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A Shakespearian Production

School Narrative

East Valley High School (EVHS) is a public charter school in the East Mesa area. The community is generally low-income, the average salary being approximately $47,256. The school is the second of only two schools in the Legacy School District. There are about 150 students currently attending EVHS ethnically composed almost equally of Hispanic and Caucasian students with low numbers of Black, American Indians, Alaska Native, Hawaiian Native, and Pacific Islander. The students age rage is anywhere from fourteen to nineteen. EVHS is a Title I school with a very low socioeconomic status and more than half of all the students receive free or reduced lunch. The school received the following AIMS scores last academic year: in math they scored 27% when the state average was 62%; in reading they scored 67% when the state average was 83%; and in writing they scored 55% when the state average was 70%. At the school, students have access to two computer labs, art, choir, creative writing, dance, music, and drama. Although students have access to performing and fine arts, the resources in the classroom are sparse. There are, on average about ten students in each English class, equally composed of females and males. Do note, however, that the classes are not equally balanced. Some English classes have a vast amount of students while others have only a few.

There is a single computer, a white board, a tack-board, a television, individual dry erase boards, a projector, books and textbooks inside the classroom. There is an overemphasized use of textbooks, which students read from with minimal use of the projector. Although computers are available in the computer lab they must be shared by the entire school, including many students who participate in online education only. Online students are the only one’s allowed to use the computers.

In my classroom specifically, a lot of emphasis is placed on reading Shakespearean texts but the text does not come alive by just reading from a textbook and watching small clips from movies. Rather, I believe the students would greatly benefit from experiencing Shakespeare on the stage, where the physical actors must reinterpret how Shakespeare originally intended it to be performed. The students could observe actors making decisions on the stage and compare that to how they originally envisioned it. Students can also compare and contrast the stage production to the film productions, making connections to aspects of real life.

Therefore, I am requesting funds to support student learning by taking each of my English students on a field trip to the Mesa Arts Center where they will be able to witness a Shakespearean play in person. Perhaps, because this is a school event, we could ask the actors in the show to speak after the show about choices they made and have a discussion with the students about Shakespeare and his words. I believe that having this live interaction with Shakespeare will greatly improve the students understanding of his works and their importance for both English literature and culture.

Learning Goals and Outcomes

How are dramas adapted for the stage and for the screen?

The first major goal for students is to understand how dramas are adapted for the stage and for the screen. In other words, how does the text in front of them become a play or a film? This would include understanding why certain production choices are made, the differences between the stage and the screen, how are performances today different from original performances, comparing the play/film back to the original text, the process of adapting a written drama to a physical acted representation and some of the more technical aspects of a production such as the cost behind a production. Students could also explore how this play would function in real life. Is it realistic for our time? What would be similar? What would be different?

This could help students explore why they are drawn to certain types of movies, television shows or plays, and not to others. They could explore how modern day movies are created and the role of actors, directors and other cast members. This could also help some students figure out if show-business and Hollywood is what they want for careers. This project would also allow students to explore original practices and how those have changed over time. This could include comparing how they originally envisioned it and what they are seeing on the screen/stage.

* Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums, including what is emphasized or absent in each treatment (9‐10.RL.7)
* By the end of grade 9, read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poems, in the grades 9–10 text complexity band proficiently, with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range. (9.RL.10)
* Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self‐generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. (9‐10.W.7)
* Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation. (9‐10.W.8)
* Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. (9-10.W.9)
* Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally), evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source. (9‐10.SL.2)

How can I communicate best with an audience?

The second major goal of this entire project is for students to learn how to best communicate with an audience. This includes critically thinking about who their audience is, how to communicate with the audience, what features or aspects should be included to make an appropriate argument, how are major themes transmitted through drama and how can I utilize those in my own communication.

This would help students explore how arguments are made in their everyday life, convincing them through social media and television. This would also help them explore how to build an argument for their own specific type of audience. They will be building communication skills and developing their own skills to analyze communication, especially when it comes to real world applications. These analyzing skills will be useful when looking at politics and political campaigns, advertisements, media and the like.

* Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (9‐10.W.4)
* Produce clear and coherent functional writing (e.g., formal letters, experiments, notes/messages, labels, timelines, graphs/tables, procedures, invitations, envelopes, maps, captions, diagrams) in which the development and organization are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience. (AZ. 9‐10.W.4)
* Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and task. (9‐10.SL.4)
* Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest. (9‐10.SL.5)

Project Based Learning

The project based activity I am suggesting would allow students to explore real life situations surrounding modern day productions of Shakespeare. The overarching idea is that rather than just read a Shakespearean play out of a text book or watch a single movie representation that was made over twenty years ago, the students would have a much more interactive, hands on and personal experience with a Shakespeare text by exploring a modern day rendition of a Shakespeare play. Focusing on concepts of production such as how actors perform, how major themes are transmitted through a production and why certain choices are made would help students analyze any performance both on the stage, on the screen and even in real life such as media advertisements and political propaganda. Students could also focus on more technical aspects of productions such as funding a production and managing a theater. While exploring modern performances of Shakespeare’s texts, students could learn how the play would have been performed in Shakespeare’s day and why changes are made in today’s production. Students could even make this learning a bit more personal by considering how they would represent one of Shakespeare’s plays on stage or on the screens. Not only would this project allow students the chance to explore an interesting topic related to a normally boring subject, but they would also gain the skills to analyze a text for a purpose other than just reading and understanding.

This project has some very essential real world connections, especially for those students who are interested in a career in acting, moving making, script writing or theater. However, it also has a lot of applications for other students because it teaches them the skills to identify production choices in media, politics, commercials and so much more that might influence how they think and behave. Additionally, it molds the student’s ability to critically think about how they would communicate ideas to an audience. It gives them real life practice in how to persuade an audience into believing their argument or idea. This would include skills associated with understanding the target audience, understanding modes of communication and understanding society.

Because of the nature of this project I believe that students could find assistance and resources in drama teachers, film teachers, art teachers, history teachers, English teachers and even math teachers. Each of these positions would offer a unique insight into the production of a Shakespeare play. As this would most likely be implemented in an English class, students could connect with students in drama classes to discuss logistics of a performance. They could engage with art students to learn how best to represent a scene before an audience. Essentially, this could possibly turn into an entire school event where students communicate with their peers to build something together. They would also have to learn what their audience, their peers and their parents, would want to see in a performance and think critically about how to bring that about. In the broader community, students would experience a real life performance put on by a local performing arts group, in this case the Southwest Shakespeare Company at the Mesa Arts Center. They could interview the actors, the director, the stage hands and the owners of the center to learn more about how they do their job and why they make certain decisions.

Although this project is not solely a technology based project, it could be useful for students to have access to computers and the internet for research. Access to a computer would allow students to work collaboratively at home and at school as they develop projects that they would then need to communicate to the rest of the group. Owning or having access to many different movies or stage renditions on tape would give the students a broader base of knowledge to build up their own understanding. Finally, having a video camera and editing software would give student the choice between a stage rendition and a screen rendition.

