



Presenting: Static Images

LEVEL | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5

Volcano

THE LEARNING CONTEXT

This class focused on emotions and feelings as part of an integrated unit incorporating English, the visual arts, and health. The class explored picture books, discussing how the illustrators communicated the characters' emotions. The teacher asked:

- What colours has the illustrator used? Why?
- How are the characters moving? How do you know? How did the illustrator show this?

The students learned that colours can represent different emotions or states (for example, they can be "happy" or "mad").

The teacher shared several books from the series *Your Emotions and Your Feelings* (Hodder and Stoughton). These explore metaphors and similes based on different emotions. The students discussed the emotions and suggested others. They mimed them to each other, with the audience describing how the performers looked, and guessing which emotion they were representing.

The class discussed how images and texts can be combined to communicate emotions. The teacher asked, "How does the illustration match the words?" "If you were the illustrator, what would you choose to do and why?"

She questioned them about the features of book covers. "What colours stand out?" "What catches our eye?" "Why do you think the bear is the biggest?" She showed them covers with borders and discussed their significance. During shared reading of *Ready to Read* poem cards, the class discussed the borders and the size and type of the fonts on different cards.

When the teacher felt the students were ready, she asked them to respond to the story *Animals Scare Me Stiff*. They discussed the main themes of the book and then drew pictures of the main character. The criteria were that the colours reflect the character's feelings and the picture should be eye-catching. From this, the teacher found that they needed more guidance about size and dominant image.

The class repeated the exercise, with *When Sophie Gets Angry – Really, Really Angry...* by Molly Bang. This time, the class developed their own criteria:

- Sophie will be the biggest [dominant image].
- My colours will show how Sophie is feeling.
- My words will describe how Sophie is feeling.
- My border will relate to the story.

Teacher-student conversations

After publishing:

Teacher: What an amazing picture! I like the way you've put Sophie here in the middle. Tell me about why you chose these colours.

Holly: I made Sophie's head like a volcano because she's so angry. I started to draw her hair yellow, but yellow isn't an angry colour, so I did it over orange. This bit here [points] I made a mistake, so I turned it into a black cloud coming out of the volcano head.

Teacher: What about the border?

Holly: The sides are wiggly, like there's lava coming out and running down the side.

Teacher: How do we know how Sophie is feeling?

INTEGRATING VIEWING AND PRESENTING

Students need many opportunities to view and discuss a variety of static images. Illustrations, book covers, posters, advertisements, wordless texts, and greeting cards can all serve as good models and be incorporated into a reading programme. This teacher shared a variety of picture books with the class and the students viewed role-plays based on emotions. The class also viewed and discussed the features of a number of book advertisements in the school library.

Teachers can encourage their students to determine what creates impact. "Why do we like it?" "What features does it have?" Students can explore features of static images, such as the size, frame, colour, font, and dominant image.

Presentation activities help students to appreciate ways in which they can combine verbal and visual features to convey their own ideas about literature.

WHERE TO NEXT?

To move Holly towards the next learning step, the teacher could help her to focus on:

Concept

- Increase the use of terminology and using it in her explanation (for example, "border" or, expressed in her own words, "dominant image").

Impact

- Use colour to a greater extent to support ideas.
- Manipulate the text, making confident, justified choices.
- Express ideas using a variety of language features (for example, an imperative or a rhetorical question).



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WHAT THE WORK SHOWS: Holly has produced a vibrant image of the character Sophie by drawing powerful body language and implying movement to express emotion.



Impact

Creates a large, dominant image of Sophie, the central character.

Uses visual and verbal features, such as body position and facial expression, to convey Sophie's emotion, for example:

Volcano shaped head.

Large eyes of different colours.

Frown lines.

The simple "RRRRR" in the speech bubble.

Clenched teeth.

A raised foot.

Outstretched arms.

Uses relevant framing [lava flowing from the volcano].

Student's explanation

I made Sophie's head like a volcano because she's so angry. I started to do her hair yellow, but yellow isn't an angry colour, so I did it over in orange. This bit here [points] I made a mistake, so I turned it into a black cloud coming out of the volcano head. The sides are wiggly, like there's lava coming out and running down the side. She's really angry. I made her teeth tight – RRRRR – and she's got angry lines on her face. I think she's saying angry words. She's stamping and shouting and stopping people from coming near her angry mood.

Concept

Understands that a simple idea can be conveyed visually.

Describes an idea to be conveyed [Sophie's angry mood].

Uses some terminology in explaining what she has done, for example, "colour" and "sides" [as in "border" or "frame"].



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Student's original work

