

Kindergarten Art Show: A Family Evening to Connect Home and School

In our school at Christmas, the Division 1 and 2 teachers take turns putting on the Christmas Concert. This year was the Division 2 turn, so I decided to find a different activity to invite families into our classroom. We decided to have an art show to showcase some of the work that we would be completing.

For the unit leading up to our Art Show, we were learning about Communication. Our big idea was, How do we communicate? We had talked about different ways of sharing our messages from talking to art work. We were able to list different ways of communicating – talking, texting, writing, e-mailing, drama, pictures, etc. We had also discussed the difference between our intended message and the message that others might receive from our communication.

So, with these ideas in mind, we took part in a wide variety of projects that we would be able to show off at our show!

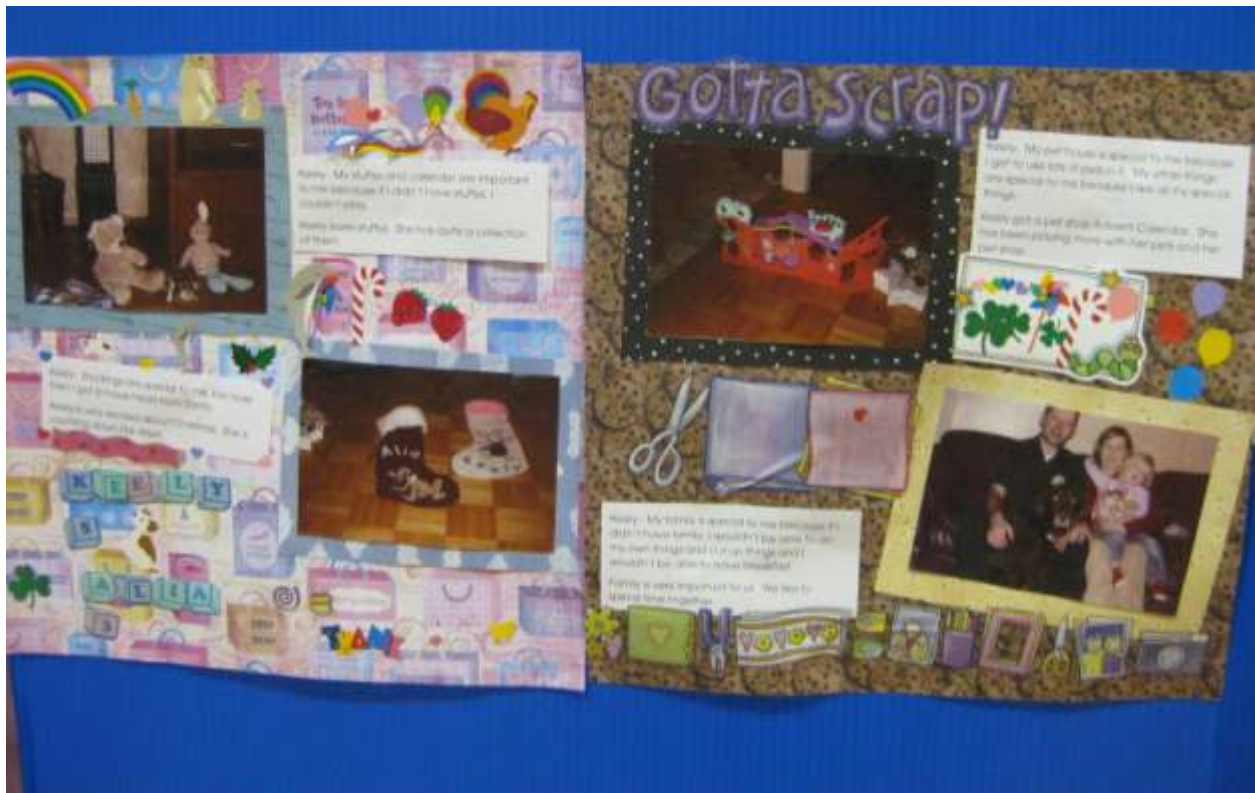
Ted Harrison Pictures – We looked at the art work of Canadian artist Ted Harrison and talked about what Ted Harrison might have been trying to communicate in his artwork. Ted Harrison does simple landscape pictures that he makes look even simpler with his use of large colour blocks. This website gave us some great ideas, and gave us samples of artwork that other students had done <http://www.canadianauthorstudies.ecsd.net/lm%20ted%20harrison.htm>. As a class, we brainstormed what messages we might want to say about where we lived. The students then sketched their art using pencil. We mixed the paint together, taking colours, and adding white so that we had three shades of each colour. The students then painted their artwork, making broad stripes of colour with the different shades of paint. When the pictures were dry, they used black marker to outline their bands of colour. The pictures looked fantastic. Our final step was to title our paintings. We went to the internet and looked at some of Ted Harrison's paintings, as well as paintings by other artists. We talked about how the title needed to help communicate the message. Each of the students came up with a title for their work.



