



Illuminated Journals

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Inspired by Ken Kesey's *Jail Journal*, which links writing with original art, students selected a journal entry of their own and created a design to bring it to life. They turned their humanities class into an art studio and constructed a permanent display for the work on the classroom wall.

Teacher Reflection

We open class with journaling almost every day. This exercise broadens the bandwidth between students' thoughts and their more formal writing, and has created a context for our class discussions. However, journals lose their power when students think their writing will just end up on the shelf. I urged my students to look at their journals as a grab bag that could provide the foundation for public expression through art. They responded by presenting insightful political perspectives, efforts at understanding their sexuality, unease with newfound class-consciousness, attempts at making sense of death, and other issues central to the humanities. In the end, the real benefit for me was that I was reminded of the need to hear what really matters to my students and incorporate their voices into my teaching.

Student Reflection

We turned our writing into an art piece that involved us putting ourselves in vulnerable positions. For my piece to be honest, I had to put myself in a state of mind where I couldn't care what people thought of me. When you hide yourself from people because you're scared to tell them about the real you, you're hiding a person that can change the opinion of other people. I wrote my piece to let everyone know that I ain't ashamed of being who I am. I didn't do this project for the grade. I did it so people can get to know the real me. If there was a grade for letting yourself be vulnerable I should get an A grade. Don't grade me on my work for how powerful it is, because I just want to be rewarded with people accepting me.

—11th grader

To learn more about this project and others visit www.hightechhigh.org and Pat Holder's digital portfolio at <http://staff.hightechhigh.org/~pholder>