

LESSON OVERVIEW

Students will explore the relationships between images and words by looking at illustrated children's books to see how illustrations and texts can relate to and strengthen one another. Students will choose descriptive words or phrases from their journals and quick writes and create images that help communicate their meaning.

LENGTH OF LESSON: One 45-minute session

KEY IDEAS THAT CONNECT VISUAL ARTS AND WRITING

- Images and illustrations can communicate ideas and express emotions.
- Words can be visual and can create pictures in your mind.
- Combining words and images thoughtfully can deepen their meanings.

INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES

Students will:

Visual Arts and Writing

- Identify descriptive words
- Understand that descriptive words can bring images to mind
- Look at illustrated children's books to see how images and words strengthen each other
- Create images that illustrate words they have written in their journals

FOR THE TEACHER

Select a dozen or more illustrated children's books to show students as examples of the ways words and images support each other. Try to find many different illustration styles and text designs to show students the variety of options there are for combining words and images. Use the [Children's Book List](#) on the ABC website for ideas and ask your school or local librarian for additional help.

Select a short passage with lots of descriptive, visual words from one of the books to read to students.

SUPPLIES

- Student journals
- Student's art exploration sheets, for reference
- Pencils, crayons, colored pencils, markers, watercolor paints, and brushes
- Drawing paper



VOCABULARY

Descriptive words describe how things feel, sound, taste, look, or smell in a way that creates vivid images in our minds.

INSTRUCTIONAL PLAN: OBSERVE, CREATE, AND REFLECT**Quick Write**

Before beginning the lesson, give students a few minutes to respond to one of the following prompts:

- List the five words you like best or find most interesting.
- Describe the image created in your mind by the phrases “roller coaster” or “outer space.”

Introduction

Introduce this lesson by asking students to think of words that create vivid pictures in their minds. What are some examples of descriptive or “juicy” words? Ask students if they think the following words are juicy and, if not, have students replace the original words with other words that are more visual: cold, loud, nice, squishy, and good. What images do these words bring to mind? Choose a food (pizza, mango, cauliflower) or a place (home, bus, cafeteria) and ask students to come up with visual words to describe it. How do these words help them “see” what is being described?

Tell students they will explore how images and words work together to communicate and create images that express the meaning of words, phrases, or sentences they have written.

Observe: Look and Discuss

Read the passage you selected from an illustrated children’s book to students. Do not show them the illustrations. To help them concentrate on the story and to visualize the scene and action taking place, ask students to close their eyes as they listen. Read the passage again and then ask some students to describe what they “saw” as you read. Which words from the passage were most descriptive or visual? Show students the illustration in the book so they can see how the illustrator imagined the scene. How do the students’ visions compare to each other’s and to the illustrator’s? How are they similar or different?

Give students some time to look through the illustrated books borrowed from the library and see the many ways words and images can work together. Point out some examples you think are interesting and ask students to share any that they especially like.

Create: Word Images

Give students a few minutes to look through their journals and quick writes. Have each student choose a word, phrase, or sentence they think is “juicy.” Students can either circle the words or copy them down on a clean sheet of paper to refer to as they work on their illustrations.



Have students decide which art materials they will use. To create an image for the words or sentences they chose, they can begin with a quick, preliminary sketch or they can begin creating their final illustrations. The illustrations can be realistic or abstract. Have students look at the words while they work to make sure the images express the words' meanings or feelings.

Suggest that students include the words somewhere on the page. They can refer back to the illustrated books for different ways the text can be placed on the page.

Reflect

When students have finished, display their work in the classroom and give them a few minutes to look at each other's images. Ask a few students to explain how their images and words relate. Ask other students to make observations about their classmates' work. Have students use sentence stems when talking about each other's work, for example, "I notice ..." or "I wonder ...".

LESSON EXTENSIONS

Visual Arts and Writing

- Ask students to choose a juicy word and illustrate the word itself so that it helps communicate the meaning. For example, the word "juicy" could be made to look like it was made out of fruit and dripping juice.
- Have students create a visual poem. A visual poem is one in which the arrangement of words on the page helps convey the poem's message; the arrangement can be as important as the meaning of the words.
- Ask them to write about a memorable meal using as many descriptive words as possible.