yet the group is small enough so each individual is an active participant in all phases. Groups are homogenous and each group has an adult to facilitate the activities. Stories can be dictated to an adult by students who have difficulty in Language Arts so they can focus on story concepts and not stress over word generation and punctuation. Stores are read aloud, because students with reading disabilities would not be as likely to read the stories available to them in the classroom. Language Arts is paired with a hands-

on activity to help stimulate interest for students with short attention spans and low tolerance for reading and writing.