



Seriously Silly! the art & whimsy of Mo Willems
Teacher Resource: 2nd – 3rd grade

This lesson plan can be used in conjunction with *Seriously Silly! the art and whimsy of Mo Willems* to prepare your students for their visit to the High Museum of Art.

Lesson Overview:

Students explore Mo Willems' use of digital collage in his children's books and consider how imagery and text contribute to the reader's understanding of setting and plot.

Curricular Areas:

Language Arts, Visual Arts

Learning Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- explain how images and text contribute to meaning in a work of art or children's book
- compare and contrast photographs and illustrations
- use collage as an art-making practice



Lesson Process:

1. **Observe:** Display "As soon as Trixie's mommy opened the door, she asked, 'Where's Knuffle Bunny?'" This can be found in the Key Images PowerPoint. Ask students the following questions:
 - What do you see in this picture?
 - What do we know about the characters, setting, and plot just from looking at the images?
 - What do we know based on the text?
2. **Compare:** Mo Willems combines hand-drawn ink sketches and digital photography to create the images in *Knuffle Bunny*. Have your students discuss the similarities and differences between the illustrations and the photographs. Consider how the book would change if it were made solely of illustrations or solely of photographs.
3. **Create:** Each student combines photographs, illustrations, and text to create a collage.
 - *Photographs:* Students select a photograph to determine the collage's setting. The photograph can be printed from online sources or cut out of a magazine.
 - *Illustration:* Students draw characters on a separate piece of paper. Ask students to consider what the characters are feeling and how facial expressions and body language convey that.
 - *Text:* Show students examples of text (ie., speech bubbles, captions) in *Knuffle Bunny*. Students write the text for the collage.
4. **Reflect:** After students have assembled their collages, they will write about the process by answering the following questions:
 - What did you find challenging about making a collage?
 - What did you enjoy about making a collage?
 - Why do you think Mo Willems uses digital collage in his books?



Extensions/ Differentiation:

- If you have access to cameras, go on a walking field trip around the school and allow students to take pictures to use in the collages.
- Lead students in a bookmaking project. Students decide a theme or prompt for the collages. After creating individual collages, students collaborate to determine what order to place the images in to create a cohesive story. Alternatively, students work together to write a story and then create corresponding illustrations.

Standards:

2nd Grade (GPS and GSE):

- ELAGSE2RL7 Use information gained from the illustrations and words in a print or digital text to demonstrate understanding of its characters, setting, or plot.
- ELAGSE2RI5 Know and use various text features to locate key facts or information in a text efficiently.
- ELAGSE2RI7 Explain how specific images contribute to and clarify a text.
- ELAGSE2W6 With guidance and support from adults, use a variety of tools to produce and publish writing, including digital tools and collaboration with peers.
- VA2MC.1 Engages in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas.
- VA2MC.3 Selects and uses subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning
- VA2CU.1 Identifies artists as creative thinkers who make art and share their ideas.
- VA2CU.2 Views and discusses selected artworks.

3rd Grade (GPS and GSE):

- ELAGSE3RL7 Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).
- ELAGSE3RI7 Use information gained from illustrations and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text.
- ELAGSE3W3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.
- VA3MC. 1 Engages in the creative process to generate and visualize ideas.
- VA3MC.3 Selects and uses subject matter, symbols, and ideas to communicate meaning.
- VA3CU.2 Views and discusses selected artworks.
- VA3PR.2 Understands and applies media, techniques, and processes of two-dimensional art processes using tools and materials in a safe and appropriate manner to develop skills.