

Students “sew” over monsters*High schoolers bring elementary students’ visions of monsters into reality**Independent living class students scare up some creativity as they transform two-dimensional monster designs into 3-D stuffed creatures*

Everett—Multiple eyes, arms, legs and antennae crawled off the page, turned three-dimensional ... and plush.

As the kindergartners at Madison Elementary School designed their monsters on paper, they knew their monsters would return “changed.”

Teacher Madison Taylor’s kindergarten students designed monsters, sent the designs off to Everett High School students who turned them into stuffed animals of the same likeness.

What the kindergartners hadn’t dreamed was their monsters developed personalities.

Some came back bearing notes that they liked pizza, swimming or princess tea parties.

*An Everett High School student stitches together a child’s imagination with practical sewing skills*

This collaborative effort began with Everett High’s Tammy Price, an independent living and career and technical education (CTE) teacher, contacting Everett High School’s librarian, Deborah Payne, for ideas on how best to teach her students basic sewing.

Payne is a passionate advocate of [makerspaces](#) (she hosts one in the library) and an expert sewer. She found a “monster project” online – a sewing unit in which secondary students construct stuffed toys for primary students based on the younger students’ designs. The project became real as Price made the arrangements and gathered the kindergartners’ drawings.

After viewing YouTube instructional videos on basic sewing techniques, Price’s independent living students assembled in the library to begin construction with the felt, stuffing, needles, pins and thread. But the teachers needed help instructing the 23 independent living students how to turn the 2-D designs into reality.

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A Madison Elementary kindergartner holds the finished monster

Enter Snohomish County’s Clothing and Textile Advisors (CTAs). Through Everett High staff connections, the CTAs volunteered to lend their expertise and support for a couple of class periods. While they deftly assisted students in technique, they never took away ownership of the work. Taking away ownership would have been difficult anyway, according to Price. Her students were totally committed to completing the project because there was someone on the other end depending on them.

Price shared, “This is one of those school projects I hope students remember in the years ahead. Those students just beginning school might also remember the time a high school student made their monster come to life!”

Andy Sevald, a district STEM facilitator, was impressed with the project. “This project hit all the marks: cross-grade student participation, project-based, personal touches, professional community member involvement. It just doesn’t get any better than this.” Sevald also witnessed the monster delivery. “What was particularly notable was the expression of the kindergarteners’ faces, holding in their hands what had previously existed only in their imaginations. Their stuffed toys served as proof that dreams can become real,” said Sevald.

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For more information:

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