

This exemplar includes



appropriate for grades

K

1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

Trickster Tales



A Gr. 3&4 Learning Experience



Select

to view video

This exemplar includes student experiences in



Drama and Visual Art

Language, Tools and Performance Skills



Students demonstrate understanding of and facility with art and drama media, tools, and processes.



Creative Expression

Students generate, develop and communicate ideas through creating original works in art and drama.

Understanding In Context



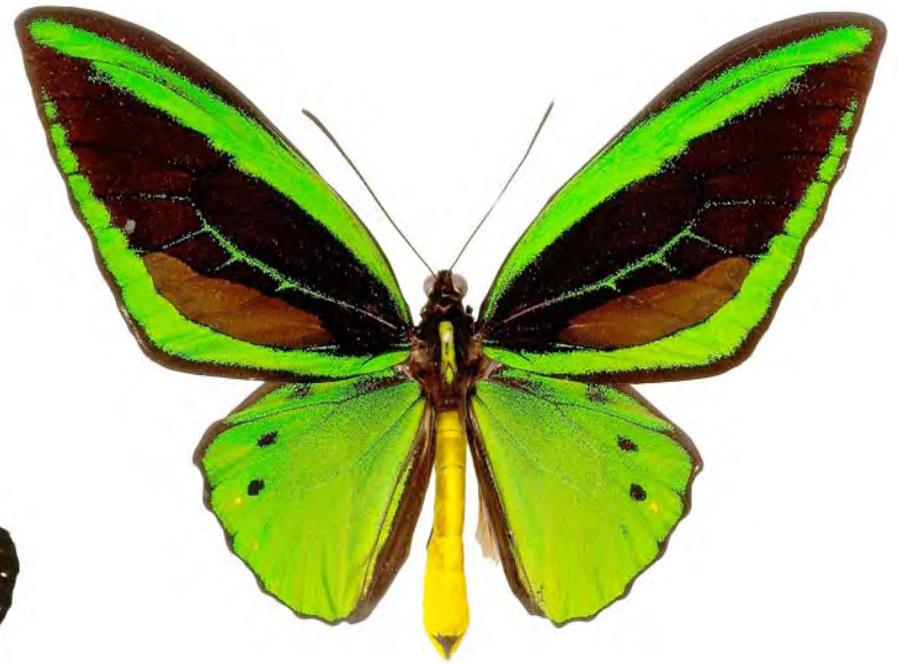
Students demonstrate appreciation of art and drama as a means of experiencing and exploring their own versions of stories from other places.



Valuing Experience

Students reflect on, share, and explain ideas about meaning in their own work.

The student is at the centre. Students' own feelings, perceptions, ideas, and expressions matter immensely. It is critical that these are valued, explored, and celebrated within all ART learning experiences.



Every student is an artist, one whose growth and learning are best fostered within rich, open-ended, participatory DRAMA experiences.

from: Framework of Outcomes for Arts Education , The Young Artist)

The Learning Context

The Big Idea: “What is a Trickster Tale?”

The students were in a Gr. 3 class which included a broad range of academic abilities, learning styles and special needs.

Prior learning

- In visual art the students had experienced a variety of activities with different art media and techniques, both in their current and previous grades.
- The students had little or no prior experience with dramatic forms.
- In Social Studies the students were working on an inquiry into Africa as part of **Social Studies Cluster 3- Communities of the World**.
- In English Language Arts the students were focusing on developing understanding in **General Outcome 3: Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to manage ideas and information**.

The classroom setting

Most of the experiences were carried out in a regular classroom setting. The teacher and students also had access to an empty classroom where they were able to set up their photo studio and store their dioramas. EA support was usually available for the special needs students, and a visiting artist and a student volunteer also participated in some parts of the project.

