

The point of tonight's chat is not to chat in a Q&A format, but to get together on one Doc and brainstorm ideas for lessons and projects. We know the WeirdEd ~~eat~~ family is smart, so let's combine art and science into Design and design some badass lessons together. I suggest using a specific font color for yourself so you can see what you've added and what others have.

**OK that's time. I'll leave the Doc open to edit. If you have something you want on here then I'd suggest adding it to your own drive. I'm stepping away to dad. No one add too much porn to it.**



Shelby - << WHO IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THIS. Doug- Yeah...which one of YOU did that? Shelby -How dare you. Tsk tsk. Our responsible leader. I STILL DON'T GET IT.

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Veronica- I recently set up a "Tug Of War" opinion writing wall. We pick a side on an issue (right now it's should plastic water bottles be banned?) the kids pick a side and put up a sticky not in one side or another, then we write, and they can change their opinion as we go, creating a pretty cool wall of ideas. I've also done an outline of Oregon, then the kids add their "culture regions" (studying Native American tribes) then they add tribe names, draw common shelters, draw food etc. and staple/tape it to the map on the wall. We're also setting up a life sized museum as a team, each classroom represents a different region and the school walks through the museum. The kids set up the room, build shelters, build food, tools, clothing, everything and are a living museum for visitors. Visitors can ask questions and see what life may have been like back then based on research.

Doug- We're doing something similar to the museum, but with Ghana. With the drumming we decided to go full on and do a country thing. The whole 5th grade team.

Veronica: I am so jealous of the drums! I played African drums all four years of my undergrad and worked with visitors from Ghana. Such an amazing experience! Have you incorporated singing or dancing yet? I have a book that has some songs(to sing) as well if you are interested. SO COOL!

Doug- I like the Tug of War wall too, how often are you changing it? Can kids go add notes whenever?

Veronica: Day 1 was just, what do you think, give a reason and post it up. The next day we read a few articles, then they had the option to change or modify their answers. Then they start writing a paper, gathering evidence, and they can add to their thinking as it goes on the wall. Eventually we will post our papers on kidblog and I'm thinking we might read a few papers and decide if one side wins, though I'm trying to find a way to do this without tears from students haha

Doug- Losing is part of debating. Making it about the conversation rather than winning will help. They also need the maturity to be told they're wrong or their argument was bad and handle it. Still might be tears. Tears are ok sometimes when it's not bc you're being mean. :)

Sarah - it can even be "your argument wasn't strong enough to convince people to join your side yet. These are things that could have made it stronger".

Shelby - \*finger snaps for both of the above comments\*

Thomas: OMG I did that as a 4th-6th grader in San Jose, CA. Our school had museum nights and we were dressed up in period-appropriate clothing, in 6th grade, we even taught visitors how to make butter old school! Can you tell me more about Tug of War? Uh, I guess Doug had the same questions. LOL.

Shelby - My wheels are already turning on how to adapt this for math. Maybe agree/disagree statements at the beginning of the unit, and they pick a side, then support with evidence from our learning as the unit goes on?

Veronica: I love this for math! So so cool!!! Totally like a math talk, and could encourage some really interesting conversations. I'm going to try that!

Doug- I wanna know how you'd use that for math in more detail. Bc I'm reading Jo Boaler the math guru lady and feeling inspired to get more creative with my math teaching. But it's still...math? Less debatable?

Shelby - So, basically, there are a lot of things that we know to be true in math. Why? Because our teacher told us they are true and don't ask questions. The math gods have spoken. But that's a load of crap - mathematicians debate stuff all the time (like, what is zero raised to the power of zero? Is is zero, is it 1, or is it undefined?) Some things will be definitively true or false, but this forces students to create an explanation/justification for why. Like: is the sum of two even numbers always even? Is the product of two numbers always odd? Is the product of two fractions greater or less than 1?

D- Ah yes, I see what you mean. Pip pip.

