Zines in the Classroom

By Cosima Storz

Ed. 7
© 2018 Cosima Storz
Why use zines in the classroom?

Zines (pronounced ‘zeen’) have always been about sharing ideas with others and existing as a counter against mass produced media. As a zine maker myself and as a teacher, I think about who gets to author ideas and who gets to put information out into the world. Zines are an exciting way to talk about a topic that a student is interested in and can easily share it.

Zines are a way for students to directly participate with ideas and information. Any opportunity for students to learn about what interests them and then to share it with others means that their ideas are valued. Students already have incredible thoughts and observations, zines are another way for them to be the researchers and the makers.

East Coast Zine Festivals
Austen, TX http://www.lonestarzinefest.org/
Baltimore, MD https://diyfest.org/
Brooklyn Zine Festival
https://brooklynzinefest.com/
Chicago, IL http://chicagozinefest.org/
Denver, CO
https://denverzinefestival.org/2018/03/07/2017-dmv-zine-fest/
Detroit, MI https://www.comixparty.com/
Los Angeles, CA https://lazinefest.com/
Philadelphia Zine Fest
http://phillyzinefest.tumblr.com/
Olympia, WA https://olympiazinefest.org/
Miami, FL
https://exilebooks.com/blogs/events/19101051-open-call-miami-zine-fair
New York Feminist Zine Festival
https://feministzinefestnyc.wordpress.com/
New York Queer Zine Fair
http://bgsqd.com/events/
Newark, NJ
http://www.thebettys.com/blog/bettyzinefest
New Orleans, LA http://www.nocazfest.com/
Portland, OR
http://www.portlandzinesymposium.org/
Richmond, VA https://richmondzinefest.org/
Seattle, WA http://shortrun.org/

Contact information:
Cosima Storz
cosimastorz@gmail.com
**Online Resources**

- Barnard Zine Library
  https://zines.barnard.edu/about/genres

- Cult of Pedagogy
  https://www.cultofpedagogy.com/culturally-responsive-misconceptions/

- DIY resource for zines & zine culture
  http://www.stolensharpierevolution.org/

- Make an 8-page zine
  http://www.wexphotographic.com/blog/tips-and-technique/how-to-make-a-simple-eight-page-zine/

- Pioneers Press
  https://pioneerspress.com/

- POC (People of Color) Zine Project
  (https://issuu.com/poczineproject)

- Queer zine archive
  http://archive.qzap.org/index.php

- Sprout Distro
  https://www.sproutdistro.com/

- Teaching with zines
  https://zines.barnard.edu/teachingwithzines

- Zines for kids
  http://zinelibraries.info/2016/08/11/zines-for-kids/

**What is a zine?**

Zines started in the 1920s in the United States in response to science fiction magazines. Fans were invited to submit letters to the magazines in response to the stories published. Eventually fans started to write their own ideas and inspirations from magazines and mail them to each other. Thus, the birth of the fanzine!

The word fanzine “...was coined in an October 1940 science fiction fanzine by Russ Chauvenet and first popularized within science fiction fandom, from whom it was adopted by others.” (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fanzine).

**Definitions**

- **Chapbook** - a small paperback booklet, typically containing poems or fiction.

- **Distro** - zine distributor, like a book publisher.

- **DIY** - do it yourself.

- **Long reach stapler** - a stapler that staples lengths up to 12 inches.

- **Zine** (pronounced ‘zeen’) - short for fanzine. A self-produced, cheaply made publication. Often about uncommon or underground topics.
**Zines as collective learning**

Zines are an excellent format for collective learning. There are many studies and theories that support group learning. One of psychologist Vygotsky’s ideas was that learning is not done individually, and that it happens between people. Zines are a great way for students to research and create a group made zine.

Another example is from educator Zaretta Hammond. Hammond researches culturally responsive learning and its misconceptions. Hammond says that “...most schools are centered around an individualistic orientation, keep your eyes in your own work. Pull yourself up by the bootstraps. Whereas collectivism is, I am because we are. It’s interdependency.”

**Possible themes for zines**

- All about me (great to start the year with)
- Artist who you should know (students research a not well known artist)
- Culture jamming (students collage pictures from movies, musicians, any visual elements that students find interesting and they react to those typical images)
- Art studio techniques (ex. How to make collagraph print)

**Books on zine making**

- Syllabus: Notes from an accidental professor
  By Lynda Barry
- The riot grrrl collection
  By Lisa Darms, Kathleen Hanna, & Johanna Fateman
- Notes from underground: Zines and the politics of alternative culture
  By Stephen Duncombe
- How to make books: Fold, cut & stitch your way to a one-of-a-kind book
  By Esther K. Smith
- The guerilla art kit: Everything you need to put your message out into the world
  By Keri Smith
- DIY: The Rise of Lo-Fi Culture
  By Amy Spencer
- Whatcha mean, what’s a zine?
  By Esther Watson & Mark Todd
- Stolen sharpie revolution: A DIY resource for zines and zine culture
  By Alex Wrekk

**A few materials to get started**

Long reach stapler, staples, scissors, glue, markers or crayons, old magazines, paper, tape, rubber stamps, ink pads, stickers, a scanner, a photocopier or a computer printer.
8 page book
What are some other items or ideas connected to zines.....

- Book
- Art
- Zines
- Comics
- DIY
- Pen Pal
- Pamphlets
- Chapbooks