Post Fellowship Reporting - Project Summary

Report Title:	Literacy Enriched through Book Arts	**Name:**	Jo Ann Agnes Porter
Other Team Members:			
Program:	New York City Program		
Trip Dates:	11/30/-0001 - 11/30/-0001	**Location Visited:**	Minneapolis, Minnesota
Post Fellowship Reporting Template: PFR Template 02			

Project Summary: My life-long appreciation of bound books and the printed word were the impetus behind my quest to delve into book arts, which is the all-encompassing term for any process—such as bookbinding, papermaking, pressure printing, paper folding and calligraphy—that is involved in assembling a book. With the support of my fellowship grant I traveled from New York City, the publishing center of the world, to Minneapolis, Minnesota, the former capital of flour production to the world. In this unapparent place, the "Mill District" of Minneapolis, I found and attended classes at the Minnesota Center for Book Arts, where bookmaking is practiced, taught as an extension of literacy, and celebrated as art by experienced artisan instructors for the benefit of all who are interested in any aspect of this craft. Coming to the center as a bookmaking novice, I found instructors who understood the needs and challenges an elementary school teacher, like myself, who has a goal of teaching bookmaking in her classroom as a vehicle to promote literacy. With that overriding goal understood and shared by my instructors and fellow classmates, I enjoyed the experience of learning in groups of one or three, over five days, the techniques of how to make simple to advanced books that look beautiful and professional. The seamless course structures and professional teaching practices of the instructors were as beneficial to my learning experience as the how-to directions for folding, cutting and gluing paper. At the close of each course I was always exhilarated and in awe of the work I produced. At the close of each course (not the end—bookmaking is a continuous learning and self-refining process) I felt excited by the thought of what more I could do in book arts in general, and bookmaking, in particular, on my own and with my students.

Career Impact: * I can model how to make a variety of books that use a single sheet of paper and apply for adornment commonly found, and inexpensively acquired objects.
* I developed an appreciation for different kinds and qualities of fine paper that are used in making books.
* My empathy for struggling students has deepened as I remember how at times I was confused by the orientation of the paper I was working with or felt awkward manipulating small tabs of paper.
* I've been inspired by the many beautiful, creative and original books that were made by hand by students and artisans at the center.

Classroom/Community Impact: * I have ideas and skills on how to integrate text and pictures in books in far more creative ways than I've done in the past.
* The bookmaking skills I will further develop in my students in the classroom will be carried home and to core content classes beyond literacy in my classroom.
* The bookmaking skills I will further develop in my students will likely raise their confidence in their writing abilities; and raise their level of effort in bringing their writing to the publishing stage.
* My school will likely make more effort to collect and display student-made books in the school library and in other public spaces.

Open Response: * I've incorporated the making of single sheet books into my lesson plans for the first days of school.
* I've begun making a journal and portfolio that my students will later make for use in writers workshop this year.

Quote: I now look at a discarded piece of paper or a crayon box as a possible literacy creation.
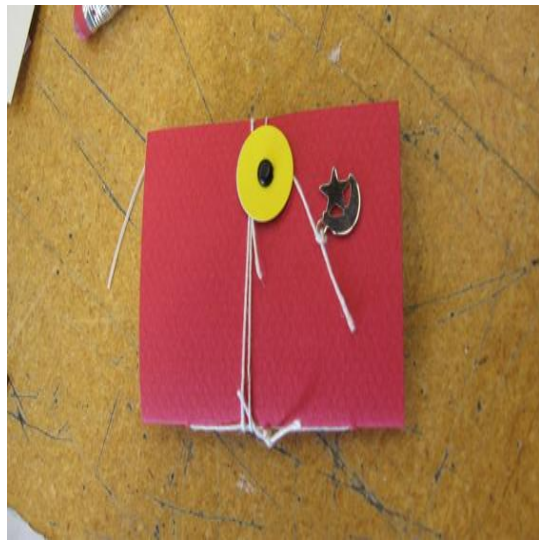
Photos:

Mill District, Minneapolis, MN skyline
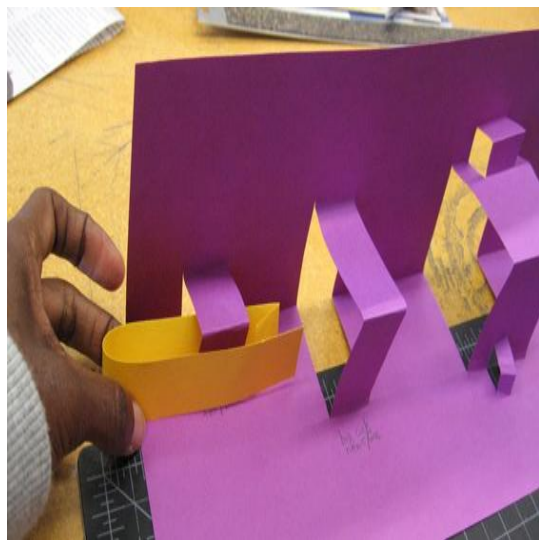

First day at Minnesota Center for Book Arts

Understanding and working with the grain of paper

A simple bound book

Making a tunnel book

So this is how you build a pop-up book!

Pressure printing adds interesting textures to books.

A paintbrush is not the only way to apply paint.