

Through my window

My students wrote a description of the view through a window of their classroom. They quickly found it necessary to use vivid and precise language to describe the view. The completed descriptions were “posted” to the *Through My Window* newsgroup located on *Network for Education*. Students from other schools then sent back visual representations of our original descriptions.



Screen capture of the site, showing the Through My Window project.

The class had recently started using e-mail to communicate with other students around the state. They eagerly awaited replies to each message sent and enjoyed learning about the lives of their keypals.

They were very curious about their keypals and wondered what their schools and communities looked like.

Students described the view from their classroom window so that other students could draw or paint it. The better their descriptions, the more accurate the interpretation would be.

The class started by describing common objects, such as fences and trees, to practise using the precise language necessary to clearly describe something in detail. Then, working in small groups, students chose a classroom window through which to look and described the view.

Their descriptions were edited and trialled many times until the words used described the view accurately. Finally the descriptions were posted to the Internet newsgroup within the Departmental web site, so students from other schools could draw our view.

It wasn't long before we received our first sets of drawings from other schools. The drawings were compared with the actual view and then with the written description. The class was able to see how their words had been interpreted. We took photographs to send to the other school, so that they could see what the view really looked like and explained how close they were with their interpretations.

We also tried interpreting descriptions written by other students. The class accessed the newsgroup, downloaded the school's description and created their drawings. Some used a computer, some used pencil, paint and paper. All the pictures were mailed to the originating school and feedback was received on our efforts.

The students learned the value of precise, vivid, descriptive language and delighted in the opportunity to gain a better understanding of the communities in which their e-mail friends live.