



Below is some research that I have done showing the benefits of combining literacy with arts and crafts, based on the paper: Integrating Literature with Craft in a Learning Process with Creative Elements. Authors: Juli-Anna Aerila and Marja-Leena Ronkko. Early Childhood educators from Finland's University of Turku.

Mini-Book in the form of a writer's workshop builds confidence, identity and growth in its young participants. I like to think that mini-book offers many advantages to the students who partake in the program, mainly: the support of academic, intellectual and social development and the 4 C's : critical thinking, communication, collaboration and creativity.

Mini-book is a creative exploration, an adventure, an outlet for imagination, and the growth of a child's spirit. It requires a step into the unknown. There is magic when children believe in their writing abilities through the exploration of literature in a writing ability workshop such as Mini-Book.

Arts & Crafts Component

Craft making has been essentially connected to early childhood education and day care in Europe. Several philosophers of education have considered that craft making is natural for and is useful to the child's development, for example Frobl (1782-1852) and Rousseau (1712-1788). In mini-book, the role that craft plays is significant in expression, rather than an economic object.

Craft making educates children by requiring them to design, build, create, and solve problems. In craft making, there is development of problem-solving skills and the child's thinking skills, along with the development of self-esteem through the joy of the success and through received feedback. So craft making affects many significant areas of child development, including bodily perception, motor coordination, visual perception, and concentration. (see, e.g., Kojonkoski-Rannali 2002; Ministry of Education 2004, 20-25).

From the point of view of crafts, the most important concept of this study is holistic craft. The holistic craft process is based on the thought that all the phases are conducted by the same person. Holistic craft comprised of all the phases of the craft-making process: The maker is in charge of developing ideas, designing, preparing, and finally assessing the artifact (mini-book) and the production process. Teaching of craft should be arranged in the spirit of holistic craft, including design, implementation and evaluation. Ordinary craft is when the maker only produces design made by another, as in making craft from a kit or a ready-made design without relying on the maker's own thinking.