Veronica: we're just getting into multi-digit multiplication right now so I'm trying to figure out how I would put this together, but still very exciting. I totally just went for writing for now, but there are a lot of possibilities.

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Shelby - Thomas stole my color. \*pout\* I really want to do a lesson where we build something using surface area and blueprints. I'm actually insanely jealous of your arcade project, Doug. I need to incorporate small builds and blueprints so they can have a major build as their end-of-unit project. We've done minor things in the past, but nothing where they create

something on their own. I think part of it is letting go of my own fears about what they will and won't accomplish.

Doug- Letting go of expectations for finished products is hard but vital. Nearly every big build project I do includes a time when we're a day away from the end and I'm POSITIVE they're all gonna fail and this is gonna look awful and I wasted a bunch of time. Then they all come together. I do quick builds all the time as a warm

up...<http://hestheweirdteacher.blogspot.com/2017/01/quick-build-wind-powered-cars.html>

And today we did a trebuchet <https://twitter.com/TheWeirdTeacher/status/958827271250264064>

Veronica: QUICK BUILDS ARE THE BEST!! Do that!!

SHelby - I've never done one of those... We almost built a bridge based on this video but then we lost 3 days due to bad weather and had to postpone indefinitely:

<http://mathsnacks.com/overruled.html>

Doug- Aim smaller and quicker. Know that some will fail and that's ok. They'll learn and do better next time. Have revision conversations.

Shelby - I don't normally feel like a control freak, but the idea of letting them fail at something is giving me a minor panic attack. I let them fail at stuff all the time. WHY DOES THIS FEEL DIFFERENT.

Sarah - I know a teacher who does "give me your worst solution" for outside the box stuff. Gets some cool ideas flowing and unblocks some perfectionist kids. Maybe have them build the "worst" something so they're "failing" on purpose? Like "favorite mistake" in that math thing that people do.

Shelby - Hm. I need to do more research on quick builds. I attended a seminar on design thinking and was all excited to implement it this year and then...didn't.

Veronica: Right?!?

**Shelby - Hey you guyssss. Halp.**

**Veronica-Have them build miniature furniture, like a gnome house or tables or chairs. My kids are building Native American shelters but they need to give me dimensions and they are putting them into a small diorama so everything has to fit together. Maybe rebuild your classroom only tiny? Familiar things and placement.**

Shelby - Ooh... that would tie in our previous unit on proportions rather nicely...

Sarah - I've tried to break up projects to save my sanity. So I tell them what the finished project is, but give them a huge number of deliverables before the final project is actually "due" or done. So maybe first "show me you know how to find the area of a flat surface" then "show me you know how to find the surface area of a geometry thing" then something else but I'm running out of math content knowledge.

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Thomas: Well, recently did a brief morning meeting using an acting game called "Build the scene." I silently start doing an action. Students have to figure out the scene/setting and silently join up front and contribute. Example: I started acting like I'm putting groceries into a cart, others walked up and start acting the same, but they don't say anything. I'm thinking this can go great with creating characters, setting, for writing a narrative. And sorry, Shelby. Went through 3 or so font colors. LOL

Doug- That would be good for characters. I do something similar for vocabulary. I call it Tableaux. Kids have to basically charades a vocab word and the others need to figure out what the word is. I think your next step would be to find ways to get the kids starting the movement instead of you

Thomas: Agreed. It was a first day thing, so I had to model. I also have to be able to have strict expectations so it doesn't get out of control. Though, it only really affects attitude, because characters' movement can reflect their emotion, characteristics (like confident/shy, etc.) But, at least for students who can't come up with anything, it's a good start.

Doug - What age? Setting good expectations off the bat is important, but they take control of that fairly quickly too. If it's entertaining but challenging that takes care of a bunch of the screwing around. Then you just gotta watch the few.

Thomas: 4th grade. A good bunch, really. The quiet part helps a lot too. What do you mean by "challenging that?"

Doug- If it's hard but fun then they'll be ok. That like it

Thomas: Gotcha.

