

Elementary Annotated Bibliography

Anholt, L. (2007). *Leonardo and the flying boy: A story about Leonardo da Vinci*. B E S Pub Co.

This historical fiction book for 1-3, introduces young students to Leonardo da Vinci, focusing on his flying machines and inventions. Through Zoro, a young apprentice, students explore themes of problem-solving, creativity, and invention. The illustrations combines historical accuracy with stylized images, showing da Vinci's artistic and scientific contributions. The book offers an engaging way to teach students about art history, drawing, and invention. Helping students connect art with engineering. Ideal for fostering imagination and understanding the interconnectedness of art and science.

Bird, M. (2024). *Dear Vincent*. Thames & Hudson. Picture book, grade level k-3. Vincent van Gogh and his brother Theo's support helped Vincent reach his artistic potential. It explores themes of hope, interpersonal relationships, and self-care, and the importance of managing emotions and seeking positive environments. Vincent's struggles with rejection and emotional challenges are depicted, showing how he improved his well-being by moving to a healthier environment with sunlight, good food, and water. The story teaches students the value of self-care, removing themselves from negative situations, and building support systems. It also introduces art and life skills, such as taking breaks and revisiting challenges with a fresh perspective. A valuable resource for SEL and resilience, and art history and biography.

Campbell, S. C. (2014). *Mysterious patterns: Finding fractals in nature*. Boyds Mills Press. This is a nonfiction book, for ages 7-10, and grades 2-5. This book introduces students to the concept of fractal patterns, emphasizing that patterns are not just human-made but are inherent in the natural world. This book explores the use of symmetry, repetition, and

scale, providing a foundation for students to create their own fractal-inspired art projects through drawing, collage, or printmaking. By highlighting the importance of patterns across disciplines—science, math, history, and art—this book encourages students to observe, analyze, and think creatively. It pairs well with other art books about patterns, offering multiple perspectives to deepen understanding and inspire problem-solving through artistic exploration.

Dorling Kindersley, Inc. (2006). *Eyewitness ocean*. DK Children. This nonfiction book is for ages 8-12, and grade level 4-7. This visually rich book offers exploration of the ocean through a mix of photographs, artifacts, diagrams, and art, with concise text. There are various information about ocean strata, marine life, and human interactions with the sea, from deep-sea creatures to the discovery of the Titanic. It provides essential background knowledge on ocean ecosystems, connecting to current environmental issues like climate change and human impact. Perfect for interdisciplinary lessons, it pairs well with topics such as food chains, environmental science, and art. Using natural materials in art, like sponge printing, watercolors, learning how paint is made. Links both scientific inquiry and artistic expression.

Lindsay, W. (1994). *Prehistoric Life*. Dorling Kindersley. This is a nonfiction book, for reading age 8-12, and grade level 3-7. This book provides a comprehensive overview of prehistoric life, exploring the history of life on Earth through detailed visuals and engaging content. It illustrates how species developed over time, and offers many images that bring prehistoric beings to life. The book serves as an excellent reference for understanding how fossils and bones have been used to hypothesize the appearance and lifestyles of ancient creatures. It also highlights how humans have pieced together Earth's

history through scientific discovery. It is ideal for building background knowledge, supporting lessons on prehistoric life, and offering research opportunities for content differentiation. It pairs well with picture books or lessons to provide in-depth information and inspire further exploration.

Nolan, D. (2001). *Shadow of the Dinosaurs*. Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers.

Fictional book, for reading age 5-8, grade levels 1-2. Nolan's vivid and dramatic watercolor illustrations are an important part of the book, and works as a gateway to the prehistoric world. While the story itself is underdeveloped and longwinded, but it acts as a starting point for sparking wonder and imagination in children. The book encourages problem-solving and creative thinking by asking readers to consider what they would do if transported to the age of dinosaurs. It introduces various dinosaur species with phonetic pronunciations, size approximations, and accurate depictions of bones and characteristics, helping students visualize these ancient creatures. The narrative also opens discussions about how scientists use fossils to reconstruct dinosaurs, allowing children to create their own renditions of dinosaurs or imagine themselves in a prehistoric world. Activities like designing a dinosaur world, creating bone puzzles, help with the idea of scientific discovery, with additional support from science books to enrich learning.

