

Book Box/ Unit Box

Description

This strategy gives students the opportunity to symbolize, verbally explain, and summarize what they have learned through reading or an inquiry activity through a kinesthetic activity. Students gather or make symbolic items to represent key ideas in a book or unit and place them in a container to share with classmates during a presentation.

Purpose

Creating a book box/ unit box is a hands-on/ minds-on strategy that helps students to summarize what they have learned by identifying major topics and/or important concepts in readings or activities. Students also communicate about them when they share with classmates. Through the use of this strategy, students decide what is important and what is not important. In addition, through sharing, students elaborate on previous learning.

Connection to Inquiry and Standards:

Book boxes/ unit boxes connect to inquiry in the following ways: Students determine and communicate relevant information from readings and/or activities. Students select the information, explain why it is important, and communicate their thoughts with others. Additionally, support their decisions during class discussions with evidence from the text and/or activity. This strategy also addresses the Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening Standards: 1.2 Reading Critically in All Content Areas (Read and understand essential content of informational texts and analyze text for information), 1.1 Learning to Read Independently and 1.3 Reading, Analyzing, and Interpreting Literature (Purposes for reading and Comprehension). Additionally, the technique requires careful listening and use of speaking skills (PA Standard 1.6).

Materials

Selected text or an activity to use with this strategy. Students supply their own box or other container and gather items from their home or school to place in the container. Students may also wish to decorate the container with construction paper and crayons.

Procedures

Following the completion of a text or unit, students are instructed to create a book box/ unit box. Students collect 3-5 objects related to key ideas in the book or unit and place them in a container such as a box or coffee can with lid. Students may wish to decorate the outside of the container to also relate to the book or unit. Students share boxes and explain the significance of each item placed in the container. Students also need to support the items placed in the container with evidence from the book or activities. Classmates may ask questions during the informal presentations.

Resources

Tompkins, Gail E. (1997) Literacy for the twenty-first century: A balanced approach.
Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill/ Prentice Hall