Overview



of teaching and learning experiences

First the students

- researched a variety of topics for their inquiry project on Africa and decided to focus on storytelling as a way to share some of their learning
- explored African trickster tales
- wrote their own versions of African trickster tales including character, setting and plot
- developed an interest in African trees, as trees were featured in many of the stories

Next they

- drew detailed pictures of their characters
- created flexible plasticene and wire sculptures of their characters
- made a large variety of three dimensional props to show the settings of their stories
- collaborated on making several large Baobab trees to use as storytelling props
- created individual glue line & chalk drawings of African trees

Then they

- refined their stories and practiced using their characters and props to tell their stories to each other
- worked in the classroom photo studio and took a sequence of photographs to tell their stories
- selected the five most appropriate photographs

Finally the students

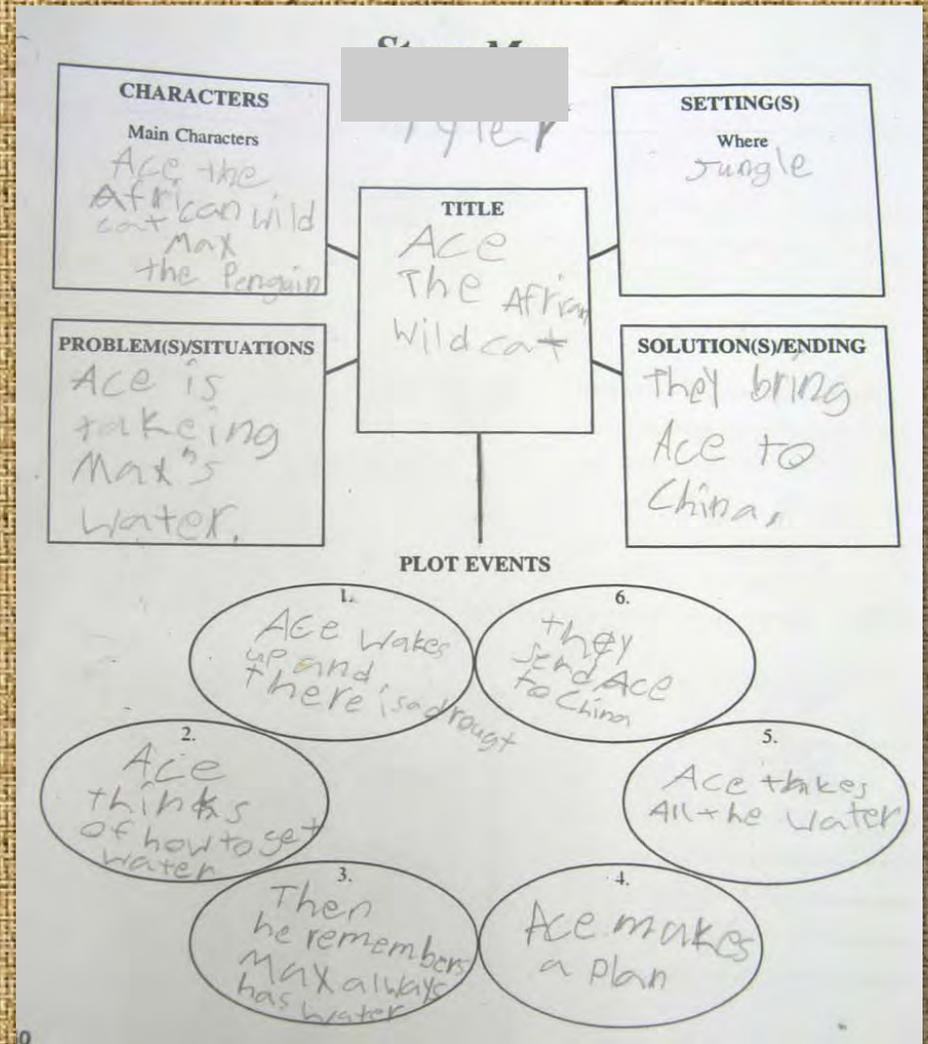
- inserted their five photos into *Photo Story 3 for Windows*
- sequenced the photos and selected appropriate timing and slide transitions
- recorded their story narratives
- shared their completed Photo Stories with each other and the school community