Reynolds, P. H. (2004). *Ish*. Candlewick. This resource emphasizes letting go of perfectionism and finding joy in the creative process, aligning with SEL goals such as self-care, self-acceptance, and understanding personal strengths and weaknesses. Art is about problem-solving and the journey, not just the end result, and encourages students to embrace the learning process and have fun while creating. By fostering the idea that there is no "right answer" or "perfect" outcome in art, students learn to explore different viewpoints and

make decisions without fear of failure. Promoting forgiveness, spontaneity, and adaptability. This approach reinforces that art is not just about planning but also about problem-solving and embracing imperfections along the way.

Rosenstock, B. (2014). *The noisy paint box: The colors and sounds of Kandinsky's abstract art*.

Random House Children's Books. This picture book, for 1-3 grade, introduces students to Wassily Kandinsky, the father of abstract art through illustrations. It explores Kandinsky's journey from excelling in math and history to breaking conventions in art class by creating abstract images instead of realistic ones. The book introduces the concept of synesthesia, how Kandinsky saw colors and shapes when he heard sounds, and the bravery required to express one's truth through art. It helps students understand the meaning and value of abstract art, challenging the misconception that it is inferior. The book connects to lessons on using shape, color, texture, and composition to evoke emotions, encouraging students to create art inspired by sounds, touches, or feelings. It also provides a foundation in art history, fostering appreciation for Kandinsky's innovative contributions.

Shapiro, J. H. (2011). *Magic trash: A story of Tyree Guyton and his art*. Charlesbridge. Fictional picture book, for ages 5 - 8, and grades k-3. This book engages students with the concept of community-driven art and environmentalism, showing how art can address social issues and inspire change. It highlights the importance of repurposing everyday objects, emphasizing that art doesn't require new materials but can be created from what surrounds us. The story introduces themes of recycling, reusing, and reducing, while underscoring the power of community collaboration. The text also serves as a gateway to discussing artistic landmarks, such as Detroit's Heidelberg Project, and the significance

of representation, particularly for people of color, in the arts. This book encourages students to see art as a tool for environmental and social transformation.

Silverstein, S. (1981). *A Light in the Attic*. Harper & Row. This is a collection of thought-provoking poems accompanied by illustrations for 4-5th graders. While less of a traditional picture book, its poems serve as a springboard for creative writing and artistic exploration. Students can select poems to inspire creations, connecting the written word to visual art. This collection encourages cross-disciplinary learning, using poetry as a theme for creative projects, personal reflection, and connections to students' lives. It will offer opportunities for engagement, self-expression, and interdisciplinary connections.

Spinelli, E. (2001). *Sophie's Masterpiece*. Simon and Schuster. This fiction book, designed for grade levels K-3 and interest levels PK-2, has a Guided Reading Level of L and a Lexile Level of 0330. This fiction book, suitable for early elementary readers, explores themes of perseverance, empathy, and helping others through the story of an outcast character. The text supports SEL by encouraging students to stand up for themselves and assist others in need. It connects to classroom lessons on spiders, weaving, and string-based art, with potential extensions into science (research on spiders) and art (weaving, felting, quilting). The watercolor illustrations, inspired by the nursery spider (*Pisaurina mira*), shows artistic inspiration, and the real life connection. A potential limitation is the challenge of addressing the concept of being an outcast with younger students, though it provides an opportunity for discussions on empathy and resilience.

Venezia, M. (2003). *Georges Seurat (Getting to Know the World's Greatest Artists)*. Scholastic, Inc. This book, reading age 8-9 and grade 4-5, introduces students to color blending and the science of color, exploring how math, logic, and techniques like pointillism can create

paintings. The importance of layering and mixing colors rather than using single tones, encouraging experimentation with oil pastels to depict nature, light, and shadow. By connecting art to science and math, it makes the idea that everything is interconnected, resulting in creative thinking and problem-solving. The book also delves into art history, guiding young readers to analyze famous artworks like experts