

Children's Literature Math Assignment

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BOOK SUMMARY

Imagine A Place is written by Sarah L. Thompson and illustrated by Rob Gansalves. It is a 2008 companion to the *Imagine a Night* and *Imagine a Day* books also done by Thompson and Gansalves. Published in New York by Atheneum Books for Young Readers (an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division), it has two ISBN numbers: book design: ISBN-13: 978-1-4169-6802-3 and text ISBN-10: 1-4169-6802-4.

The illustrations in this book are actual acrylic paintings that, according to the book's summary "show how imagination can reveal the extraordinary in the everyday." This book is filled with paintings that begin with one thing and virtually transform into something else. Each page begins with the words "Imagine a place" and then continues on to stretch the reader's imagination with the use of adjectives and adverbs. For young readers this book is a fascinating picture book, for the older reader this book is a work of art that causes the reader to use their imagination and see the transforming images. Although there are no page numbers, the pictures are large and brightly coloured and use everyday scenes to stretch the reader's imagination to its fullest.

As a learning tool, this book has so many possibilities: it's use of pictures and colours can be used for Visual Arts (artwork of everyday places created using only geometric shapes either drawn freehand or cut out); the many shapes involved in the paintings allow for it being used in Math (Venn diagrams sorting shapes by attributes); the repetition of the words "Imagine a Place" followed by the use of few yet very descriptive words allow it to be used for Literature classes for young readers(writers workshop, Imagine a Place can be used as a story starter) ; the use of pictures transforming into a different images can be used for Drama and Dance(the children can transform their bodies into different shapes) ; the imagination boggles at the many uses of this great book.

MOST APPROPRIATE GRADE LEVEL AND CURRICULAR MATH STRAND

For our purposes, this book is most appropriate for the grade one, geometry and spatial sense level of the Ontario Math Curriculum. Although it could be used at many different levels, for example it would also be appropriate for looking at transformations at the junior level.

SPECIFIC CURRICULAR EXPECTATIONS

Our book “Imagine A Place” will be used to meet the curricular expectation that states: “identify and describe common two-dimensional shapes (e.g., circles, triangles, rectangles, squares) and sort and classify them by their attributes (e.g., colour; size; texture; number of sides), using concrete materials and pictorial representations (e.g., “I put all the triangles in one group. Some are long and skinny, and some are short and fat, but they all have three sides”) (Ontario Math Curriculum Grades 1 – 8, 2005, pg 37).

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Questions to be asked before working on the activity:

- “Based on the front cover, what do you think the story is about?”
- “What do you think is unusual about the picture?”
- “Do you think that this picture is real or imaginary?”
- “What different shapes do you see in this picture?”

Questions to be asked throughout the reading of the book:

- “What do you see at the beginning of the picture and what do you see it become?”
- “What shapes do you see grow from the beginning of the picture?”
- “How do you think that we can tell that these pictures are not real?”

Questions to be asked during the consolidation of the reading:

- “Name one shape you see in this picture and tell me where you see it.”
- “What could we do to make sure that we don’t count the same shape more than once?”
- “When we go to the table to do the activity, how could we make sure that everyone is given a chance to help?”

Questions at conclusion of Activity:

- “How did you go about dividing up the job of counting the shapes?”
- “What method did you use to ensure everything was counted?”
- “Did you discover any unique shapes?”
- “If you found a new shape, how could you describe it?”
- “How did you know what each shape was?”
- “How many sides do each of your shapes have?”

ONE MATHEMATICS ACTIVITY/TASK

See attached planning sheets.

CRITIQUE OF BOOK USIN HELLWIG, MONROE, & JACOBS' FIVE CATEGORIES

ACCURACY: "Imagine A Place" allows children to see that there are shapes everywhere. Although it does not use geometric terminology, it transforms shapes to become others thereby showing the students that shapes can merge to become other shapes or objects and only the 'imagination' holds back what it created.

VISUAL AND VERBAL APPEAL: Each page has a wonderful 'Escher' type painting that holds the reader's eye as he or she studies in wonderment how one item slowly becomes something else. Children are engaged by the pictures as they try to determine how the shapes are transformed into actual images. The use of the words "imagine a place" at the beginning of each page allows for the reader to begin a new discovery of Gonsalves' imagination as shapes merge and transform into another time and place. Each time the reader looks at the book, a new part of the story shows itself making this book have a very high visual and verbal appeal.

CONNECTIONS: At first reading, math connections within the book are not always evident because the beauty of the pictures steals the reader's attention. During the second and third reading, the reader can see the many unique forms transforming from the shapes the artist's use of lines and shapes also become clearly apparent.

AUDIENCE: This book could be appreciated by any age group. For beginning readers, the pictures are intriguing enough to hold the child's attention. For primary and junior readers, the repetition of the first three words on each page ('imagine a place'), allows the child to get lost in imagining a place and picking out details that make each page so awe inspiring. For the adult, this book truly is a work of art. The use of perspective and colours that blend so well from single images to a complete picture is truly unique.

"WOW" FACTOR: This book has a very high Wow factor. From trying to find your way home through a maze, to wondering if the books in the library will fall if one is pulled out, to watching the people in the doll house come to life, just to mention a few. This book is truly a great book for many areas of the curriculum.