First the students

Read and researched a variety of African Trickster Tales

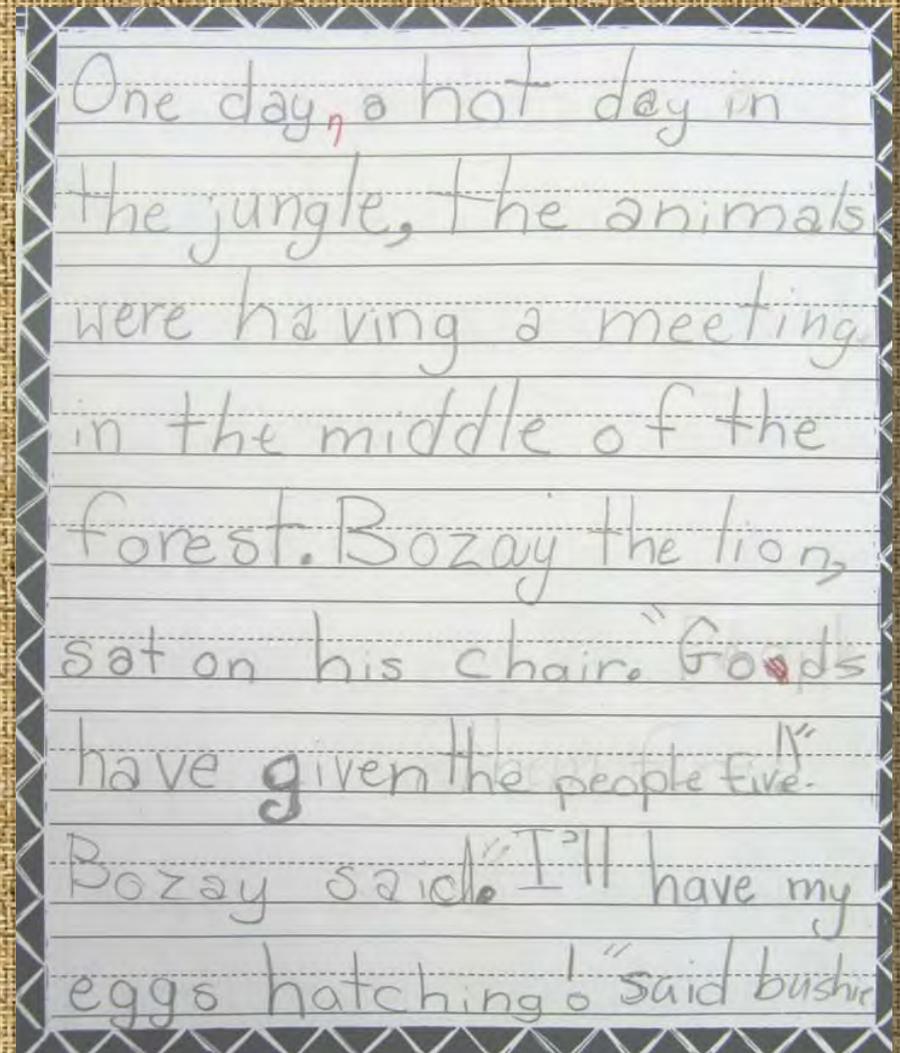
Planned their own trickster tales with

characters
setting(s)
problems
solutions
plot events



In Creative Expression in Art, students collect visual and other information for use in stimulating and developing own art ideas 2-4 A-C1.5

Students wrote their ideas for their own trickster stories including setting, characters and plot



One day, a hot day in the jungle, the animals were having a meeting in the middle of the forest. Bozay the lion, sat on his chair. "Goods have given the people five." Bozay said. "I'll have my eggs hatching!" said bushie.

In Drama Language & Performance Skills, students demonstrate understanding of beginning, problem, and resolution as basic components of dramatic play 1–8 DR–L3.1

Next

the students developed ideas for their characters through drawing.



In Creative Expression in Art, students generate multiple ideas for artmaking in response to a given stimulus (e.g., as expressed within ...drawings...), with teacher guidance 2–4 A–C1.1



They used their drawings as inspiration for making flexible plasticene characters.

First they drew a “stick figure” of their character to help them understand how to make a “skeleton” with pipe cleaners.

Then they wrapped strips of aluminum foil around the wire skeleton.

Next they kneaded & softened plasticene, formed it into flat pieces and pressed and wrapped the plasticene around the wire & foil skeleton.



In Art Language & Tools, students demonstrate understanding of oral, written, graphic, and modelled instructions for art media, tools, and processes 3–4 A–L2.4



To complete their characters, they covered the entire figure with plasticene and added additional plasticene to areas that needed to be thicker. Then they smoothed the surface and added details.

