

Presenting Pecha Kucha

Debi West

As an art educator, I know that it is my responsibility to keep the learning in my artroom fun, exciting, and colorful for my students. Each year I enjoy learning and growing so that I can be the best teacher possible.

Last year was my second year teaching AP art. I wanted to do something different, since critiquing our work in the same manner each week began to feel a bit old and forced. I felt it was time to shake things up and get my students excited about the art of critiquing. I wanted them to share their concentration and breadth pieces in their portfolios, but I wanted them to do this in a quick format, allowing the art to be the commentary. I was looking for a means to showcase more art with less talk.

What Is Pecha Kucha?

I began to do some research on creative ways in which to teach this and came across the Pecha Kucha (pronounced peh-chak-cha) approach. The history behind Pecha Kucha presentations is very interesting. A group of architects in Tokyo decided they wanted to shorten the speaking time of the presenters at one of their meetings, so they devised the Pecha Kucha 20x20 (20x20 stands for twenty images, twenty seconds each). Pecha Kucha is a Japanese term for the sound of conversation or "chit chat."

This first Pecha Kucha was held in February 2003 as an event for young designers to meet, network, and show their works in public. It soon turned into a huge celebration, and soon hundreds of cities around the world began to catch on.

Planning Pecha Kucha

Pecha Kucha is a format that makes presentations concise while keeping



things moving at a rapid pace. This sounded like the perfect plan for me to bring to my AP students, so together we planned our very own Pecha Kucha night at our high school.

My students were very excited to have an opportunity to present their AP portfolio work and not have to talk too much about it. It actually turned

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out that twenty seconds was a long time for a few of my students, but most of them found that they really had to practice what they were going to say about their work. This not only helped them in future critiques, but it also helped them on the writing portion of their AP portfolios. I found this to be a wonderful tool in helping students reflect on the art-making process as well as the completed artworks.

Each student made invitations to send out to friends and family and put together their own slide shows, showcasing twenty of their strongest works and making sure that each image

would only be viewed for twenty seconds. We used a standard kitchen timer as our official clock.

Pecha Kucha Night

The night of the event, we began the presentations and there was an immediate change in the way students listened, looked, and became involved in each of the mini presentations. After the twelve students completed their presentations, we had a quick discussion about what the participants and viewers thought about the event. Everyone loved it!

We are now planning our Pecha Kucha night 2011 and will be using it to kick off our Youth Art Month events here at North Gwinnett High School this spring. Students are already working on their slide shows, and I'm sure this will become an annual event. ☺

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WEB LINK

www.pecha-kucha.org/what