



The final piece in our “eARTh ... it’s got ART” yearlong curriculum series takes us to the world of scrapbooking, otherwise known as “Document Your Doings!”

I have found over the years that it is extremely important to document your lessons, your assessments, your student work and your exhibits so that you have a means of reflecting on the aspects that worked well and reassessing the aspects of the lesson that may need some tweaking. Although I rarely teach the same theme-based curriculum, I often reuse my lessons over the years as they can easily fit into various units of instruction, and I often alter them to make them stronger and more effective.

A few years ago, as I was looking through my many scrapbooks, I realized that in order to get with the 21st century and join the technological age, I could also take these scrapbook pages and put them on the Web digitally, thus creating my own Web site, complete with yearlong curricula. I love to share successful teaching strategies with others as the ultimate winners end up being our students! Take these ideas and springboard off to give them your own personal touch!

If you have never scrapbooked before, don’t fret because you’re in luck! It is simple—all you have to do is get yourself organized ahead of time. As you are planning your year of instruction, make sure to take photos of the art room, the bulletin boards, the assessment strategies and the demos, as well as the process of the kids working and, of course, the end result ... the actual artwork! As you complete each unit, put them into your scrapbook or download them to your Web pages. As time becomes a big factor in what we do, I often find that I can’t keep up, so I have a “document” box that I put the images and extras into. I

have found that putting them into files helps to keep it all organized for that rainy day when you actually have time to put them in your book.

I mention that you can do a scrapbook *or* a Web site, but I actually prefer both. I present at local, state and national conferences and have found that teachers like to see and feel the scrapbooks. And, as a personal means to reflect, I also like to have the books right there for my own perusal. Having said that, my administration and community have come to look forward to seeing my Web site updated as well, as it has become a great communication tool. The Web site



Scrapbooking is a way to document what you and your art students have done during the school year.

is a means to share the importance of the visual arts with the masses and it also gets all of my students “published” online!

As your school year comes to an end, you can put your entire book together with images, lesson plans, student notes and fun art quotes. Each year my scrapbooks take on a new look, depending on the theme and what’s generated from the school year.

The best part about having these books is when it comes time to read your *Arts & Activities* magazine, you suddenly realize that you really have strong lessons, and realize the success your students had with them, and just like that, an article appears! By documenting your “doings,” you can easily become a published author. So organize your curriculum, take a lot of photos, reflect often and then share your “stuff” with art educators everywhere! I can’t wait to see what your “doings” look like! ■

Currently an art teacher at North Gwinnett High School, Debi West wrote her “eARTh: it’s got ART” curriculum while at Level Creek Elementary (both in Suwanee, Ga.). She’s also a past-president of the GAEA and owns the Crystal Collage Children’s Art Studio.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Art teachers will ...

- learn that organization helps in the reflection process, as they have the opportunity to look back at their accomplishments over the entire school year.
- benefit as these “doings” get published in *Arts & Activities* magazine!

MATERIALS

- Scrapbook (store bought or handmade)
- Photographs
- Lesson plans
- Acid-free glue/tape
- Acid-free paper
- Acid-free page protectors
- Markers
- Stickers
- Student and colleague notes
- Any personal touches

Document Your Doings!

by Debi West