

Running Head: Response to Literature

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EDUC 661 – Spring 2008

ULS Professional Development

Response to Literature

## Reflection

The text I chose to use for the response to literature activity was titled My Map Book, written by Sara Fanelli. Prior to reading the book, I showed the class the cover and asked them to make predictions about what they thought this book was about. I was not surprised when a number of them shouted, “Maps!” I asked them to tell me more. Many students offered suggestions related to treasure maps and road maps. They told me that a map was used by people to find something when they were lost or to find something that was lost, like treasure. The class also began listing the parts of a map (e.g. key, compass, etc.).

They were pleasantly surprised to find that the author presented them with an unexpected childlike view of maps. In her book she included maps of a tummy, face, day, jacket, dog, and heart. Fanelli’s interesting view of the world through unusual maps quickly engaged the class not only in the book, but also in discussion. They agreed that the first two maps, the treasure map and the map of a room were indeed maps, but debated whether or not the map of a family could be considered a map. They eventually agreed that it did not really matter, but it was an interesting way to view a family. The map of the tummy caused many in the class to make connections to what they had eaten that day and what a map of their stomach may look like now.

After reading the story the class was asked to respond to the book in some way. All students decided to draw “picture” maps. I was surprised that they all modeled something from the book, and no students ventured out with their own ideas. Also, no student responded in writing. This however did not surprise me given that I teach at an arts school and students embrace the opportunity to draw and color. It was evident by the abundance of heart maps that were drawn that this was the students’ most favorite map from the book. It was nice to see their artistic sides flourish with this activity.

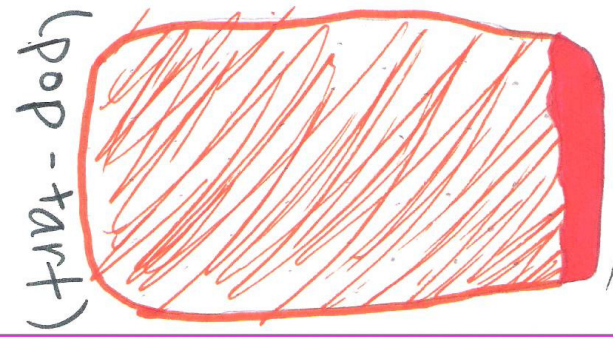
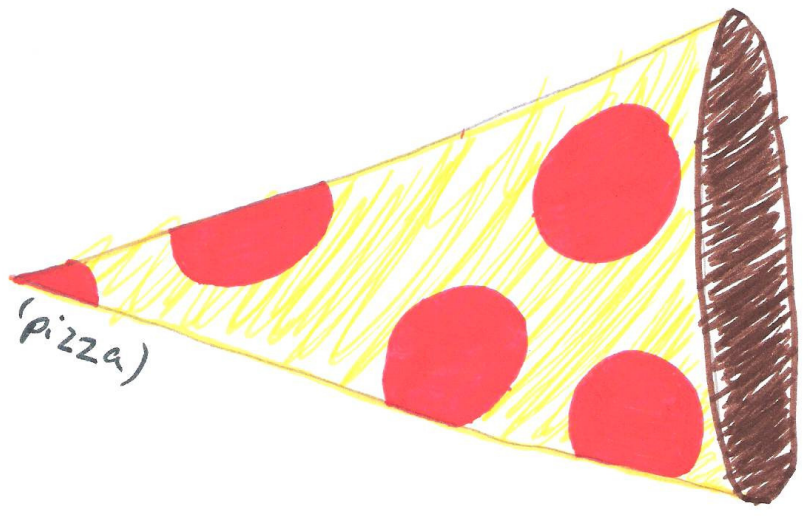
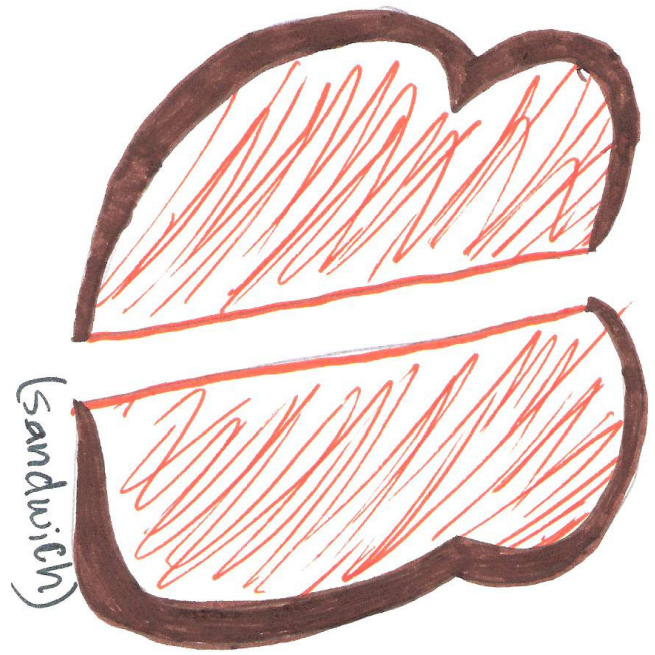
Many of the students' picture maps allowed me to get to know a little something more about them that I may not have learned or may have forgotten. I enjoyed seeing the heart maps and how the students made some sections bigger than others. I was impressed to see that each student who drew a heart map made their family the biggest section! Friends usually ran a close second. Some students drew pictures of their stomachs or included food in their heart. I was surprised to see how many of them eat pop tarts. I guess I know what to buy next time to they earn a treat!

