Creating a Rubik’s Cube Mosaic to Facilitate Literary Analysis and Writing

Intro - Description of lesson, rationale, setting/context

This lesson is designed to help students who may need to create a visual representation of their literary analysis. I have used a similar art project with reluctant learners as well as with advanced learners. I found that when they were asked to do a creative project and then write about the project, they were much more receptive to writing about literature and produced better literary analysis. Adding Rubik’s Cube mosaics gives students a greater challenge/problem solving as they will need to translate their design into a mosaic format.

Grade level: Middle (6-8)

Common Core Standards:

**Anchor Standards for reading**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.2
Determine central ideas or themes of a text and analyze their development; summarize the key supporting details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.3
Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10
Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.

**Anchor Standards for Speaking and listening**

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.1
Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.4
Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.5
Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

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Anchor Standards for Writing

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.2**
Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

**CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.4**
Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

National Standards for Visual Art

Content Standard #3:
Choosing and evaluating a range of subject matter, symbols, and ideas
Achievement Standard: Students integrate visual, spatial, and temporal concepts with content to communicate intended meaning in their artworks. Students use subjects, themes, and symbols that demonstrate knowledge of contexts, values, and aesthetics that communicate intended meaning in artworks.

**Objectives:**
This lesson involves creativity, collaboration, cooperation, and presentation.

1. Students will able to represent a key scenes, characters or themes from a literary text in a non-objective Rubik’s Cube Mosaic of their own design.
2. Students will be able to explain their design using evidence from the text both orally and in essay format
3. Students will be able to replicate color configurations on one face of a Rubik’s Cube

**Materials:**
Grid Paper (about 0.75” squares)- provided
Crayons/markers/colored pencils
Rubik’s Cube Mosaic Builder set

**Background Knowledge:**
Students will have read the literary text and have had opportunities to discuss plot, characters, themes, etc.
Students should examine some sample mosaics to understand the challenge of creating a mosaic using Rubik’s Cubes – especially creating curved lines out of squares

**Procedure:**
Before class:
* provide graph paper that is divided into sections that will represent the mosaic size each group will be working with.
* choose cooperative learning groups

With students:
1. Arrange students in their cooperative learning groups
2. Explain the overview of the lesson.
3. Have each group choose an important character, theme, plot point, etc. for their group by coming to a consensus.
4. Have each group discuss their ideas so that each group member could explain the group’s analysis if need be.
5. Have a spokesperson for each group give a quick summary of the group’s analysis.
6. Have each group create a design on their graph paper that represents their analysis on the graph paper—each design should be patterns of color and non-representational or symbolic. All group members must be able to explain how the design connects to the group’s analysis.
7. Groups should create their mosaics. If using one mosaic set for the class, have the class help create one group’s mosaic, then the group can present. Then the class can create the next mosaic.
8. Students will present their mosaics and explain how the design represents their character, theme, plot element etc.
9. Once the groups have presented, students will write an essay explaining how the design represents their analysis.

Notes to Teacher:

To add an extra challenge:

Assign each group a stage in the plot to represent visually and put together a “visual” plot map of the story along the room or in a series of photos.

Have each group show their mosaic, identify the character etc. and have the audience try to interpret the mosaic.

Use the opportunity to teach about the history of mosaics and mosaic construction.

Have each student evaluate the process of working with a group and creating the final design. Have each student document the challenges of such a project.