

Chasing the Storm: A Curriculum Resource for Resilience

Alisse Guerra, Art Education, alisseguerra@utexas.edu

Background

The purpose of this capstone project is to investigate and reflect on my experience of living through Hurricane Katrina in order to develop a children's book for art educators in elementary schools dealing with the aftermath of disaster. This project provides essential research into how resilience was fostered in my life after Hurricane Katrina and uses this data to address the resiliency necessary for children to survive climate disasters by providing a curriculum resource for elementary art teachers.



A photograph of me in 2005, just after Hurricane Katrina.



Cover art illustration for *August and the Rain*.

Conclusion

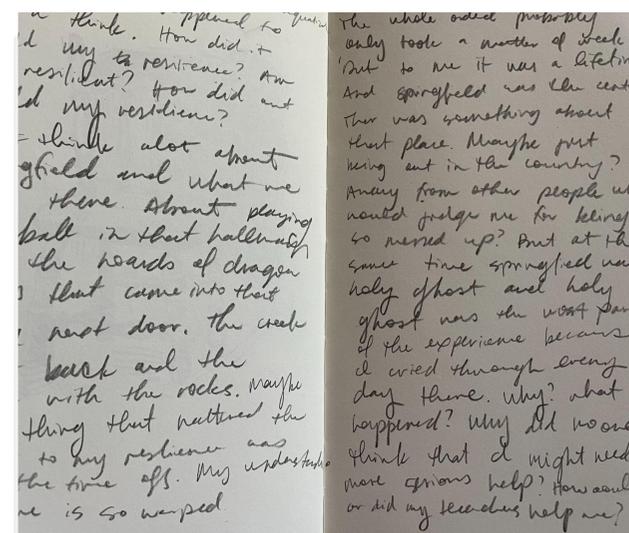
The full children's book consists of 13 illustrations and one page of resilience building questions and art making prompts. I based the plot of the story on the memory of my favorite stuffed animal avoiding the flood waters of Katrina by floating up above the water on my mattress. This story presented the perfect structure for a story about perseverance, survival, joy, and home. I chose to illustrate my book with a painted paper collage motif, with most inspiration from Eric Carle, Lois Ehlert, Leo Lionni, and Aura Cherrybag.

Research Questions

How did I build resilience in my own experience of Hurricane Katrina? What children's books already exist that deal with disaster? How can I write and illustrate a children's book that functions as a curriculum resource for elementary art teachers and promotes resilience building in response to climate disasters?

Book	Location	Notes 1	Notes 2
Two Bobbies	APL - North Village Branch: Children's Area J 636.983 LA Or https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gavnaVQ2M	animal story. Themes of friendship and codependence. Hurricane Katrina story. How did it affect these two animals? Lots of words, large paragraphs of text. Illustrations of actually flooded areas and devastation. Two friends who are bonded and rely on each other and the kindness of the community. This book is for older elementary students. Obviously a true story told in great detail, not a lot of whimsy or fictionalization. They mention real places and even address Cooper 360 lol. Finding new family and learning to start over, learning to be happy again after disaster. Finishes with a message of survival- they survived by relying on each other. No questions or prompts at the end. Fully drawn illustrations	Survival is a key word in this I specifically. New Orleans is des 25, 2005 "strong winds pushing leave their homes, say goodbye coming to town. People stranded. Descriptions of multiple hard continued to live (resilience). I it descriptive. They end up leaving rebuilding, rebuilding is a com storm" section. SURVIVAL thro lend each other a hand.
Marvelous Cornelius	PCL Library: Stacks 65: YOUTH PZ 7 B4923 Mar 2015 OR https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZqH2voN2o	illustrations are not collage, but blocky like collage drawings. Colorful and stylized. Themes of joy in tragedy. Katrina story about a garbage man who cleans up after Katrina. Working hard to clean up. Spreads of flood- cars under water. Relying on each other to help, based on a true story, but more stylized, accepting help. Does show destruction that comes from flooding, shows people coming to help	This is a human story with direct think this is about the perfect at JOY JOY is a major theme here, came" Stylized version of the sit more realistic depictions in some
Time of Wonder	PCL Stacks 65: YOUTH PZ 7 M1336 T1 OR https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv6sp1s8Gai	Big landscape illustrations. Large paragraphs of text. Large book in general. Poetic text. Describing what YOU do. Beautiful tribute to the land. "It's raining on YOU!!" such gorgeous landscape illustrations from 1957. Talks about preparation for the storm, having food and water and gas, have to hurry home because there's so much to do before the storm comes. "We're going to have some weather!" The tiny things that happen when the tide comes in, the spiders, the mice, poetic descriptions of the animals and how the land and the boats react to the rising tide. People trying to keep the storm out. The cool and interesting things you can explore after the storm causes destruction - life happening in the aftermath. This book is so slow and beautiful. I love the writing and the art styles	This book is delightful. A love let islands one by one. The illustra Sometimes the words are within sometimes outside of the illustra heavy air" instead of first person into the story with frequent use c description of the hurricane as landscape, rather than the hui the people as more or less safe
	PCL Stacks 65: YOUTH PZ 7 B22965 RAD 2000 OR https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zv6sp1s8Gai	Large blocks of text. Hand drawn illustrations. Painted. Quash? A lot of information about fire rescue and fire trucks! Morse code? This is boring. I am tuning out. Not poetic text. Talks about falling and then persevering. Studying really hard because you want something. Succeeding after sustained effort. SO FUCKING BORING. how this little boy could help by connecting people to their loved ones who had been affected by a hurricane. more about radio than	I hate this one omg. Its so boring the long descriptions of telephor morse code. Resilience is a key disaster. Resilience is in the con learning morse code even after i able to help people in a disaster others. Perseverance and len here. "Will I ever be good eno

Notes from content analysis. Each book was read several times to get a holistic understanding of its characteristics and meaning.



Journal entries and stories written for autoethnographic analysis.

Results

I identified a few key themes in my autoethnographic writing that were included as part of my children's book:

- Destruction/ rebuilding
- Community support/ friendship
- Joy in the face of adversity

These points connect my children's book to my story, but also allow the book to be relevant to all students experiencing natural disaster. The themes identified also function as resilience factors, allowing art teachers to use this curriculum resource to build resilience in their students.

Through the content analysis, I identified a few elements that I included in my book.

- Resiliency prompts, questions, and activities integrated into the text, and offered at the end of the book
- Connection to and reverence for nature
- Whimsical language and collaged art style

Methods and Materials

Narrative autoethnography was used to investigate stories and narratives from my experience of Katrina. Content analysis was used to investigate existing children's books relevant to the study. From this data, a children's book was written and illustrated as a curriculum resource for fostering resilience.

- 15 stories and 10 journal entries written
- 14 books about resilience, natural disasters, or both are analyzed for content, writing style, and illustrations

Because of limitations of this methodology, the study may not account for different viewpoints and contexts of disaster.

Acknowledgments

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