Criteria for a finished character:

Each character must be strong enough and smooth enough to be bent into 3 different positions without breaking, cracking or collapsing.



In Creative Expression in Art, students revise and refine own artworks on the basis of established criteria 2–4 A–C3.1



Art Toolbox Media tip: *The wire and foil skeleton strengthens the plasticene figure and makes it more flexible. Later, when the students use the figures to tell their stories, the inner skeleton makes it easier to bend the figures into different positions .*



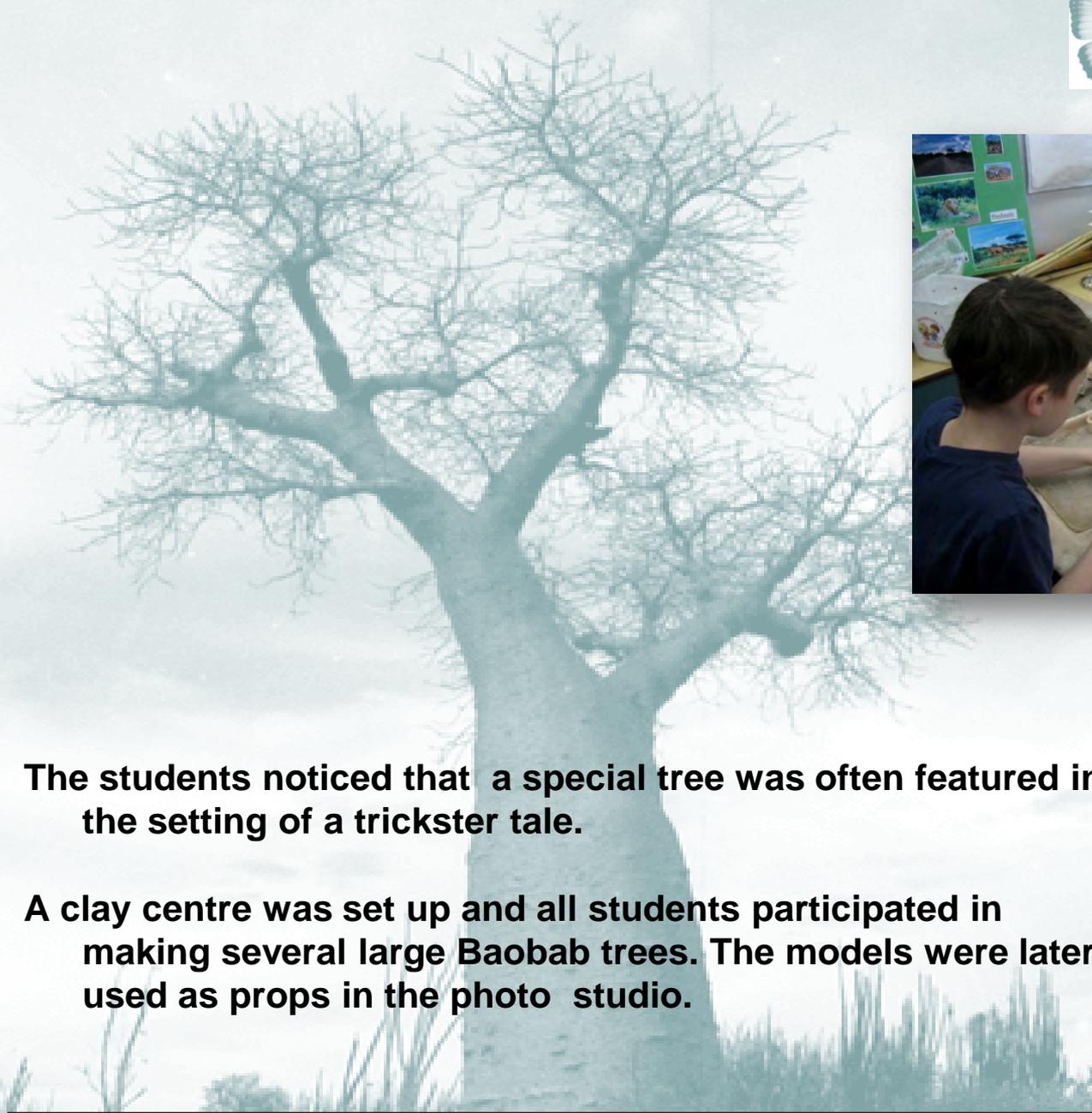


Then

the students reviewed their stories and decided what kinds of props they would need to show the settings.



