

Berlin-Milan Local Schools	
Berlin-Milan Middle School	
Jane Morner	Judy Campbell
Title: "Newbery and Caldecott Research"	

Caldecott Collaborative Unit

by: Judy Campbell, Lynn Nelson, Jane Morner

for ILILE Language Arts, Kent State. July 2004

(Results of \$1000 grant received)

We were fortunate to receive the \$1000 ILILE grant funds to extend our staff development opportunity for promoting information literacy and to provide an enjoyable literacy instructional intervention for students. The funds were used to purchase 58 Caldecott books, poster boards, art supplies and tee shirts.

Lynn, Judy and Jane met once after school to plan for our teacher in-service for November 29, 2004. We chose the Monday after Thanksgiving for this after-school meeting. One week before, invitations were placed in all middle school mailboxes to attend a session titled "Laugh and Learn with Lynn, Judy and Jane." We advertised enticing baked goodies, give-aways and door prizes for our guests. Also, we promised to only keep them for 1/2 hour.

Sixteen invitations were made, but only six teachers attended. Our objective for this staff development was to review the project techniques we used for our student Caldecott unit. Media specialist, Jane Morner, also took this opportunity to dispense INFOhio and KnowIt Now bookmarks. She explained how many of the sites could be incorporated into the middle school curriculum and gave examples of where we used these in our unit for research. Lynn Nelson and Judy Campbell sparked the discussion of the development of our Caldecott unit, including a re-cap of our experience with ILILE activities. We shared our Web Quest research and the checklist Likert graded scale for the biographies of the book illustrators.

Judy had several samples of the "anticipatory posters" which each seventh and sixth grader created to share with their first or second grade partner. Our colleagues were impressed with the ability of students to model the artistic style of the Caldecott illustrators. Judy and Lynn explained the process of reading strategies such as what it means to "question the text". We also reviewed special art terms and techniques used in book illustration with our colleagues.

We devised a short evaluation form for our listeners on which they added comments. All participants told us we did a great project and that they learned one or more useful items that they will try in their own classroom. We also asked for their suggestions of how we should present this project to our school board in February. As a result, we will develop a power-point program with numerous photos and student testimonials.

The results of our information literacy instructional intervention for students are beyond SENSATIONAL!!! Both sixth and seventh graders as well as our first and second graders benefited beautifully with the help of our grant funds. This money allowed us to extend our original plans of just designing "learning posters" to actually purchasing 100 white tee shirts and 10 packages of special Crayola fabric markers. After our middle schoolers read with and presented their learning games, letters, vocabulary words and biographical information about the Caldecott illustrators to their elementary partner, each paired group created a tee shirt design that modeled a character or scene from the Caldecott title they shared together.

Our team met with the first and second grade teachers and worked out a schedule of when each class could meet. Our art teacher, Ms. Lisa Gormley, was very instrumental and cooperative in assisting with this endeavor. We used her elementary art room for the tee-shirt project. After purchasing about 60 extra poster boards, we asked for any extra hands available to place a board inside the shirts and paperclip them in place. When the classes met to design their creations, Lisa gave them specific directions of the techniques of using the markers. Each paired group decided what to draw and printed the title of the book and the illustrator on their shirt. They also added their names and date on the shirt. All this was accomplished in about 50 minutes of class time. We left the shirts to dry for awhile and then removed the protective poster board. The shirts were folded neatly along with a typed note to the parent explaining the project and advice to place the shirt in a HOT dryer for 30 minutes to set the color before laundering.

The elementary students were elated to receive an item of clothing they helped to create! Many wore them immediately over their school outfits! During one of the classes, a reporter from an area newspaper came and spent one hour interviewing the students and teachers and took many photos. His article can be found at www.norwalkreflector.com for November 26 in the "Our schools" column. We also took many digital photos which will be placed on our school website and will be used for a power-point presentation for our school board meeting in February. We plan to include quotes and comments from our sixth and seventh graders about the collaborative project.

Many of our middle schoolers now realize how difficult it is to successfully model an artist's work using the various respective mediums. They also learned that it takes considerable time to plan and design a teaching unit for younger students. Most of the students enjoyed the process. If we repeat this again next year, we will allow more time for students to complete their art on the poster. They seemed to genuinely love the artistic dimension of this lesson and often expressed how much they miss having a regular art class in middle school.

This collaborative unit is a definite win-win situation! We would highly suggest others trying it. Seeing the happiness on the faces of the youngsters wearing their shirts is worth all the planning and effort involved!