

Slide 1:

Introduction of myself. Brief bio.

Slide 2: The Problem:

There is a growing trend in schools to polarize every aspect of education, which leads to students feeling overwhelmed and not taking an active role in their education. Students think they will never use the knowledge again and don't feel like they have any ownership in what they are doing. This leads to kids who are unengaged, uncaring, and uneducated.

Slide 3: How do we solve this problem?

To be able to solve this problem I had to start by asking myself and the learners in these project some essential questions.

Like the following:

How can we improve acquisition of knowledge? Can we help students to make connections between subjects? Can we offer RELEVANT and RIGOROUS real-life learning scenarios?

How can we increase student engagement?

To be able to answer these questions and address the problem I created a Target audience.

Slide 4: The Challenge

These teachers work in a Title I school and they came from a variety of subjects areas (the ones highlighted here were math, science, and art) and taught a variety of student achievement levels from basic to advanced in grades 9-12. They were all experienced teachers having taught several years in their particular content areas. Their environment was a title 1 needs improvement school, the student body was primarily African-American and came from extremely low socio-economic backgrounds.

Slide 5: The Challenge

The target audience took a survey to see their thoughts on issues. I challenged my target audience to create a solution to the polarization mentioned in the problem by creating interdisciplinary units. The challenge I presented to my learners, the teachers, in my environment was to have them engage students in cross-curricular instruction to see if the acquisition of knowledge and student involvement can be improved by teaching lessons in this manner. The concepts in their core classes of math, science, history, literature, and their elective classes would have to cross-disciplines. That meant the teachers had to create a solution that allowed students to see the connections between the classes they took and the information they learned in those classes.

Slide 6: The Solution

After looking at the results of the surveys and discussing them the teachers decided to create a thematic unit across subject areas. They decided on a theme that had to be covered in each of their classes according to the state standards for curriculum. The theme they decided on was the human body, concentrating on the head. Once they had decided on the theme to be taught they looked at their calendars and figured out the best week for each of them to cover the

thematic unit in each of their classes at the same time. The teachers goal was to submerge the students into seeing one thematic unit from all sides. By teaching about the human head in each of their classes all day the students would be submersed in knowledge about the head, which would improve knowledge acquisition, and also see how their various classes relate to and connect with each other, which would improve relevance and rigor. Teachers also added rigor and relevance by incorporating a variety of technology into the curriculum with the use of Web 2.0 tools like prez!: which they used to create interactive lectures, sketchfu: which allowed the students to create visuals about what they were learning, and study island: which helped them study and expose them to more curriculum. Students used ipads, phones, and netbooks to complete these assignments. Google Docs also allowed them to create common documents that they used across classes.

Slide 7: Results

The teachers planned their unit together. They came up with a common vocabulary list, each making their own contributions. They decided what standards could be represented for each of their classes and where on the calendar it would be beneficial for them each to teach the unit together. Each Teacher engaged their students with the standards from their particular class but they used the common theme of the human face or human head.

Each class had a product to show as part of their solutions to the unit. The spanish class made sugar skulls, the math class artworks of faces re-created using coordinates, art class did grid drawings of the human face, and science discussed the bones, muscles, and organs of the human head. In each of these classes they had their own unit tests to cover their individual standards as well. While there was noway to determine if student scores actually improved teaching this way, teachers agreed that student involvement was up and overall passing grades seemed to be higher than in previous units not taught this way. Each of the classes displayed their products in the halls at school and the school website.

As the solution reached it's final stage the reaction from the target audience and other's viewing was overall positive. The teachers enjoyed the fact that their subjects were being discussed in other rooms, that students were verbally making the connections between the courses when asked questions in class and seemed more engaged during class discussions. Other teachers viewing whose classes were not involved in the unit study were discussing ways to involve their classrooms next year for a similar unit. The students enjoyed the unit because they felt like they could concentrate on one area and learned many aspects of that area.

Slide 8: The Research

Educating students in a global and integrated society, require that educators take a new approach to effectively preparing students for both secondary education and life in the work force. Students learn in entirely different ways. Access to new technologies and the continuing global interconnection of societies have opened new and exciting doors for the student. This literature will review three separate education philosophies that could be integrated into modern art education were presented and evaluated. Small learning communities, interdisciplinary

education, and project-based learning all have a unique and interesting view on how to effectively reach students. All three philosophies brought both advantages and disadvantages to the educator's classroom.

The final step took each of these and showed how they were integrated into education. The common thread was collaboration between disciplines. When educators across all disciplines began to work together, the ability to promote significant growth in a student's success was immeasurable. Whether it was through interdisciplinary instruction, small learning communities, or project-based learning, the key to each being successful was communication between everyone involved. Small learning communities encouraged relationship building between student and educator, which promoted communication. Interdisciplinary instruction allowed communication between subject teachers when planning thematic units. While project-based learning allowed for communication between educators, students, and the community. This level of communication included: parents, educators, administrators, and even the community. When the community banded together to promote change in education the results were immediate.

Slide 9: Conclusion

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