Thomas: Even the miming bit is good to get a feel for their character. I have to thank my drama experience in 9th grade for this. "Getting into the role" can change and really conceptualize character through movement than just sitting around thinking.

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Doug- I'm doing a reflective teaching thing with my district and I have to record a 10 minute lesson when I'm sitting with another teacher I trust and we're gonna watch it and take it apart and look for ways to get better and stuff. I shouldn't do something special for this, right? Just pick a random lesson and go for it?

Shelby - pick a lesson you like, but you know needs work.

Doug- That's a good idea. We're starting fractions stuff so...it's basically right there for me

Sarah - I would pick something that's "a regular lesson" in the sense that it's similar enough to what you do every day that you'll be able to apply the feedback to teaching more broadly

Steph: I agree that you should not do something "special." Make it real.

Shelby - I LOVE FRACTIONS. I have all sorts of fractions activities and things. Huge thing in MS is competence in fraction arithmetic. Graph paper is \*perfect\* for getting students to draw shapes that actually have some hope of being the same size. I would also recommend the Fraction Thinkbook by Ira Nirenberg. Also check out Life of Pi by Singh - Pigarden (or something like that on Tw, Mathematician's Lament is another good book.

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Sarah - upper elementary teachers, how do you make your kids tolerate picture books? Trying to use them for music has been a bust so far but I want so badly to be able to do cool things with them!

Katie - I read picture books every week! My students really get into it and I teach 4th grade. I use CAFE strategies when I do this. I do not read the whole picture book in one sitting. I break it into parts to last the whole week. At the break point, I put a cliff hanger, make a sentence frame

with that cliff hanger and then have each and every student use the sentence frame to answer what they think will happen next. They really enjoy it and come to hate the cliff hangers. I've read books as young as Chrysanthemum. I also choose some really mature picture books such as Pink and Say.

Sarah - very cool! I'd love to break into parts but sadly I only see my students once per week (music) so they would likely not remember the plot week to week. Mike - You'd be surprised. Get someone to document it,

Katie - Something you could do for that is to split it up for time intervals. Read the book for 5 minutes and then do another activity and come back to it. I have done this as well. It breaks up mini-lessons. Doug- This is a good modification.

Doug- Must be because I read so well. ;~p Do the students not sit for them with you?

Sarah - they sit! But they roll their eyes and make comments and generally just aren't into it. They've told me they'd rather do boring worksheets...

Doug- That's super strange. Even 5th graders normally like being read to. I know you're picking good books. Did you shout at them to be quiet? And make Scary Face?

Veronica- I wonder if you could turn it into a mystery, or have them vote on which one you read based on minimal info, like; a girl goes on an adventure and dragons are involved, or something just to get them invested, or have them bring in some books. Maybe have a few key words that mean something, like a movement. Every time the word happy is read, move to a new seat, or stand on one foot or something... To add on to you, my dear friend, since this is a music class....you can add in the hand motions for do, re, mi when reading aloud.

Sarah - haha I don't shout at them, but yes lots of Scary Face with the big ones. And reminders that those who are not following expectations can expect a consequence. Voting might help for some of them - this year's grade 5 is super tough at my school so maybe it's just something to wait out and try to get grade 4 on board.

Thomas: For me, I use realistic fiction w/real life issues. I'm just a big fan of Jacqueline Woodson and how she approaches racism and bullying makes it very understandable for children. Maybe, you can do a running soundtrack using the musical instruments in the room during a read-aloud of a picture book?

Sarah - yes, trying to do a soundscape (soundtrack but less noisy for the sake of noise). They think all the books I've tried are "lame". I've tried everything from biographies (one about Charlie Parker) to folk tales to random stories with funny plots but they're either too silly or just make noise rather than relate it to what they hear. My younger kids do fantastic with the same premise

Doug- Seuss. Always Seuss. Literally any point you want to make can be made with Seuss.