Knuffle Bunny Free – We read the Book *Knuffle Bunny Free: An Unexpected Diversion* by Mo Willems. In the book, the illustrations are done with photography to set the backdrop, but the characters are all drawn in. The students brainstormed different messages that they would like to communicate within our school. The students then set out to take a picture that would help share their message. We spent a class learning how to take photos, making sure that the photo was clear, there were no people in the photo and that the picture captured what we wanted. I also taught them how to delete pictures so that they only came back to me with their best one. We went around the school and each child had the opportunity to take a picture. I printed the pictures in black and white, the students then had to add people to the picture. We did this using collage. The students used scrap paper to cut out people and add them into the picture. The hard part was putting everything into perspective. Sometimes the student had to go back to where the picture was taken and see how tall they would be if they were standing there. We also did

lots of comparisons – if the book is this big, how big would you be beside it? In the end, the pictures were amazing!

Scrapbooking – This project was done to link what the students were doing at home with what they were doing at school. Each child was asked to go home and take 3 or 4 pictures of things that were important to them. They could take pictures of people, places or things. The catch was that the students were to take the pictures and decide what was important. I then asked the parents to write a few words for each picture, telling me why they thought the child had taken the picture and the significance of it. When the students brought the pictures to school, I sat down with each one of them and asked them why each picture was important. I typed this up. Next came the fun part! I brought in scrapbooking paper. We helped the children matte their pictures, and the students arranged them on the special paper. We then printed out their words, and had them arrange their words, and their parent's words on the paper. It was interesting to compare their intended message with the message that the parents got from the picture. The students finished up their pages by decorating them with stickers.



Branch Weaving – Each student was asked to bring in a Y shaped branch from home. Using string, the students weaved on the branch using a variety of methods. Some actually weaved where others just wrapped. Both turned out very nice. I then brought in a variety of feathers, beads and string. The students created their messages by weaving decorations into the string. These turned out very well!



Recycled Self Portraits – Our last project was to create a self-portrait out of recycled materials. Each child use a piece of thin cardboard for backing. I put a variety of materials out on the table – everything from old beads to material scraps. Then students cut, glued and created themselves using these materials. I told the students that their choices needed to be purposeful. They needed to choose materials that would represent themselves. We used mirrors as they wrked so that the students could see themselves.



For the art show itself, we wanted it to be very professional and fancy! We set it up in a section of the gym. We had tables around the outside of our area. On the tables, I had display boards that the artwork was attached to. Under each piece of art, we hung a tag with the student's name, the type of art work and the name of the piece. Down the middle of the gym, we moved in some room dividers. We used these to hang more artwork on. We served cheese, crackers and grapes – we thought that this was fancy food, fit for an art show. Before the show, we talked about colour, line, texture, etc so that we would be prepared to talk about our art with our special guests. We planned the time for 5:30 – 7:30 in the evening. It was a come and go event. Some families stayed for a long time, others came in for a quick look and then needed to be on their way. The students were very excited to be able to show off all of their hard work! In the end, almost every family was able to come for the show. The evening was a great success!



~Karen Hadwen