I chose this book on a whim because I had missed the previous class and had not had a chance to review the book choices. When I got the book home and looked at it, I was a little concerned about reading it to my 7<sup>th</sup> grade students. The book seemed childish with lots of color, pictures, and very few words. In fact, there was not even a "story" to be told. However, once completing the response to literature, I realized that my students were really thinking about their maps and the book was more valuable than I had imagined at first glance. I was pleasantly impressed at the connections my students made to the text and their willingness and enthusiasm to respond to the book. I was somewhat disappointed that I did not receive a wider variety of responses. However, despite the similarity in maps, each map told something different about its creator. Given more time I think it would be fun to take the students' names off the maps and see if the rest of the class could guess who is the map's owner. This could make a great beginning of the year activity to replace the old "me boxes."

Sparah's  
Tummy

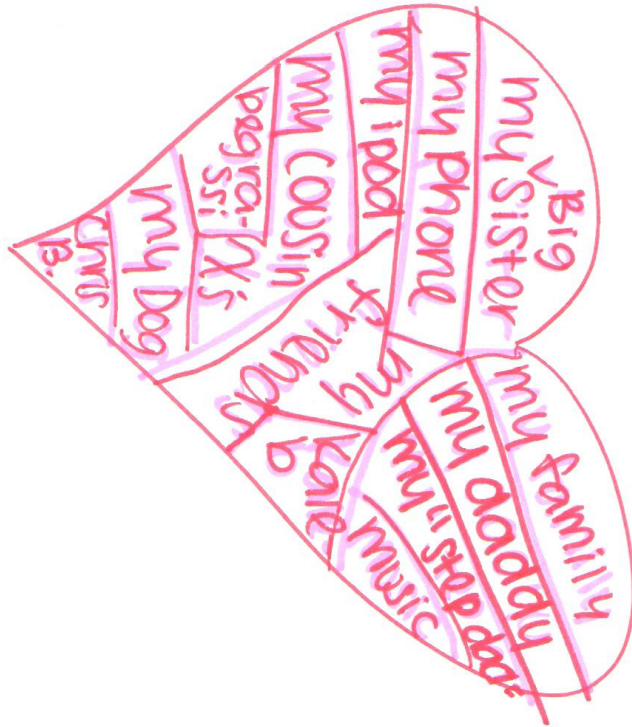
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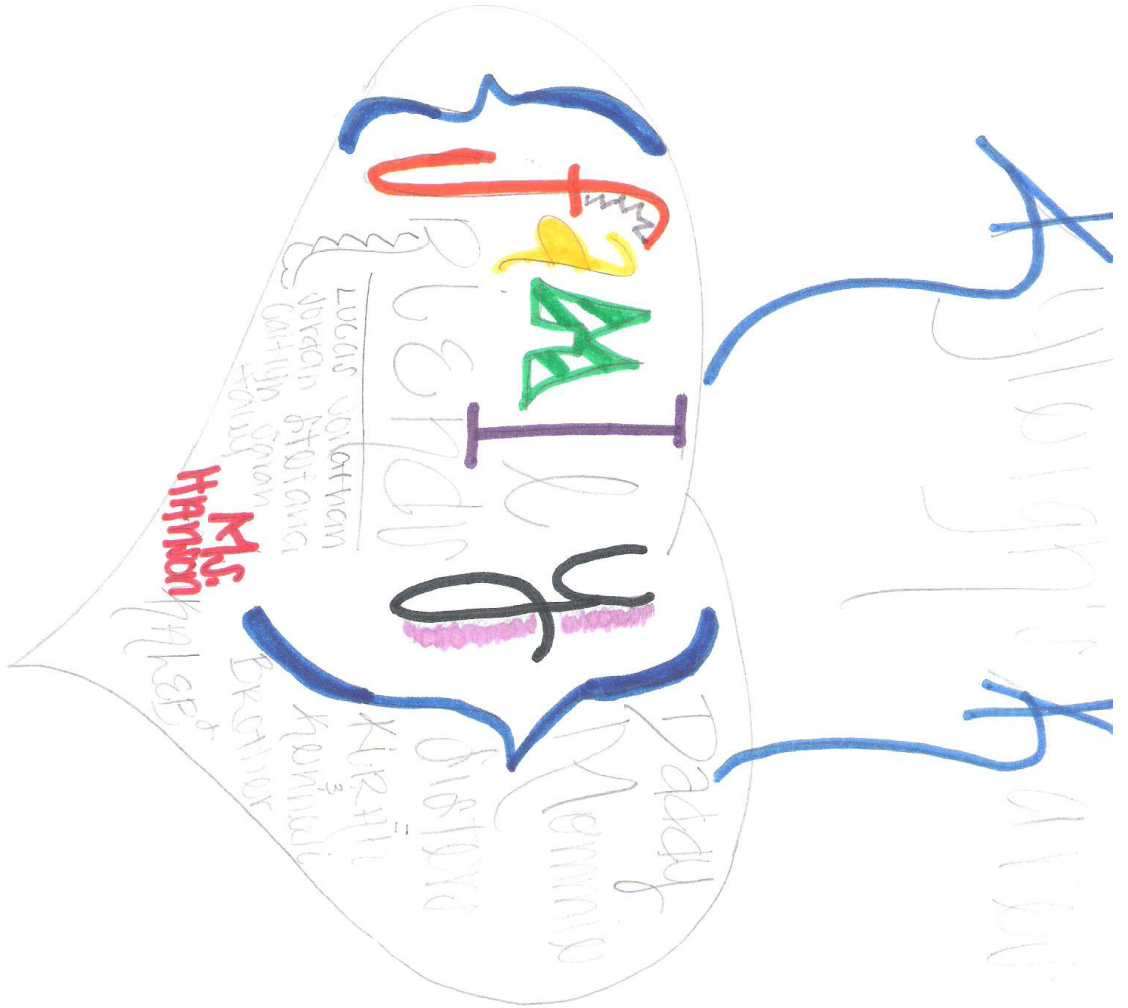




MY HEART



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# HAZEL'S HEART



























