

OVERVIEW: Harry Potter Biology and Art:

Application of the Dichotomous Key with our Artistically Designed Fantastic Beasts

After looking at a narrative that tells a story of fantastic beast descriptions, students brainstorm about the necessary verses possible creative characteristics the detailed narrative of their chosen fantastic beast illustrates. Students then draw from the point of view of one of the characters in the narrative description, sharing the character's mood through physical posture and gesture while imagining the evolution of the fantastic beast that followed.

FEATURED RESOURCES

Timeline Tool: Use this online tool to help students sketch out the sequence of events for their narratives.

<http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/interactives/timeline/index.html>

Differentiated levels for drawing fantastic beasts:

Higher-order Thinking	Owl Level Acceptable	Owl Level Exceeds Expectations	Owl Level Outstanding	Newt Level
	Worked above and beyond to create and original product (did something teacher did not show)	Artwork is an original design	Artwork is somewhat original	The student copied ideas from another source.

Rubric for Drawing Skills: (item still coming)

FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

This lesson uses artworks as inspiration for narrative writing. Why use drawing? As Rochelle I. Frei (1999) explains, art "can be used the same way as written text can to expand children's knowledge of the world, and to understand what children do when they make sense of that world. . . . Art can provide a window into how children negotiate their understandings of images and their knowledge of the world" (386). In Frei's project, students explain their understanding of pieces of art, revealing details about their literacy processes and strategies. The same kinds of revelations, likely on a more advanced level, are revealed in this lesson, where students explore background actions and other narratives related to the character they study. All students can find success "where they are" through this exploration of creatures, vocabulary, voice, and characterization in the specific context of creative interpretation of charter development through narrative descriptors for the inspiration of the artwork. Because of the open-ended nature of this lesson, it is particularly appropriate for multi-leveled classrooms and classrooms with special-needs students and English Language Learners.

Further Reading

Frei, Rochelle I. "Making Meaning with Art: Children's Stories." *Language Arts* 76.5 (May 1999): 386-382.

This lesson is adapted from: O'Keefe, Alice M. 1996. *Motivating Writing in Middle School*. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 111-12.