In Drama Language & Performance Skills, students make, select, and use costumes, props, and sets for specific play experiences 3–6 DR–L3.5



The students noticed that a special tree was often featured in the setting of a trickster tale.

A clay centre was set up and all students participated in making several large Baobab trees. The models were later used as props in the photo studio.





Students also

- made artistic decisions about which materials and processes to use to create specific characters and props
- collaborated on making additional characters and props to share with their classmates



In Drama Language & Performance Skills, students participate collaboratively in a variety of grade-appropriate dramatic forms K–4 DR–L1.1

In Creative Expression in Art, students make ongoing decisions about the use of art media, elements, and subject matter on the basis of own purpose or intent for artmaking 3–4 A–C2.1





Students

- experimented with manipulating their characters and props and sequencing their ideas into scenes
- were responsible for keeping all their characters and props organized . Small tri-oramas helped the students keep their work together.



In Creative Expression in Art, students generate multiple ideas for artmaking in response to a given stimulus, with teacher guidance 2–4 A–C1.1

In Creative Expression in Drama, students create and experiment with costumes, props, and sets for specific play experiences 2–4 DR–C1.4





The students then

- reviewed their stories and made checklists of all the items they would need to tell their stories, then checked their own collection of items to make sure they had everything
- shared their stories with a partner and explained how they planned to use their characters and props
- listened to their partner's story and plans, asked questions and made suggestions



In Valuing Artistic Experience, students reflect on, share, and explain ideas about meaning in own and others' artworks 2–4 A–V3.1

In Valuing Dramatic Experience, students describe the use of various settings and props in dramatic play experiences and presentations, and explain their contribution to the meaning of the dramatic story 2–4 DR–V2.3



Next the students

- helped set up a “photo studio” in the corner of their classroom
- were given basic instructions in the use of the school’s digital camera
- took turns at the “photo studio” where they worked with an older student (in this case, a university student volunteer) who discussed their work with them and supervised the use of the camera and tripod



In Art Language & Tools, students continue to practise safe and appropriate use of various art media (photography), tools (cameras), and processes (arranging the setting & lighting) K–4 A–L2.1



When each student had their turn in the photo studio, they read their story to the older student, reviewed the beginning, middle and end, and described their ideas for organizing the story into five scenes.

Then they experimented with the placement of their props and characters.

They reviewed the instructions for camera use. Some children used a tripod while others chose to hand-hold the camera.



In Creative Expression, students explain own decisions about the selection and use of art media, elements, and subject matter in own ongoing artmaking 3–4 A–C2.3

In Valuing Dramatic Experience, students describe the use of various settings and props in dramatic play experiences and presentations, and explain their contribution to the meaning of the dramatic story 2–4 DR–V2.3



Learning Conversation:

“What do you need to show the first scene of your story? Do any of your characters need to show movement? Experiment with a few different arrangements and see how the scene looks. If necessary, you may borrow other props or materials from your classmates (ask first, of course).”

“Let’s look through the camera and see how different points of view can show your scene.

- *A bird’s eye view is taken from above.*
- *A close-up view can show details like a face or an object.*
- *A ground level view can show the scene from a low point of view .*
- *A overview can show foreground, middleground and background*

What camera angle do you think would be best to show each of your scenes?”

“What time of day or night is it in your story? Would you like to adjust the lighting by closing or opening the blinds? See what you can do by moving the desk light into different positions.”



