

Fairy Tale Zines

Titi, Nunu, and Klembolo: Helena Modjeska's Fairy Tale Book



Introduction

The great Polish actress Helena Modjeska (1840–1909), best known for her performances in the plays of Shakespeare, was a star of the American stage in the 1880s and 90s. In 1888, she and her husband built a country home, Arden, in what is now Modjeska Canyon in Orange County. Among her many other talents, Modjeska was a gifted storyteller and artist. During breaks in her acting schedule she spent time at Arden writing and illustrating a fairy tale for her grandson, Felix Modjeski, presenting the 147-page bound manuscript to him as a Christmas gift in 1896. With handwritten parallel texts in English and Polish, and ink-and-watercolor illustrations that show Modjeska's flair for both fantasy and natural observation, it tells the story of a pair of brothers, Titi and Nunu, who live on Mars. They run away from home, accompanied by their six-legged blue dog, Klembolo, but after some scary adventures return to their family and friends for Christmas.

To introduce this lesson, show examples of different types of book-making.

Bring in examples of different books whose illustrators were also inspired by natural observation and fantasy: *Where The Wild Things Are*; *Wild*; *The Last Gardener*; etc.

Have a discussion with students about what makes an interesting story.

Discuss characters, setting, problems, beginning, middle & end.

Objectives

- Through this lesson, students will explore bookmaking, illustration and storytelling.

Postmodern Principles addressed*-

- **Interaction of Text and Image:** The interplay between the two elements generates rich and ironic associations. Rather than demanding a literal match of verbal and visual signifiers, Text & Image in the 21st century tends to explore disjuncture between these modes as a source of meaning and pleasure.
- **Juxtaposition:** things side-by-side. In art this usually is done with the intention of bringing out a specific quality or creating an effect, particularly when two contrasting or opposing elements are used

Studio Habits of Mind addressed*-

- **Envision:** Learning to picture mentally what cannot be directly observed, and imagine possible next steps in making a piece.
- **Express:** Learning to create works that convey an idea, a feeling, or a personal meaning.

Materials:

- Story Map worksheet
- Sketch paper
- Cardstock
- Scissors
- Pencil
- Eraser
- Colored pencils

Steps

- Create short book/zine – *see pictures below
 - Fold sheet of paper in half. Fold it again into quarters, and then one more time so that it is folded into eighths.
 - Open your paper so that it is folded in half. Cut halfway across the middle from the fold. (When you open your paper it should have a slit in the middle.)
 - Fold your paper lengthwise (along the crease that has a slit). Hold the paper at either end, then push the ends in toward each other. The sections should fold into each other to form an eight-page booklet.
- Brainstorm: think about characters, setting, problem, beginning, middle & end.
- Create a story map.
- Sketch.
- Transfer short story and illustrations to book.
- Add cover.

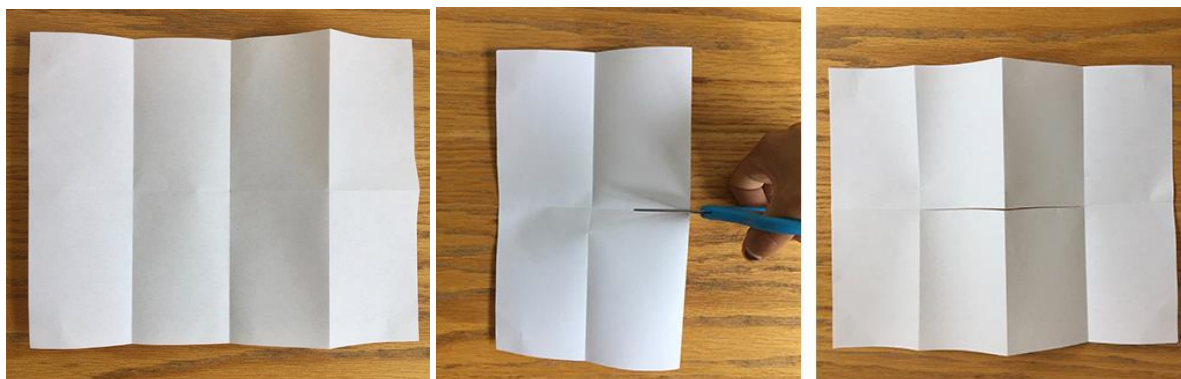
Modifications

Create more than one book if students want to make a longer story and tape together. Use readily available materials for illustration.

Reflection

Make photo copies of the zine and create a classroom library. Students can take home their original, but the photocopy can exist in the classroom library.

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*https://naea.digication.com/omg/Postmodern_Principles

*<http://www.studiothinking.org>