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The Light Bulb Lab: A Creative Writer's Workshop—Integrating the Fine Arts and Fiction into Second Grade Literacy Curriculum

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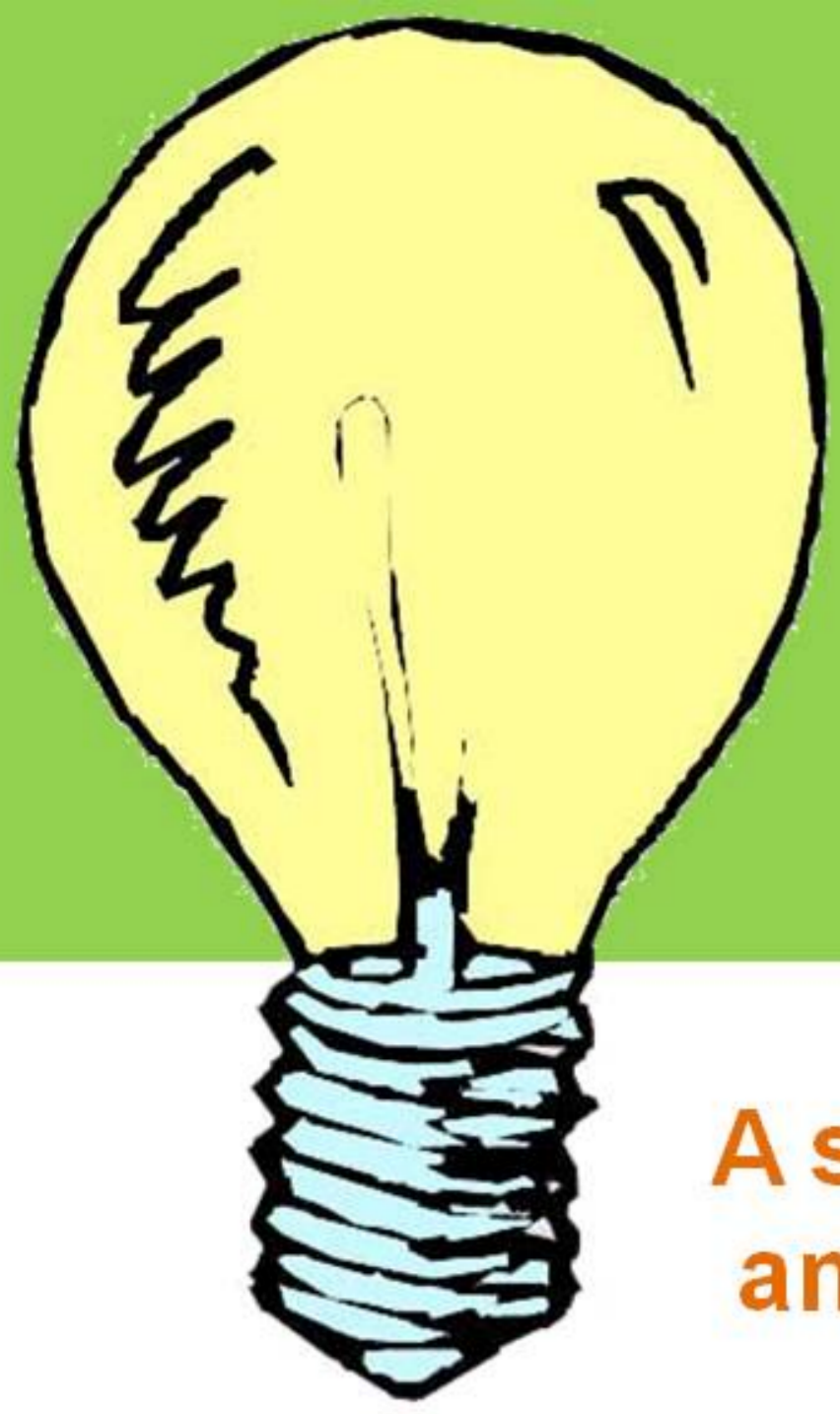
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The Light Bulb Lab: A Creative Writer's Workshop

Integrating the Fine Arts and Fiction into Second Grade Literacy Curriculum

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A special thanks to my co-operating teacher, supervisor, and professors for all of their encouragement and help.



Methodology

Data was drawn from the following sources:

Personal Reflections

Lesson Plans

Student Work

Video Taped Lesson

My self-study involved developing a series of writing trait lessons that integrated the fine arts. The lessons were taught to both the whole class and designed small groups. The lessons encouraged students to express themselves through writing. Together, we were inspired to write through activities such as listening to Beethoven's music or exploring the art in Dr. Seuss' books.

Research Questions

What does a creative writer's workshop look like in a second grade classroom?
How do students react when asked to approach writing in a new way?
How can incorporating the fine arts into literacy curriculum encourage students to become more enthusiastic about writing?

