

David is an eight year old student with an attention deficit problem. If you are looking for David in the classroom, you soon learn not to look for him at his desk for he is rarely in his seat. Writing time is the worst for David. In his own words, "I hate to write. The words fly out of my head before I can get them down on paper." David spends much of writing time each day sharpening and re-sharpening his pencil, getting drinks at the water fountain, and finding a variety of other excuses to wander around

the room. In two months time, he managed to produce two sentences of writing, only under the threat of not going out to recess if he did not write something. David loves recess. Each day he waits for recess to arrive where he is free to run and play without the glaring eyes of his teacher piercing him. Sadly, by the second grade, David has already learned that teachers do not take kindly to him and that he is failing in school.

When David was first introduced to The Image-Making Process via the making of a variety of hand-painted textured papers, he did not stand out in the crowd. He moved from station to station, completely engaged in each art process. David even went back to the bubble print station to create a second round of bubble prints.

As the class viewed textured papers together, David did stand out from his peers, however, as one of the first children to discover images within the textured papers. Rich language and imaginative images were at the tip of his tongue.

When it came time for the children to begin their story-making process, David immediately "envisioned" his story. A geometric design in a plexi-glass print he had made reminded him of a window. He quickly cut it out and literally peered through it to discover the rest of his story. A big blue swirl in a marbled paper became a blustery tornado and thick blue and purple bubble prints became ominous clouds. As a visual and kinesthetic learner (and a child who struggled with writing), David chose to make collage image after collage image, eagerly securing his ideas down on paper in pictures. Being an active child, his story-making process was very physical. His blue marbled tornado literally spun through

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## David's Journey: Image-Making Within The Writing Process *Beth Olshansky*

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the air accompanied by great swishing sounds before he hastily fastened it to the page before it too blew away.

As David created each collage image, he was obviously rehearsing his story over and over in his mind and would eagerly share it with any passer-by. His oral language was unusually rich and descriptive. As he traced the lines of each collage image with his active fingers, descriptive language was at the tip of his tongue. His language appeared to come directly off of his collage images. Holding an uncombed purple and magenta marbled paper in his hand, he called out, "It feels like we are caught in a meteor shower. Huge rocks like pumpkins hit me from all sides. It's raining rocks." David ducked, his hands flying up over his head to protect him from the "dusty storm".

David retold his story so many times, that he had memorized it before he ever began to put words down on paper. This, plus the strong visual record of his thoughts in his own images, ensured that his words would no longer "fly out of his head."

David created both text and illustrations. His published book was outstanding in both words and pictures. After looking through his published book for the first time, David looked up and with tears in his eyes said, "I didn't know I could do that good."