Inquiry **Based Lesson Plan**

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| Teachers: Taylor Johnson | | Subject: Romeo and Juliet; comparing more than one production/version of a scene |
| Standard:   * Analyze the representation of a subject or a key scene in two different artistic mediums 9-10.RL.7 * Evaluate a speakers POV, reasoning and use of evidence and rhetoric 9-10.SL.3 * Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse media, evaluating credibility 9-10.SL.2 | | |
| Objective (Explicit):   * Students will demonstrate evaluation of multiple representations of a given scene by identifying similarities and differences | | |
| Evidence of Mastery (Measurable):  For a summative assessment, students will write/create a critique on a single clip/scene using their analytical and evaluation skills. | | |
| Sub-objectives, SWBAT (Sequenced from basic to complex):   * Students will identify similarities and differences in various productions. * Students will analyze the effectiveness of various choices made in these productions | | |
| Key vocabulary: | | Materials/Technology Resources to be used:  *-romeo and juliet videos: globe rendition, 1960’s version, the 1996 version; 2014 version*  *-comparison charts*  *-computer/link to videos/headphones* |
| Engage (Make content and learning relevant to real life and connect to student interest)  -Point out that in a production such as a movie or a presidential debate every aspect is deliberately chosen for a specific purpose. Presidential debates and campaigns are very much a production similar to that of a play.  -Watch a short clip of the presidential debate between Nixon and Kennedy; go into why Kennedy won the Presidency and not Nixon based on this debate; what is Kennedy wearing? What is Nixon wearing? What are they saying? How are they saying things? What is the effect of color television? Specifically, this will allow students a real life example how certain production choices, such as clothing, speech, tone, etc, are made that influence an audience’s perception.  Key questions: How does each candidate come across to you as the audience? Which candidate do you like more? Why? How are the specific production choices influencing your opinions? How does this relate to media and advertisements today? | | |
| Explore | Teacher Will:  -watch each scene  -then provide one example of a similarity or difference between the various clips such as time period;  -help groups facilitate discussion | Student Will:  -watch each different scene; break into groups of three to identify similarities and differences between the two clips; comparison charts are provided as a tool for students to use in comparisons  -students will be focusing not only on what is similar or different, but they will begin to think about what the effects of these choices are; how these choices change the audience’s perception |
| Co-Teaching Strategy/Differentiation  -allow some students to work individually but encourage group work; allow students access to computers to rewatch the videos for further analysis; group students who are struggling with students who understand (This explore stage may take quite a bit of time for analysis) | |
| Explain | Teacher Will:  -observe and regulate  -lead discussion about how each adaptation is different; ask guiding questions to stimulate discussion such as similarities/differences in plot, lines, costuming, acting, setting, tone, attitude, theme etc?  -lead discussion on answers given especially focusing on the effect of each scene; Which scene did you like better? Why? What is your response to each scene? What do you gain from each scene? Where the production choices effective? Which scene had a stronger theme? Where the themes the same? | Student Will:  -as a class, identify some of the more common similarities and differences; explain what those differences were and what their effect was  -important to start stating the effect of the differences and changes |
| Co-Teaching Strategy/Differentiation  -allow students to write all the info down/ or take a picture/ or type it up  -highlight the super essential key points for students to know | |
| Elaborate | Teacher Will:  -help generate ideas and further elaborate on the students thoughts | Student Will:  *-* they will change one aspect in the scene (plot, lines, costuming etc) and discuss how this would change the scene; What effect does this change make on an audiences understanding of the scene? |
| Co-Teaching Strategy/Differentiation  -allow students time to write/think about answers to questions; | |
| Evaluate  -watch short clips of modern day presidential debates; Identify what choices are made in speech, motion, dress etc.? What are the effects of these choices? What do you notice making an effect on you? Do you think politicians today use media to influence your opinion?  Make sure students understand that just as producers, directors and actors make specific choices on the screen or stage in order to get their message across, politicians craft their campaign to present a certain image to their audience. | | |

Assessment

The Summative Assessment would be a project that allows students the creative license to recreate any scene from Romeo and Juliet. They would either need to perform it live or they would need to create and edit a video version. In this assessment they would need to make production choices similar to what a director does. In addition to this, student would be required to write a short essay that would explain what specific choices they made and why.

One formative assessment would be a short essay comparing the choices made in two or more versions of the same scene and those effects. This would include creating a Venn Diagram for brainstorming when comparing the scenes as well as the actual essay itself.

Another formative assessment would be students taking a quiz with 80% mastery on vocabulary and knowledge related to productions. I would originally provide students with information on how productions are made with examples from our movies. Students would take notes and then complete the quiz to show their mastery. This presentation/quiz could also include review of literary devices, plot and text details, and other literary elements that pertain to either productions or to Shakespearian works.

Another formative assessment would be student creating a short video using a movie maker. Students will practice using a movie maker software by creating a short commercial for their own movie/clip. This will give students hands on practice before actually attempting to make the final movie/scene.

