

Chinese Brush Painting at PCY

3rd graders in Mrs. Karns' class at Paradise Canyon Elementary School are learning Chinese Brush Painting skills as an extension activity of their Language Arts curriculum. The *Ballad of Mulan* legend in the Houghton-Mifflin textbook sets the stage for Mrs. Karns to integrate Language Arts, Social Studies and Art standards and help history come alive for students.

Making inferences was the Language Arts focus of the *Ballad of Mulan* legend. This is a critical skill that begins as early as Kindergarten in La Canada, and is continuously built upon throughout elementary, middle, and high school. Students are expected to use elements of the text, their own experiences, and what they know about the world, to infer about characters' feelings, events, or settings. Using this Chinese legend stretches the 3rd graders thinking to learn about and understand people of another culture, and to imagine themselves in another time and place.

Throughout the story, Mrs. Karns called the students' attention to the Chinese characters within the illustrations. The students learned that Chinese people speak a different language and have a unique way of writing. As an extension to the *Ballad of Mulan*, Mrs. Karns' shared examples of the tools used long ago by the Chinese people. The students then were able to practice and paint their own Chinese symbols using similar tools to have on display in their classroom.



Mrs. Karns' 3rd grade class



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