

THREE-PART ART: Post-Visit Project

PROJECT TITLE: Classroom Curators

CANNON ART GALLERY EXHIBIT AND THEME: *Reimagined: The Artist's Book*

AGE RANGE: Grades 1-5

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

For this classroom project you and your students will become your own **curators** and will design an in-class exhibit using the star book artworks.

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION: Role of a Curator

A **curator's** job is to take care of and manage objects of some sort—artwork, collectibles, historic items, or scientific collections. They can work in many different places: museums, zoos, aquariums, botanical gardens, or historical sites. Curators that work in art museums and galleries often decide how the artwork is displayed. When deciding on how to display artwork, a **curator** considers how the viewing public will experience the artwork in the museum or gallery space. Many of the works of art in the **exhibition**, *Reimagined: The Artist's Book*, were created to be interactive and are meant to be displayed in multiple ways. For this exhibit, The Cannon Art Gallery curator decided how to display each artwork. These decisions were based on space, layout and balancing the artworks within the space.

One of the artists whose work in the exhibit can be displayed in multiple ways is Julie Shaw Lutts. Lutts' work explores themes of history, women, geography, mathematics and the sciences. Many of the items that inspire her include: maps, photographs, handwritten letters, odd medical devices and keepsakes she finds in flea markets around the world.

Lutts says, "Each found object I use has its own story which informs the narratives I create. My artist books are often housed in vintage boxes or one of a kind containers. I love the idea of wondering what's inside and the process of lifting the lid or opening the box to explore the unknown."

Lutts' artist books are often able to be rearranged by the "readers" to create a personal experience.



ARTIST: Julie Shaw Lutts

Me & My Automobile, 2019

Mixed paper, metal, vintage wooden box,
toy car

LESSON PLAN



ARTIST: Julie Shaw Lutts
How to Eat Cake, 2016
mixed wood, paint, pottery, glass, bakelite



ARTIST: Julie Shaw Lutts
8 Cups of Coffee, 2020
mixed porcelain, ink, vintage metal box

PROMPT QUESTIONS TO BE USED WITH POWERPOINT IMAGE SLIDESHOW:

1. What was your favorite piece of art from the exhibit? What did you find the most interesting about this artwork?
2. If you were the Cannon Art gallery's curator, would you have displayed the artworks in the same way? If not, how would you have displayed them?
3. How does changing the way each work of art is displayed change the viewers experience? Explain.
4. Your artist books turn into the shape of a star. What are some other shapes you could make them into?

ARTS EDUCATION PROGRAM

LESSON PLAN

VOCABULARY:

Exhibition - a public display of works of art or items of interest, held in an art gallery or museum

Curator - comes from the Latin word *curare*, meaning to look after. It is a keeper or custodian of a museum or other collection

MATERIALS NEEDED FROM SCHOOL:

- Star of your Story Books
- Space in the classroom for an exhibit: tables, desks, walls, counters

INSTRUCTIONS:

Step 1:

Select space for the classroom exhibit. Assign each student a space to work within and then allow the students a few minutes to experiment unfolding their Star of Your Story books and rearranging them into different shapes for the exhibition. Ex: long accordion shape, mountain shape, closed, one page open.

Step 2:

After each student has decided how they want their book to be presented, your exhibit is ready to visit! Encourage students to walk around the “exhibit” to observe the different display styles that other students have chosen. Remind them that just like in the Cannon Art Gallery, students should not touch the artwork.

Optional:

Take turns curating the show. Select one student or a group of students to curate a new exhibit. Curators will work with the students and ask them to rearrange their Star of the Story books into new configurations. Remind the classroom curators that for this exhibit only the artists will touch their own work. Repeat this process until everyone has had a turn to curate. Follow up with a classroom discussion about how the exhibit changed under the direction of different curators.

Host an “Exhibit Opening”. Invite another classroom to visit your exhibit. Brainstorm a list of exhibit titles and then vote on the winning title. During the exhibit, students may choose to stand near their artworks and answer questions from the visitors.

POST PROMPT QUESTIONS:

1. What did you learn today about being a curator?
2. Did anything challenge you? If so, what was it and how did you find a solution?
3. Did your Star of your Story change when it was displayed differently? If so, what changed about it? What arrangement did you like it displayed in best?
4. How did you feel about the way the class curator chose to display your work? How did it feel talking with others about your artwork and process?