Another formative assessment would be students writing a personal review on the live performance we observe. They would have to write a one-two page paper discussing specific choices they observed in the live performance, what the effect of those choices were and how much they liked them as an audience member.

Rubric

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| CATEGORY | **4** | **3** | **2** | **1** | **Score** |
| **Concept** | Team has a clear picture of what they are trying to achieve stylistically. Each member can describe what they are trying to do and generally how his/her work will contribute to the final product, especially the intended effect on the audience. | Team has a fairly clear picture of what they are trying to achieve stylistically. Each member can describe what they are trying to do overall but has trouble describing how his/her work will contribute to the final product and the effect it will have on an audience. | Team has brainstormed their concept, but no clear focus has emerged for the team on their stylistic purpose. Team members may describe the goals/final product differently, especially the intended effect on the audience. | Team has spent little effort on brainstorming and refining a concept to achieve their stylistic goals. Team members are unclear on the goals and how their contributions will help them reach the goal. |  |
| **Script** | Script is complete and it is clear what each actor will say and do. Entries and exits are scripted as are important movements. Script is quite professional. | Script is mostly complete. It is clear what each actor will say and do. Script is shows planning. | Script has a few major flaws. It is not always clear what the actors are to say and do. Script shows an attempt at planning, but seems incomplete. | There is no script. Actors are expected to invent what they say and do as they go along. |  |
| **Production Quality** | The overall quality of the video is superior with smooth transitions, editing and video recordings. | The overall quality of the video is great but not entirely smooth. Most of the transitions, editing and video are great but not all. | The overall quality of the video is good but not smooth. Some of the transitions, editing and video are good but not all. | The overall quality of the video is poor with little effort to create smooth transitions, editing and video. |  |
| **Teamwork** | Students meet and discuss regularly. All students contribute to the discussion and all are listened to respectfully. All team members contribute a fair share of the work. | Students meet and discuss regularly. Most students contribute to the discussion and are listened to respectfully. All team members contribute a fair share of the work. | A couple of team meetings are held. Most students contribute to the discussion and are listened to respectfully. All team members contribute a fair share of the work. | Meetings are not held AND/OR some team members do not contribute a fair share of the work. |  |

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| Title | Price | Tax | Total | Quantity | Total |
| Tickets to the Southwest Shakespeare Companies “Romeo and Juliet” at the Mesa Arts Center | $14.50 | $1.17 | $15.67 | 28 | $438.76 |
| Bus (hours + miles) | $114.55 | $9.22 | $123.77 | 1 | $123.77 |
| Romeo and Juliet (2013) includes s+h | $10.06 | $0.81 | $10.87 | 1 | $10.87 |
| Romeo and Juliet (1996) includes s+h | $7.68 | $0.62 | $8.30 | 1 | $8.30 |
| Romeo and Juliet (1968) | $8.53 | $0.69 | $9.22 | 1 | $9.22 |
| Shakespeare’s Globe Romeo and Juliet (2009) | $31.93 | $4.71 | $36.64 | 1 | $36.64 |
| Canon PowerShot SX260 HS Compact Camera with Video Taping Capabilities | $263.00 | $19.00 | $282.00 | 1 | $282.00 |
| Total |  |  |  |  | $909.56 |

The tickets and bus would be necessary for this project because they would be the personal experience for the students. This would be one of the most important aspects because it would give the students experience at a live performance and it would give the students a chance to ask the actors and directors why they made certain choices. The bus would be necessary in order to transport the children to the Mesa Arts Center. The three movie versions of Romeo and Juliet would be used as a way for the students to watch and analyze certain choices that the directors make. It would give them a chance not only to analyze a single movie but compare and contrast them. The final movie is a live recording of a play performed live in the Globe Theater in 2009. I think that this rendition of the play would be vital to the students understanding first because it is actually performed in the rebuilt Globe Theater and secondly, because it is another live performance, similar to the one they will be witnessing at the Mesa Arts Center. Finally, I would like to purchase a good camera that has the capability of recording videos so that if students wish to create a video as their final project they will have access to it.