Each student then

- set up their first scene
- arranged lighting
- took one or two digital photographs of the first scene
- repeated the process for each subsequent scene
- reviewed all their photographs and selected the 5 best shots for inclusion in *Photo Story 3 for Windows*



Organizational tips: *each student spent about 15-20 minutes at the photo studio. Meanwhile, the rest of the class worked on other activities: they refined their stories and props, worked on a drawing activity (see appendix) and completed other independent inquiry projects*

In Creative Expression in Drama, students rehearse, revise, and refine drama experiences with audience in mind 3–4 DR–C3.1

Scenes from different “Trickster Tales”



In Creative Expression in Art, students finalize own artworks (e.g., make appropriate decisions as to whether own work is “finished”) 2–4 A–C3.2

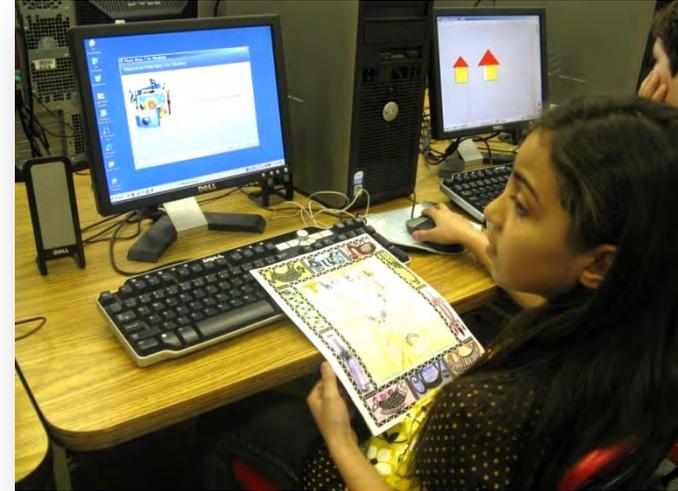


Finally, to complete the project, the students

learned how to use

[Photo Story 3 for Windows](#)

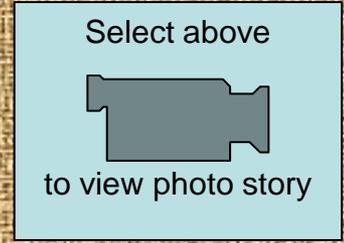
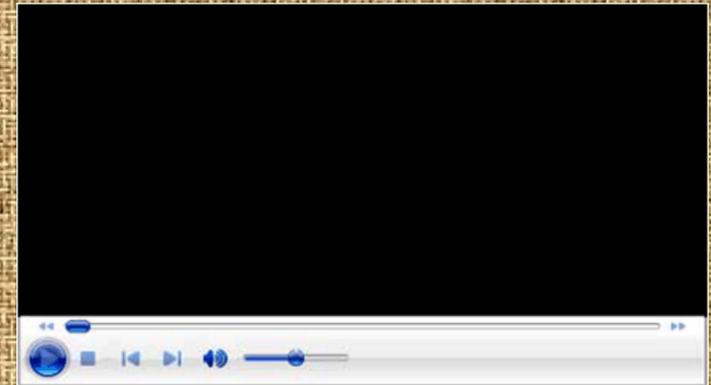
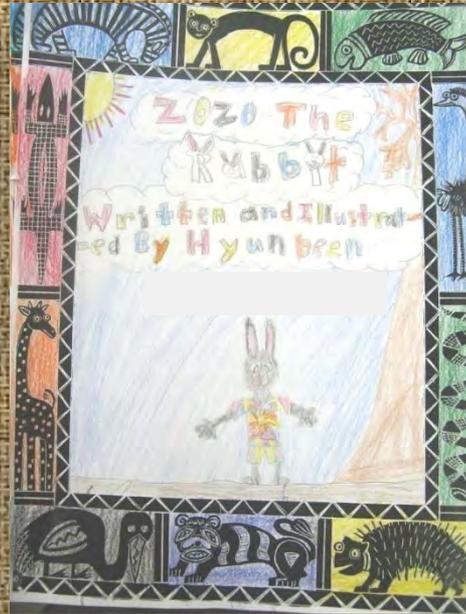
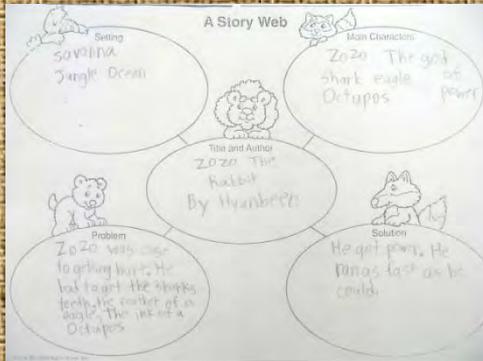
- inserted their own five photos into the correct story sequence
- adjusted timing and transitions for each slide
- made a title page
- helped each other record their readings of their own stories



In Creative Expression in Drama, students share own drama with others through performances, scripts, or video recordings K–4 DR–C3.3



Students were able to share their work with other students, their families, and the community at large (through websites).