Goals

- Motivate second graders to become enthusiastic about their writing
- Engage students in activities that match their strongest intelligence
- Encourage students to learn to think creatively
- Create hands-on experiences
- Present students with curriculum that uses play and imagination to encourage expression and discovery

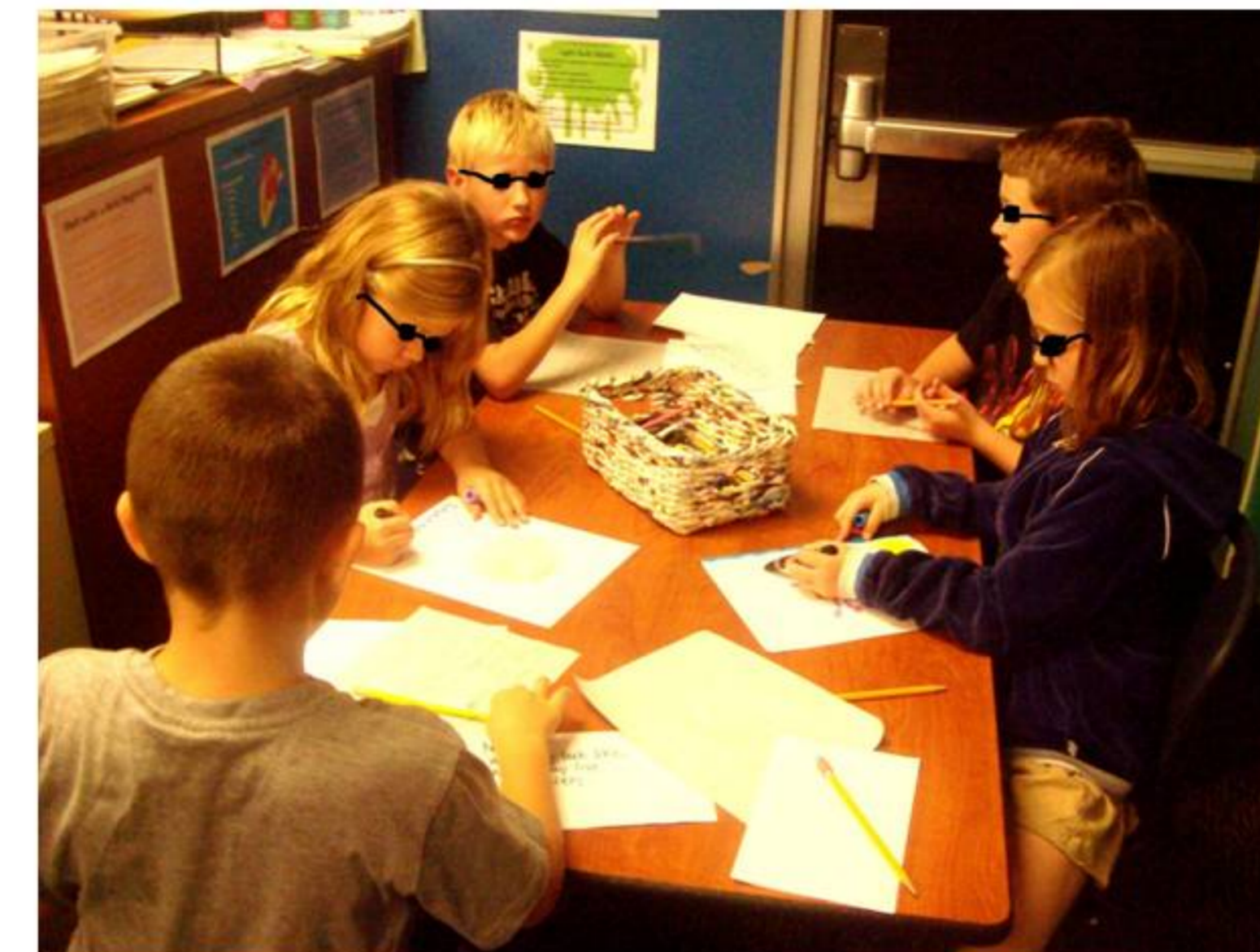
Literature Review

The Benefits of a Creative Writer's Workshop

- Critical thinking skills are developed
- Students develop a higher level of awareness in their everyday lives
- Multiple learning styles and intelligences are satisfied

The Benefits of Integrating the Arts into Writing

- *Music* – improves mathematic reasoning, and promotes literacy
- *Drama* – enhances comprehension and encourages peer collaboration
- *Visual Arts* – aids students in interpreting text and enhances reading abilities



Results

While conducting this teacher research, I found:

- Unmotivated students can become motivated
- Students can find pride and assume responsibility in their work
- Students who struggle academically find success when they are given the opportunity to demonstrate their learning through multiple mediums of expression
- Students can learn how to "think" and approach other areas of curriculum with a creativity
- The arts can help students experience and therefore more deeply understand concepts in all curricular areas
- Writing is a one-on-one working experience and "workshopping" lessons allows for the teacher to better meet the needs of all students