



Children's Astronomy Book Project

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Students created an illustrated book to teach young children about our universe. In pairs, students chose and researched topics in astronomy. They wrote essays about their topics, learning about outlining, thesis sentences, topic sentences, supporting evidence, and MLA citation in their Humanities class. They then composed stories about their topics for 8-10 year olds, creating storyboards with scripts and hand drawn art, and editing mock books through several rounds of critique. Their stories and artwork, published through blurb.com, are available at the HTH bookstore: <http://www.hightechhigh.org/books>.

Teacher Reflection

The most rewarding aspect was the numerous drafts the students completed for their essay. I was glad they understood that correctness was the goal, and however many drafts it took to achieve that goal was what they had to do. Some students did more than eight drafts. Reading that many essays was a challenge, but by taking this seriously we sent the message that doing *something* was not good enough. It had to be done right.

—Aaron Commerson

Student Reflection

One important thing we got out of this project was realizing how to communicate and collaborate well. The idea of the story was hard to come up with, as well as editing it to ensure the content was correct and understandable. Even making pictures was a challenge, because we had a tough time deciding what to do and how to do it. In the end, we were able to learn some valuable skills that we will need to use in our future at HTH, including communication, time management and, if we create another product for children, the ability to simplify concepts.

—Ethan Chan and Michael Thompson, 9th grade

To learn more about this project and others visit www.hightechhigh.org and Aaron Commerson's and Juli Ruff's digital portfolios at <http://staff.hightechhigh.org/~acommerson> & <http://staff.hightechhigh.org/~jruff>

