



ILLUMINATED LETTERS

Overview

Book: *Annihilation* by Jeff VanderMeer

Grades 9-12

The Crawler creates script with many curves and flourishes. In this history and fine arts lesson, students will investigate examples of illuminated manuscripts and produce a letter in that style.

Standards

SS.H. 1.9-12	Evaluate how historical developments were shaped by time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
RH.9-12.1	Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
VA.Cr1.1.I	Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work. Use multiple approaches to begin creative endeavors.

Objectives

Students will research the history of illuminated manuscripts.

Students will create a “sampler” sheet showing examples of the illuminated letters.

Students will create a letter in the style of an illuminated manuscript.

Materials Required

Art paper
Scrap paper
pencils
Colored pencils
Gel pens
Paint and brushes
Fine point Sharpies
Access to internet and/or library

Procedure

1. Ask students to describe how they think the writing of the Crawler might look. If possible, have students read passages from the book.
2. Show students examples of illuminated letters. Here are several resources:
<https://hrsbstaff.ednet.ns.ca/kmason/images/Illuminations1.pdf>
<http://www.illuminatedpage.com/illust>
3. Have students research the history of the illuminated manuscripts. Have students find answers to the following questions.
 - a. When did these letters appear in history?
 - b. What was happening at the time in the art world?
 - c. Who created the illuminations?
 - d. Who read or saw the illuminations?
4. Allow time for students to capture images of the ornate letters online in order to create a sampler of these letters. Sampler should include at least 12 examples.
5. Share the process for creating the letters. (Steps a-e preliminary steps using scrap paper and pencil.)
 - a. Choose either your first or last name initial.
 - b. Create 3 different block style letters of that initial.
 - c. Select the one that you like best.
 - d. Brainstorm a list of things that describe you, your interests, your likes, hobbies, or dreams.

- e. On scrap paper, create sketches of stylized images that represent the concepts from step d. Create a minimum of 5 drawings.
 - f. Next on art paper and with a pencil, combine the letter style you selected and several stylized drawings into one illuminated letter.
 - g. Add a border.
 - h. Colorize this drawing with paint, fine point Sharpies, gel pens, or colored pencils.
6. Provide time for students to share their creations and respond to questions about the designs that were chosen.

Extensions

1. Have students create a piece of art for each one of the letters of their name.
2. Have students create an illuminated letter that would depict a fictional or historical figure.
3. Ask students to write a poem that would use the illuminated letter as the first letter of the text.

Rubric

RUBRIC	Exceeds (3)	Meets (2)	Partially Meets (1)	Does Not Meet (0)
Research	Student is able to answer and elaborate on each of the 4 questions	Student is able to answer 3-4 questions	Student is able to answer 1-2 questions	Student is unable to answer any questions
Sampler	Sampler included more than 12 examples	Sampler included 9- 12 examples	Sampler included 5-8 examples	Sampler included fewer than 5 examples
Sketches	More than 5 sketches that each clearly symbolize a concept	Five sketches that each symbolize a concept	Fewer than 5 sketches that may or may not symbolize a concept	Sketches do not symbolize a concept

Finished letter	Letter includes symbols, border and a very ornate design. Letter is legible.	Letter includes symbols and border. Letter is legible.	Letter includes symbols, but no border. Letter is somewhat legible.	Letter shows no symbols or border. Letter is not legible.
Total N/12				

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