

## Behind the Novels

### Deeper Learning Postcard



Carrsville Elementary School,  
Carrsville, VA, 23315  
(757) 357-8844  
Contact: [cberard@iwcs.k12.va.us](mailto:cberard@iwcs.k12.va.us)

### Highlights

**Vetted Project:** For this particular project, we launched with a discussion of the driving question: How is the theme of good vs. evil seen in our everyday lives, and do our life experiences affect our perceptions? Students then created their first rendering of their artwork that illustrated their perception of good vs. evil. From there, we began reading the novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* by C.S. Lewis as a whole group. During the reading, students completed comprehension activities, researched the author and continued to give and provide feedback on drafts of their illustrations. They also made note of any quotations that tied with the theme of good vs. evil. Upon completion of the first novel, we watched the movie and made comparisons between how the author presented the theme vs. how the director was able to portray the same theme.

After the first novel, students then discussed how their perception of good vs. evil had changed. We then began to read *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeleine L'engle and researched her life as well. The students continued with feedback and drafts of their illustrations, with several visits from a guest artist who talked about painting techniques and how artists show emotion through color, shapes, etc. Students again completed comprehension activities and made note of good vs. evil quotations. Once we finished the novel, students went to the theater to see the movie on its opening day so that we could again make comparisons between the author and director. Middle school students who read this novel as well were available to discuss how their perceptions of good vs. evil were the same or different from our elementary students.

Once we were finished with both novels, students created their own three dimensional tesseract that they wrote their good vs. evil quotations on. They published their research papers and then created personal sonnets to express their own personalities and perceptions. We had another discussion about how life experiences affect how we perceive things, noting how we felt the life experiences of Lewis and L'engle likely affected how they wrote and viewed life. Students finalized their illustrations and then painted them on canvases to be sold at the art auction. The night of our expo, students presented their sonnets, tesseracts, research papers and movie/book comparisons. The focal point that was the artwork was done in a silent auction. Students showed their processes of drafts and feedback, and guests were able to bid on the final paintings. Money that was raised went to the class fund to help pay for many of their end of the year activities, a cost that in the past was the responsibility of students. All money received from the auction was profit, as I used [donorschoose.org](https://www.donorschoose.org) to fund the materials for my project.

**Sustainability:** Our artwork was auctioned off to build funds for the benefit of future students. The use of the paintings and the theme of good vs. evil became a highlight that inspired many of the students in other grades to create their own art using their own unique individual talents. The lessons learned will have a lasting impact on the students, both in terms of good v. evil and the role that perception plays in our lives.

## Behind the Novels

### *Deeper Learning Postcard*

**Driving Question:** How is the theme of good vs. evil seen in our everyday lives, and does life affect perception?

#### **Student Reflection:**

Student 1 - "Throughout the project we all had a part. The most significant part to me was that we all comprehended the overview of good vs. evil. Through paintings, novel comprehension, and researching two brilliant authors, now we all understand one major thing: powerful perception. I will carry my learning experiences throughout moving to my higher grades and life. This was not easy to comprehend, because evil can be dangerous and our vision altered, the same way our paintings changed as we moved throughout the project."

Student 2 - "I learned a whole lot about good vs. evil. We didn't just learn about good vs. evil, but we learned about the power of life and what makes it good and what makes it evil. We also learned about two authors, wrote research papers and created a painting about our perspective of good vs. evil."

Student 3 - "This project taught me a lot about teamwork. It was really fun to have the experience to work with each other and present our projects. I enjoyed working with our guest artist to complete my painting that demonstrated my view of good vs. evil."

**Teacher Reflection:** Some elements that impacted students the most was learning how our perceptions about some of the same things are often very different. They began with a perception of what they viewed as good vs. evil, but they evolved into final products that were often very different from what their initial ideas were. They were able to make connections to authors in a more personal way by researching their lives and seeing how it filtered into their writings. This project truly reinforced the idea that "perception is everything."

**Lessons Learned:** I had students do research and write biographies in pairs, however I feel that maybe having them work in larger groups might make the task less daunting.

**Teacher Rating:** Definitely would recommend

## **WANTS**

### **I. Authenticity**

Demonstrating

Exhibit / Contest

Producing / Revising

Execute Multiple Drafts

Portfolio / Presentation Board

Product

### **II. Media Produced**

Physical Drawings & Fine Arts

Painting

### **III. Challenging Problems**

Questions

Build a Better World

Express the Intangible Visually

Reveal the World

Self Reflection & Evaluation

Themes

Community Outreach

Research-based

## **Behind the Novels** *Deeper Learning Postcard*

### Topics: Humans in the World

Civilizations & Cultures

Ethics

Historical Times & Periods

Modern Living

Student Related Issues

### Topics: Of the Mind

Implications of Decisions State of Mind

## **IV. Achieved Literacy Skills**

Leadership

Balance Diverse Views

## **NEEDS**

### **I. Parameters & Feasibility**

Project Timeframe

More than 8 Weeks

Assessment Timeframe

Within a Class Period

# of Project Members

Individual Pair

Small Group

Large Group

Grade Level

Elementary (Grades K-5)

Middle School (Grades 6-8)

Authentic Audience / Evaluators

Peers

Parents

Teachers & Administrators

Community Members

Special Test Accommodations

Presentation of Materials / Directions

Student Response

### **II. Intended Learning Outcomes**

Creativity

Brainstorm

Design / Create

Elaborate / Expand

Envision / Invent

Communication

Decipher Attitudes / Intentions / Values

Engage Creatively

Point of View

Collaboration

Assume Shared Responsibility

Develop Trust

Encourage Others

Value Contributions Made by Others

Critical Thinking

Balance / Weigh Alternatives

Clarify Meaning

Rational, Objective Decision-making

## **Behind the Novels**

### *Deeper Learning Postcard*

Reflect Critically on Learning  
Instilled Citizenship Values  
Express Empathy / Compassion  
Habits of Mind & Heart  
Personal Responsibility  
Social Responsibility  
Student / School Governance

### **III. Success Skills & Depth of Knowledge**

Cognitive Demand  
Comprehending / Understanding  
Analyzing  
Evaluating  
Creating  
Social & Emotional Skills  
Self-awareness  
Group-awareness  
Learning Styles / Intelligences  
Interpersonal / Social  
Intrapersonal / Introspective  
Verbal / Linguistic  
Visual / Spatial  
Assessment Structures / Resources  
Checklists Portfolios

### **IV. CTEs & Disciplines**

Career & Technical  
Arts & Entertainment  
Authorship & Composition  
Arts  
Art Studies  
Humanities  
Composition & Linguistics  
Cultural Studies  
Literary Studies  
Literature