Lesson 4 Day 1

**What went well:** This week we explored the backgrounds or "environments" for our creatures in space project. We added "environment" to our word wall and reflected on our vocab so far this semester and these connections are becoming really solid. We brainstormed what different environments could be. This was meaningful because some students thought environment as very binary i.e. desert, jungle, mountains but then when brainstorming we realized environment can include Fort Collins, our classroom, underwater, etc. Through brainstorming I think we also tapped in to some excitement for the project. As we started to list all the things that could be included in environment students engaged with an idea they were passionate about.

**What didn't go well: I**t's not that this is necessarily bad, but students spent longer on this aspect than we thought they would. I was happy about this because their ideas seemed developed and they seem invested in their work. But I'm anxious about this because we allotted three class periods for "creatures in space". This first class was meant for the environments, the second for their creatures, and the third was the reflection for the project. As it is, we are going to use next class to finish environments and get started on creatures and then finish creatures on the third day and go directly into reflection and I think this will be an ok solution. We are trying to spend a longer amount of time on our reflection because it is more in-depth, requiring students to step into a role as a museum tour guide and take their peers on a tour of their creature in space; I think so long as we have a minimum of 20 minutes for this, we can still achieve it. Clean up could have gone a little bit better. Denise pointed out that we could have been more specific. Also, just throughout class, the tables got cluttered because we were working on so much and I saw one altercation were a student snapped at their table because their work was crowded. I had students move some of their stuff to the floor but I know this wasn't the best solution. I think we also could have had some more examples of artist work concerning our topic to better explain what we were asking of the students.

**What I would do differently:** We've already made some time adjustments to our unit. As for the cluttered table space, next time, I would have students clean up after our pre-assessment "painting frenzy". Students would bring their paintings to one table to dry. THEN we would move on to our sketches with relatively clean tables. After students were finished sketching on their final draft for their environment, their sketchbooks could be but back in the basket so (again) they had nice, clean table space. Next time I do this project, I would be sure to specifically seek out artists that make art specific to environment. As it is, Clarissa and I found great examples of artists' work that take an object and place it in an environment in which it *doesn't* belong but we don't have an example in which the environment and object *work together*. We told students they could choose either relationship between their creature and environment. i.e. They could create a background *for* their creature OR they could come up with a totally wacky background in which their creature didn't belong.

Lesson 4 Day 2

**What went well:** Students were transitioning from their environment for their creatures to the creatures themselves. So the room was buzzing with a lot of materials and transitions from one project to the other but students were productive and engaged. I think Clarissa and I gave the students a good order of operations in which to work on stuff. So students finished their backgrounds and put them on the drying rack. Then students got their sketchbooks and created sketches for their creatures. One finished with their sketches, they had to get approval from Clarissa or I to get their materials and get started on their 3D version. When they came to the back of the room to get their materials, they were given a paper plate with the amount of clay they would work with and then they got to "shop" through other materials such as foam, beads, metal, recycled materials, pipe cleaners, etc. Denise commented after class that this was a smart move on our part because if materials are just given out all at once things can get hectic. Plus, in throwing in the approval process by Clarissa or I, we got to ensure that they had developed their sketches before moving on to the 3D version. Clarissa also had the great idea to bring individual plastic bags with each students name on them to put their creatures and materials in so that next class all their stuff will be together. This also made transport easy.

**What didn't go well:** One student in particular is moving really slowly and we're having a hard time knowing when to push him and when to allow him the time to explore at his own pace. He didn't even complete his environment/background, let alone start his creature. We also almost ran out of clay but I was able to ration it out among students and make it work-it was just a good reminder to double, triple, and quadruple check that you have enough of the materials.

**What I would do differently:** I would maybe scaffold some more ideation for their creatures to troubleshoot any students struggling. It would also help with their motivation. I would also potentially show the students their materials first-before they did their sketches. One student in particular did this-she came over to the materials section of the class and looked before she did her sketch. I would love for other students to work in this process as well.