Create a Border for Your Research Report

1. Focus

Explain Choosing a Border

Say: Many stories include visuals on a page that appeal, or attract, a reader’s attention. These can include photos, illustrations, charts, and so on. Another type of visual is a border. Borders can be found along the edges of a piece of paper. They can be in many different colors and shapes.

Model Choosing a Border

Show students examples of nonfiction book articles with borders. Point out the differences in the border treatment and how the border matches the theme and content of the text. Also display the mentor text “History’s Amazing Cloth” in book form or using the interactive whiteboard resources. Point out how the design in the mentor text fits with the theme of the text.

Say: Let’s look at the design of these books, especially the border treatment. How does the border of this book fit the content and theme of this book? (Allow responses.) Now let’s look at “History’s Amazing Cloth.” The content of this book is about making silk cloth. It makes sense that the border should be something to do with cloth and fabric patterns.

Discuss the border on pages 12–13. Say: The border on the top and bottom edge of these pages looks like a flower pattern, which could be a pattern on a piece of silk cloth. The border adds interest and also reinforces the content of the book.

Display the border on pages 14–15. Say: The yellow, flowered border found on pages 12 and 13 is also included here. Continuing a border throughout pages of text helps create a connection between the pages.

Objectives

In this mini-lesson, students will:

• Learn strategies for choosing a border that matches a research report’s theme.
• Discuss ideas for borders.
• Discuss how to apply the strategies to their own research reports.

Preparation

Materials Needed

• Mentor text: “History’s Amazing Cloth” from Along the 21st-Century Silk Road
• Chart paper and markers
• Interactive whiteboard resources

Advanced Preparation

Gather together examples from the classroom or school library of nonfiction books that have borders with different design treatments.
2. Rehearse

Practice Choosing a Border

Invite students to focus on the drafts of their research reports and think about what kind of border they would use. Encourage students to think about the genre and also the theme and content of their research reports to help them come up with ideas.

Share and Discuss

Bring students together and invite them to share the ideas they have come up with so far. Encourage students to explain why they made the choices they did.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that including a border around the pages of text makes a research report visually appealing to readers. The border should reflect the content of the report in some way. Keep this in mind as you publish your research report and think about what type of border to include on its pages.

During independent writing time, encourage students to create interesting and relevant borders when they publish their own research reports. During conferences, reinforce students’ use of this and other strategies using the prompts on your conferring flip chart.

4. Share

Bring the class together. Invite volunteers to share their borders and explain how they think the borders enhance their texts.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Work one on one with ELs. Help them take a piece of their own writing and create an illustrated border for it. You may want to have students view different types of illustrated borders in sample nonfiction texts.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers during the practice activity.

All Levels

If you have ELs whose first language is Spanish, share these English/Spanish cognates: border/el borde; illustration/la ilustración.