

at the Tempe Center for the Arts

Objectives

- Students compare detailed, more realistic artworks with abstract, more simplified or changed artworks.
- Students simplify a picture with much realistic detail into a simpler picture.

Preparation

Make arrangements for field-trip to the Tempe Center for the arts (TCA). Before your visit, discuss with assigned TCA docent, if possible. Provide the docent with a copy of “Exploring Words and Pictures at the Tempe Center for the Arts” worksheet in advance of your trip and discuss the extent to which students might complete any or all of the worksheet at the center or whether any or all of the questions might be addressed during their tour.

Read “Questor Questions” for additional information and questions focused on Anne Coe and her work, which you might use at the exhibition. Also, scroll down to read a brief review of Madelaine Dunfy’s *Here is the Southwestern Desert* illustrated by Anne Coe.

Activities

Distribute the “Exploring Words and Pictures at the Tempe Center for the Arts” worksheets to students and ask them to answer as many questions as they can during their tour. If writing responses on the worksheet is not practical or possible during the tour, use the worksheet to guide students in focused observation as circumstances permit. For example, you might use questions on the worksheet when students assemble or travel to the TCA or when they assemble for or travel back to school. Take notes on any new information presented by the docent as well as interesting questions, observations or responses made by your students during their tour. If the circumstances of the visit do not allow students to complete their worksheets, explain that later, in class, you will lead a discussion of discoveries they made by comparing detailed, realistic illustrations and simpler, abstract artworks used to illustrate children’s books.

If a visit to the TCA is not possible, display selected artworks from the Preview the [Read Me a Picture Exhibition PowerPoint](#) for a variety of children’s book illustrations made by Arizona artists.

Book Review of *Here Is the Southwestern Desert* by Madelaine Dunfy illustrated by Anne Coe

“The book tells its story, provides a capsule image of a Southwestern desert in two parallel ways. The text uses words to describe growing things in the desert, while the visual employs naturalistic paintings of these things and their relationships. But Coe also creates metaphors in which the creatures symbolize human behavior and emotions. What is the bobcat thinking as he spied the badger from his rocky perch? Is the badger aware of his role in the food chain which is poetically delivered in the text’s ‘This is the House that Jack Built’ patterned verse? Coe creates mini-dramas, choosing to evoke anticipation while denying the viewer the ultimate climaxes where prey and predator fatally interact.”

Ken Marantz, Professor Emeritus of Art Education at The Ohio State University and Sylvia Marantz, librarian, children’s book and picture book collectors and reviewers.