

Shadow Boxes

Shared by Sarah Leadbeater, Newburyport High School

| Tools, materials, technologies used: | Experience level required: |
|--|------------------------------|
| craft tools (scissors, exacto knife) | Intermediate |
| card stock, cardboard etc. | Intermediate |
| Laser or vinyl cutter (optional) | Beginner but not first-timer |
| Gravit 2D modeling tool (optional) | Intermediate |

Grade Level (of this example): 2 - 12

Content Standards: see *Possible Content Explorations*, below

Summary of Project: Students will design and construct a shadow box that meets design criteria designated by the teacher. They can find or create an image to use in their composition. They will use card stock or Bristol board to construct their design, using layered pieces to add detail of the piece. Students will work individually to design and plan the structure of their shadow box. The finished shadow boxes can be displayed vertically in a grid-like formation for presentation, or students can present their work to the class individually.

The added depth is also a simple change of pace from assigning typical diorama work, and if structured like a pop-up card (as below), the bottom non-shadow portion can be used to display additional graphics or information.



Encourage students to experiment with multiple layers.

Left: Notice the wing, created from a separate piece of cardstock and mounted separately onto the bird's body to create additional depth and shadow - avid scrapbookers may recognize this technique.



Possible Content Explorations:

STEM

- Physical sciences: Illustrating parts of a machine
- Life Sciences: Illustrating parts of a cell, organ, organism

ELA/Social Studies

- Facades - students explore the outward projection of a character, situation, or society vs. the reality behind it. Mount the foreground images to a sheet of translucent material rather than solid cardstock. When viewed from the front, you see the figure and its shadow; when viewed from the back, you see hidden images or messages about what's in the foreground. Can be used for character studies, domestic vs. foreign perceptions of a country, etc.