



Moon Journals: Writing, Art, and Inquiry Through Focused Nature Study

Joni Chancer, Gina Rester-Zodrow

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One of our greatest sources of wonder—the moon—becomes the focus of a classroom inquiry in this vivid illustration of integrated curriculum at its finest. Here, teachers Joni Chancer and Gina Rester-Zodrow recount how their students observed the moon's transit for twenty-eight days, recording their impressions in written and illustrated records called "Moon Journals."

As time goes by, we see these journals evolve from empirical observations into rich anthologies filled with prose, poetry, and artistic renderings using watercolors, pastels, printmaking materials, collage, and more. As the students experiment with multiple forms of composition, they begin to make sense of the world—and their place in it—in surprising ways.

Moon Journals contains some twenty-eight Writing Invitations and twenty-eight Art Invitations that are actually mini-lessons. Each is illustrated with samples from actual Moon Journals and each includes easy-to-follow, step-by-step instructions for reproduction in the classroom. Also included are a full-color insert, samples of teachers' own journals, a bibliography, discussions on developing portfolios and the studio/workshop environment, and a chapter exploring the theoretical underpinnings of this approach to writing, art, and science investigation.

Moon Journals was written primarily for K-8 teachers, but it can also be used in high school and even at home. Above all, it is meant to serve as a model of fruitful inquiry in any subject area—in the realm of nature, or beyond.

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