In Creative Expression in Art, students finalize own artworks (e.g., make appropriate decisions as to whether own work is “finished”) 2–4 A–C3.2

As an extension

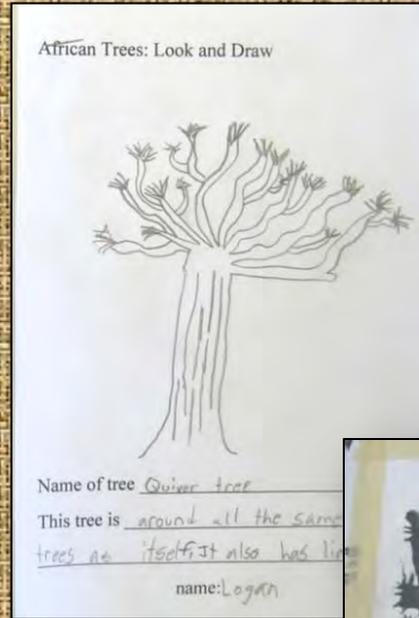
the students created drawings of African trees

Because of their interest in the Baobob tree and it's role in trickster tales, the class chose to find out more about African trees.

The students

- looked at photographs and drew several different African tree species
- chose their favorite drawing and redrew it onto a large sheet of heavy art paper
- outlined the drawing with black glue lines

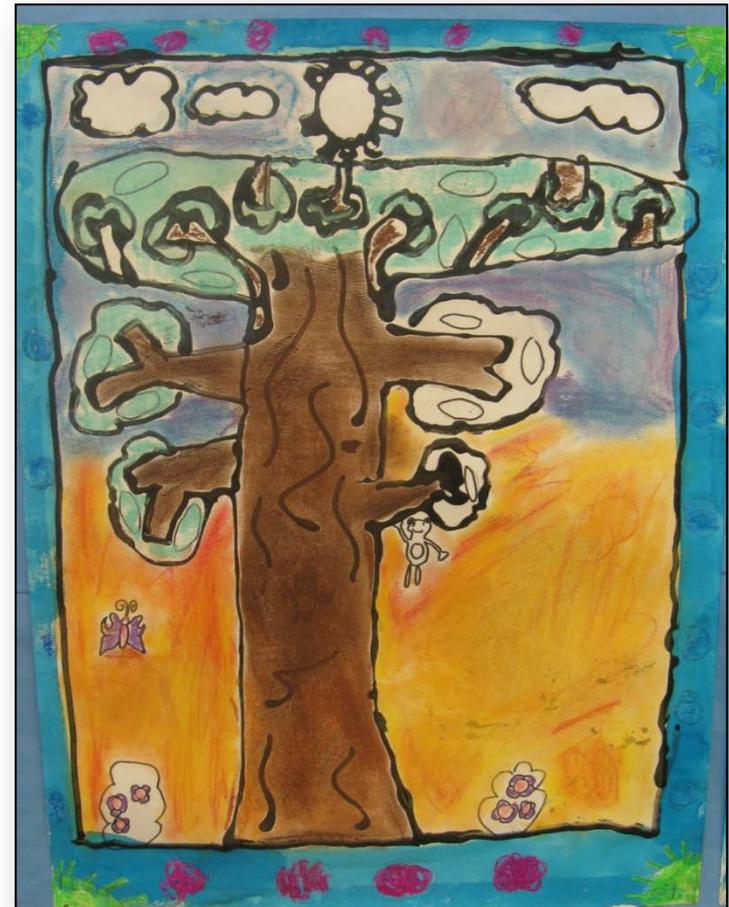
In Creative Expression in Art, students collect visual and other information for use in stimulating and developing own art ideas
2-4 A-C1.5





They then

- examined the photographs a second time, described the different colours in the sky and speculated what time of day or night the photograph was taken
- chose a time of day or night for their own pictures and completed their drawings with coloured chalk pastels



As an extension

Students could compare and contrast their African trickster tales to First Nations trickster tales.

