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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2010 Volume I: Connecting the Visual to the Verbal in the Classroom

Finding the Story through Intermediality: Poetry Comics, Animated Poetry and Tableau Vivant

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What do Tim Burton, Charles Shultz and Billy Collins have in common? I have listed a film director, cartoonist, and poet. Some of the greatest artists of our time provide us with unique ways in which to see the world, but many teachers would never think that in a unit plan these disparate artists could be combined. How does one use comics to inform poetry or teach Shakespeare? How does poetry have anything in common with film? This unit provides teachers with the tools to be able to use a range of art forms to help students understand content and to process what they understand in a unique and varied way. This subject matter is a powerful tool and has a cross-curricular adaptability if you as a teacher gain an understanding of how combined media can be a wonderful vehicle for delivering content that is initially difficult or intimidating for students. There are many resources that I will talk about that could be of use in an English, Drama, or History class, as well as Visual Art, which is my primary focus.

(Developed for Art 1-2, grades 9-12; recommended for Art, English, and Drama, grades 7-12)

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