

ART 357: Understanding Children's Art

Kramer Formed Expression Handout

Looking at your midterm image and implementing Kramer's criteria for *formed expression* give consideration to the following questions:

Explore your Motivation and Intention:

Motivation

- Transform a book
- address childhood mental health
- specifically childhood grief
- even more specifically the grief of moving

Intention

- address childhood loss such as the loss of a home
- symbolize the multiple losses when one moves (important things like toys, places, people, smells, sounds, etc.)

a. Explore the image from an aesthetic standpoint? What works visually? What needs adjusting?

The book is cut into the basic shape of a house with rooms carved into the thick stack of pages. The front cover opens revealing the rooms within. The entire book is wrapped in brown paper, reminiscent of the brown packing boxes. Small moving boxes are stacked within the rooms and spill out of the book. They are labeled "toys", "bedroom" "books". some of the boxes are sealed while some are open, exposing some of the content such as miniature children's books, a stuffed bear, and a blanket. The exterior of the house is decorated with [FRAGILE] stickers and a shipping label. The inside of the front cover holds a memory wall covered with framed drawings that depict a drawing of a pet dog, a house, and a child and their friend.

The symbols communicate the intention clearly and the small details from the boxes of objects to the miniature drawings. Unfortunately the wrapping of the house in brown

paper is not as seamless. Even though there are only a few details to the actual house, the simple recognizable shape adequately sets the scene.

b. What personal growth (or meaning) can be garnered from this image?

The meaning of the image is to emphasize childhood loss and grief. To highlight ALL aspects within a single loss like moving and the layers that it has. The image symbolizes objects physically lost in a move, as well as the symbolism for how children can handle the grief. The boxes can symbolize the desire to box everything up that you love and keep it with you in the event of a big change or the other symbolism is the idea of boxing up everything you've lost and pushing it to the back of your mind so you don't have to acknowledge that you experienced the loss of those things.

How can this be a point of departure for future explorations? (Be specific)

This is a point of departure for future explorations of childhood grief. There are lots of reasons for children to experience grief from moving whether it is due to a parent's change in job, a natural disaster, a war, etc. There are also other ways children can experience loss that is not from moving to a different place. Children can experience the loss of a loved one, divorce, etc. Another interesting exploration could be the upsides to moving and experiencing major life changes. Some changes may be painful at first but the outcome is sometimes better in the end.