EG compare and contrast:

Raven and Anansi the Spider , both by Gerald McDermott

Social Studies:

3.3.6 Cultural Diversity

“Cluster 3 is designed for the study of two contemporary communities of the world (one indigenous).”

This learning experience focuses on the concept of culture. Every culture has developed a unique set of beliefs, values, and traditions that are expressed in a variety of ways. Students explore the elements that make up cultures and research various cultural expressions in the communities studied.”

Appendix: Visual art tools and materials

Making characters:

- Plasticene
- Chenille wires
- Aluminum foil
- Fabric & yarn scraps

Making Props:

- Drawing supplies
- Craft odds & ends
- Corrugated cardboard, recycled objects
- Clay & natural twigs (props made with natural clay were not fired)

“African Trees” Drawing Activity:

- Pencils, markers, coloured chalk, paper (cream manilla, construction or water-colour), white or black glue in squeeze bottles (add black acrylic paint to white glue to make black glue)

Photography:

- Digital camera
- Tripod for the camera



Appendix: Resources

Print:

Trickster Tale stories by Gerald McDermot

Photo Story 3 for Windows : Available as a free download:

[Photo Story 3](#)

Appendix: Learning Across the Curriculum

Social Studies Cluster 3- Communities of the World

“Students enrich their appreciation of global diversity as they explore communities and cultures in other places of the world. Students explore the elements that constitute a culture and examine the physical, social, and cultural characteristics of two contemporary communities of the world, one of which is an indigenous community.”

3-KI-009 Define the elements that constitute a culture. “Include: ways of life, language, art, clothing, beliefs.”

ELA Grade 3 General Outcome 3: “Students will listen, speak, read, write, view, and represent to manage ideas and information.”

Appendix: Manitoba Education Resources

Independent Together: Supporting the Multilevel Learning Community



For more information, see:
[*Independent Together:
Supporting the Multilevel
Learning Community*](#)

“Students exploring the world in authentic ways will naturally call on learning associated with different subject areas. Curriculum integration allows students to develop a whole picture of the topics they explore, without artificial divisions into subject areas. Integrated themes, units, or projects based on topics in social studies, science, and health education, for example, provide purposeful contexts for learning and practising language arts and mathematics skills. They allow teachers to use time more efficiently, taking advantage of overlaps between subject areas and avoiding fragmenting the day into separate periods. To attempt to deliver distinct and separate curricula based on subject areas and grades would be a daunting task for any teacher, and would overlook the benefits multilevel learning offers. “

Independent Together 5.3

Appendix: Manitoba Education Resources

Independent Together: Supporting the Multilevel Learning Community



For more information, see:

[*Independent Together:
Supporting the Multilevel
Learning Community*](#)

“Embedding Instruction in the Context of Inquiry

To address the learning outcomes of several curricula as well as the needs of a wide range of students, instruction needs to be intentional and focused on developing skills and strategies for independent inquiry. Instruction may take the form of mini-lessons for the whole class or for small instructional groups, shaped to address the needs of students as they conduct their inquiry. Embedding instruction in the context of ongoing inquiry helps students see the purpose of their learning and gives them the opportunity to apply it immediately in an authentic context..”

Independent Together 6.5

Why was this exemplar a valuable learning experience?

Language, Tools and Performance Skills

Students develop understanding of and facility with the dramatic form of storytelling and they make, select, and use characters, props, and sets for specific play experiences.

Creative Expression

Students generate ideas for their own art through an inquiry into Africa. They make and explain their own ongoing decisions about use of media and subject matter.



Understanding in Context

Students experience art and drama as a means of exploring others' lives (e.g., feelings, values, stories, events, cultures)

Valuing Experience

Students reflect on, share, and explain ideas about meaning in own artworks and they describe the use of various settings and props in dramatic play experiences and presentations, and explain their contribution to the meaning of the dramatic story.