Sarah - my kids last year made me cry with an amazing soundscape of My Many Colored Days... second graders rocked it. Which is why I'm so frustrated with the older kids not handling it.

Shelby - Any chance you can record the younger kids and play it for the older ones? Maybe they aren't really getting what you're asking them to do, and seeing other kids accomplish will help them see it as achievable.

Sarah - this might be good. I have school iPads, so it's definitely doable. It'll be about choosing words carefully so it doesn't come off as "the little kids can do this why can't you"

Shelby - You're nicer than me. I'd say exactly that and get called to the principal's office.

Mike - I'd like to know more about your soundscapes. I have the equipment to do them, just need a few ideas. Have you used conductive playdoh?

Sarah - I try to use a book that suggests specific sounds (either explicitly using onomatopoeia or more generally) and have kids find a way to make each sound. I usually show them a clip of a Foley artist first, and guide them through a short one by modeling (walking could be a slow drum beat, getting faster when they run, a big thump when someone falls, etc.). Usually they run with it and a few kids take the lead in getting their classmates involved and helping everyone know what sounds should work where. I like this. This was my goal in movie production, etc. I just didn't get around to it. Have you seen Bare Conductive's Touch board?

Heard of it... haven't played with one yet. I've been trying to figure out when to break out my Makey Makey for music making but there hasn't been an appropriate moment yet with my classes this year Just do it.

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Mike - Can't stay long, my computer's on it's last bits and bytes but .. I'm working on e-textiles with my TAG (GT/Gifted) Students. We're learning to sew while discussing relationships. I'm hoping to introduce weaving to them. Second grade is working on structures. We've built plenty of structures and are working on adding in geometric patterns.

In previous years, I've used Ozobots to introduce coding, I do a lot of primary source picture analysis, and a few more things. Although I've taken a few arts integration programs, it's a little weak for me.

Thomas: That's really cool that you're teaching how to sew! Though, what do you mean discussing relationships?

Good question ... I'm still figuring out the intent. It's a scripted curriculum - I think the focus is look at our relationships with one another, as well as our tools, fabrics, history/traditions / culture, etc)

Thomas: Awesome! So using sewing as an introduction to all sorts of stuff. That student engagement though....

Connected sewing to *Fox in Socks* one year. Wife came in and taught my kids to sew socks. It was great. Fine motor skills, counting, focus, new skill, watching my tough guy football grrr boys bent over working with a needle.

I can picture it Doug, I want to teach sewing in younger classes. I think they can do it. Something simple, then have them sew a single LED circuit into it.

Yes, student engagement is pretty solid, I'm not sure if they're really making the connections. I think they'd rather sew. They're struggling with it. But getting it. We just introduced circuitry, we're moving into weaving and going to end up with Lilypads / arduino coding.

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Sarah - the biggest thing with Arts Integration is TRY! And ask arts teachers (or artsy teachers) to collaborate. I LOVE when classroom teachers ask me if I can integrate music with things (as long as they aren't pushy, rude, or super last minute about it).

Katie- I just keep cutting you off, Doug! I love that our music teacher has suggested a Native American music unit since we are currently studying this in class.

Doug- I love my music teacher, I should take advantage of having her around like this more.

Mike - Agreed. I'm in the library so I have similar issues. Mine is usually time. If I had more of it, I'd do more AI. **Never enough time!** Mike - Agreed. And with one of me for 950+ children ... at least I'm in one school this year rather than two.

Katie - Does this color work? Mike - It does yep!! (Below: What are Glad Strategies?)

Katie - I use a lot of GLAD strategies. So I write songs that pertain to the topics we are studying. GLAD strategies are used for students who are language learners. There's a lot of visuals, songs, and color coding. Photographs and drawn pictures to show what things look like in real life, etc

Mike - Time for me to run, it's approaching 11. . Thanks for a good chat

Shelby - Thanks everybody! Off to go sooth the tyrant who is resisting bedtime with all sorts of tiny fury.