

GRAPHIC DESIGN

FIDM's Just for Educators Classroom Projects & Activities



Objective:

To establish a common understanding of graphic design in the context of book cover art and to allow students to research, design, and present a book cover

Student Activities:

Students look at a sampling of books in the classroom. They divide into teams of four students, choose a book, and prioritize the design elements in terms of what attracted them to the book cover. Then each team is asked to design a new book cover on a subject that is relevant to their age group and would appeal to both males and females. They are to design a cover using a sketch pad and pens and/or computer-generated graphics. They will have a set amount of time for discussion and creation of a mock-up of their design. Each team then presents their mock-up to the class and explains why the team designed the book cover as they did.

Arizona State Standards:

• Visual Arts: Strand 1: Create

- Concept 1 **Creative Process:** The student will develop, revise, and reflect on ideas for expression in his or her own artwork.
- PO 301 Demonstrate oral communication skills for the marketing field.
- Concept 4 **Meanings or Purposes:** The student will express ideas to communicate meanings or purposes in artwork.
- PO 202 Create an artwork that serves a function.

California State Standards:

• Media and Design Arts Pathway

- 2.1 Solve a visual arts problem that involves the effective use of the elements of art and the principles of design.
- 2.3 Develop and refine skill in the manipulation of digital imagery (*either still or video*).

Washington State Standards:

• The Arts: Essential Academic Learning Requirements

- 2 The student demonstrates thinking skills using artistic processes.
- 2.1 Apply a creative process in the arts; conceptualize the context or purpose, gather information from diverse sources, develop ideas and techniques, organize art elements, forms, and/or principles into a creative work, reflect for the purpose

of elaboration and self evaluation, refine work based on feedback, present work to others.

National Standards:

• Fine Arts: Visual Arts

- NA-VA.9-12.1 Understanding and Applying Media, Techniques, and Processes
- Students conceive and create works of visual art that demonstrate an understanding of how the communication of their ideas relates to the media, techniques, and processes they use.
- NA-VA.9-12.5 Reflecting Upon and Assessing the Characteristics and Merits of Their Work and the Work of Others
- Students identify intentions of those creating artworks, explore the implications of various purposes, and justify their analyses of purposes in particular works.
- NA-VA.9-12.6 Making Connections between Visual Arts and Other Disciplines
- Students compare the materials, technologies, media, and processes of the visual arts with those of other arts disciplines as they are used in creation and types of analysis.

• Technology K-12

- NT.K-12.3 Technology Productivity Tools
- Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity.
 - Students use productivity tools to collaborate in constructing technology-enhanced models, prepare publications, and produce other creative works.

Warm-Up Exercise:

Ask students who buy books why they do so. Some replies might include recommendation, subject matter, well-known author, title, book cover graphics, bargain bin browsing, etc. Have them look at all of the books you have brought into the classroom. Have teams of four students each choose a book to examine in class.

Using the following list, ask each team to prioritize the design elements in terms of what attracted them to the book cover:

1. Graphics
2. Colors used on cover
3. Images
4. Title and/or sub-title
5. Coffee-table qualities (impressive to display and/or adds to the décor of the room)
6. Font design
7. Typography
8. Author's picture
9. Other author's recommendation of book (as seen on the book cover)
10. Magazine/newspaper/web reviews of the book

Project Guidelines:

Ask each team to design a new book cover on a subject that is relevant to their age group and would appeal to both males and females. Have them design a cover using a sketch pad and pens and/or computer-generated graphics.

1. Give the teams a set amount of time for the discussion.
2. Have students use their top three priority design elements from the list above to create a book cover.
3. Students may also use any of the other elements to augment their design.

4. Each team will create a mock-up of their design.
5. Have each team present their mock up to the class and explain why the team designed the book cover as they did:
 - How does the design reflect the chosen subject matter?
 - What does their design have to do with the literary genre?
 - How does their design reach their target market?

Possible Follow-up:

Have students visit a graphics lab at a university and get an on-location demo lesson in computer-aided design.

Possible tie-in to Project Based Learning:

Have students in teams of four do a comparative study of book genres by comparing two genres, e.g. mystery and romance. They will choose a book in each as the focus of study and complete an assignment based on a required list of criteria.

• Have the students perform the following assignment

1. Choose a book in each genre as the focus of study.
2. Bring the following to class:
 - o Two book reviews for each book
 - o A copy of the cover of each book
 - o A sample paragraph from each book
 - o Information about how much the book costs
 - o The target audience demographics
 - o Have students visit a book vendor's website and print out copies of book covers that appeal to them and write a paragraph explaining why.