

Arts Across The Curriculum
A Cross-Age, Integrated Language & Visual Arts
Poetry Writing & Bookmaking Project
Anderson Valley Elementary School
2016-2017

An ongoing arts partnership established in the Anderson Valley Unified School District with artist and arts educator Cathleen Micheaels, this cross-age, integrated arts project has enriched the Anderson Valley Unified School District's elementary and junior high school communities for the past ten years, bringing poetry writing, decorative papermaking, printmaking and bookmaking to students, teachers and families. This year's *Arts Across The Curriculum* project builds directly on past years and is an example of how carrying out an ongoing partnership like this year to year can grow, making rich connections to the curriculum at each grade level and building on skills from one grade to the next.

The 2016-2017 *Arts Across the Curriculum* project carried out integrated poetry writing and bookmaking with 275 K-6th graders, with 5th-6th grade students serving as Art Buddy mentors for the K-1st graders and family and staff volunteers along with junior high and high school student *Arts Leaders* and the *ReThink Your Drink* team helping bring together the annual *Family Arts Night*. The project engages students in eight sessions January-May and culminates with a school-wide book display and poetry presentation at Open House in May/June as follows:



- ❖ In the K-2nd grade, writing odes to fruits, vegetables, animals and trees inspired by the great Chilean poet Pablo Neruda's odes. In K-1st grades, making decorative paste papers and accordion slat books with cut paper cover collages of fruits, vegetables or animals, with three Art Buddy mentor visits from the 5th-6th grade students to help K-1st graders write odes and make books. In 2nd grade, making decorative paste papers, accordion balance books with hand lettering and miniature print cover labels.



- ❖ In the 3rd grade, writing tribute poems about birds students are studying in class, using Christopher Smart's poem *For My Cat Jeoffrey* as inspiration then making dos á dos (or back-to-back) book structures with hand lettering, miniature prints, bird nameplate collages and cover labels.



- ❖ In the 4th grade, writing autobiography *Where I'm From* poems inspired by educator Linda Christensen and drawing on cultural/family traditions and characteristics then making more involved dos á dos book structures with hand lettering, inside photo and paper collages and cover labels.



- ❖ In the 5th grade, writing poems about states students are studying in class, using Walt Whitman's poem *I Hear America Singing* and Carl Sandberg's poem *Chicago* as inspiration then making pop-up flag or banner books with hand lettering and miniature print cover labels.



- ❖ In the 6th grade, writing biography tribute poems to current and historical figures, leaders, thinkers and artists students are researching in class for biographies then making more involved dos á dos book structures with hand lettering, miniature prints, biography nameplates and cover labels.



Along with deepening teaching and learning, the project also strengthens connections to the home through a *Family Arts Night* which brings families together to make art while enjoying an affordable, healthy dinner. This very well attended and successful annual event is a true cross-program collaboration involving family and staff volunteers along with junior high and high school student *Arts Leaders*. This year's *Family Arts Night* in March was focused on **The Hopes In Our Hearts** and engaged families and students in making heart poem mini-print collages to contribute to a community "quilt" while enjoying a delicious Mexican posole dinner.



This year's tremendously successful after school event was held on Thursday, March 30th and brought together 125 families, students and staff volunteers for a fun, art-filled evening which featured an opportunity for families to write poems about what brings them hope, make mini-prints and then create heat collages to contribute to the community "quilt" which will be on display in the school's cafeteria alongside last year's *Family Arts Night* banners.

Ode To A Furry Friend

Oh, small, white Rufus,
you are like a jack-in-the-box
that wags its tail at me,
you give me hope to be
small but with a big heart.

Analee Gatlin

Ode To A Wonderful School

Oh, intelligent, fun school,
you are like a protector armor
that is always keeping me safe,
you give us hope
for our field trips!

Edwin Magaña

Ode To A Majestic State

Oh, big, colorful California
you are like a paradise
that fell from heaven,
you give us hope
for life.

Yuliza López

Ode To A Bike

Oh, my blue beautiful bike,
you are like a bird flying in the
wind that rides fast down a hill,
you give me hope
on a sunny day.

Gabby Pérez



Additionally, the project brings families together with an end of the school year exhibit of all the completed K-6th grade poem books which are on display in classrooms at the school-wide Open House where two students from each grade are selected to read their poems aloud as part of the Open House program presentations for families. This year's upcoming Open House will be held on Tuesday, June 6th with students reading their poems aloud in English and Spanish as part of the program followed by students and families visiting classrooms to read poems from the completed books on display.

Ode To A Family That Keeps Me Safe

Oh, big, funny family,
you are like a blanket
that keeps me warm and safe,
you give me hope
that I will grow up loved.

Sol Jennyze

Ode To A Steam Of Smoke

Oh, fluffy, poofy cloud,
you are like a white bucket
that rains on our gardens,
you give me hope
for a rainbow.

Zoey Crisman

Ode To A Food

Oh, to eating
burritos at home
with my family,
you give us hope
for a yummy taste.

Morgan Ávila

Oda mis padres

Oh, cariñoso, apoyadores padres
son como una pareja de leones
que cuidan a su cachorro,
me das esperanza
que siempre están conmigo.

Lidia Sánchez



This year's *Arts Across The Curriculum* project received funding from Anderson Valley Arts, the Anderson Valley Education Foundation, the Anderson Valley Elementary School arts program, the George and Ruth Bradford Foundation and the Mendocino County Health & Human Services Agency—this matching of funding sources is an excellent example of how funding is leveraged to extend and expand the project to serve all K-6th grade students and their families through collaboration with the classroom teachers and the Special Education and Family Literacy programs.