

Decker Elementary Artists Featured at MISD Central Office 4th and 5th Grade Poetry Self-Portraits on Display

Each month, MISD welcomes the artwork of various campuses for display on the superintendent's bulletin board and within the board room. The work of Decker Elementary students and art instructor, Mr. Todd Stevens is featured in October. The art unit displayed focuses on Shape into Form while using implied line. Implied lines are defined as lines that dim, fade, stop and/or disappear where the missing part is implied to continue and is visually completed by the observer as the line reappears. In other words, creating a line or in this case shape and form without drawing the line. The students looked at the artwork of Andy Goldsworthy a contemporary British sculptor who uses nature to create implied line and shape in to form. Goldsworthy emphasizes all of the elements and principles of design in his work while using alternative methods of creation, such as rocks and sticks.

Each student created an "I Am" poem, which is an autobiographical poem about thoughts and feelings. The students then drew out their shadows and filled in the poem inside of their shadows to give the illusion of an implied line. This technique is used by many commercial artists and can be seen in advertisements today. Students learned that art can be created by using words and that there are no limits to creation. Decker Elementary School students expressed, "the lines are created by writing words."

Mrs. Barrett Johnson, MISD Advanced Programs and Fine Arts shared, "Mr. Stevens takes great care to acknowledge students' work and to also build esteem through the creative processes of art. I was recently at DES and enjoyed a parade of artists in the hallway celebrating the artists of the day. One of the most popular awards created by Mr. Stevens is the coveted Orange Juice Award, which is presented to the most *concentrated* artist." Mr. Stevens is beginning his third year as the art teacher at Decker Elementary School and loves his work with DES students. He is originally from the Great Plains and grew up in Wichita, Kansas. He received a BFA in Visual Studies with an emphasis in painting from Texas Tech University. Mr. Stevens says he was called to inspire young artists when his high school art teacher Mr. Pfannenstiel encouraged him to become an artist.