INSTRUCTIONAL STRATEGIES



Bento Box

Students synthesize and summarize their understanding of a novel, historical event, or time period by creating a single image made from different components, similar to the composition of Japanese meals served in a compartmentalized box.

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BENTO BOX

Summary

The Bento Box strategy encourages students to analyze and summarize a novel by putting together separate visual components to form one square or rectangular image. This strategy also may be used for other subjects and cross-curricular content. For example, students in a social studies class could create bentos to show their understanding of a historical event or time period.

Procedure

1. Working in small groups or on their own, students curate 5–7 images or objects that are relevant to the novel they have read or another topic they are studying. (E.g., for a novel, these images could be related to the theme, plot, characters, imagery, and setting, and one of the images should be the cover of the novel.)
2. Students arrange all the images into one large square image.
3. Students describe the objects included in the bento and explain their reasons for selecting them.
4. Students submit their final products and descriptions either digitally or in person. Optionally, students may present their bentos in small groups or to the whole class.
5. **Optional Technology Use**: Students may use an app such as Google Slides, ThingLink, or Piktochart to create their bentos.
6. **Optional Technology Use**: Students may use a video device to create an unboxing video explaining the contents of their bentos. These recorded responses could be published in a secure location such as Google Classroom, a private or unlisted class YouTube channel, or a class blog for the teacher and/or classmates to provide feedback.

Valenza, J. (2019, May 4). Building beautiful book bentos. School Library Journal. https://blogs.slj.com/neverendingsearch/2019/05/04/building-beautiful-book-bentos/