

Art Integration Paper
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The art form I will be using in my Art Integration lesson is a RAFT. The acronym RAFT stands for Role, Audience, Format, and Topic. A RAFT is a strategy that integrates reading, writing, and/or the arts in a non-traditional way. These art strategies ask students to take what they have read or what they have learned in their subject matter and create a new product that illustrates their depth of understanding.

I have implemented RAFTs into my lessons in different subject areas, and the students really enjoy it as they see themselves as having a choice in the way they demonstrate their end product and having control of their own learning. By doing so, the students have a vested interest and a desire to perform well on the project as they are able to express themselves and their learning in a way that's meaningful to them. I chose the topic of math and more specifically equations for my art integration lesson. I do so because I have taught equations for a number of years, and the students appear to be able to complete the necessary steps on paper. However, when asked to explain why they do the steps they are doing, the students have a difficult time. In order to create deeper and meaningful understanding, I believe the use of RAFTs will allow this to occur. Whether writing, drawing, creating a song or dance, one cannot hide his/her true understanding of the concept.

My personal beliefs of incorporating the arts into the classroom, especially math, is that STEAM education aids in bridging the gap between ethnic and gender gaps sometimes found in the science and mathematical fields. By implementing this type of learning, teachers will be able to impact students' learning by building upon their understanding of Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics, and by encouraging students to be competitive in the economic and global society. I believe in doing so, students will be prepared to think deeply and have the necessary twenty-first skills needed to be competitive in the global society. In addition,

I believe the creativity and the arts have really gone by the wayside in education as the focus shifted more and more to standardized testing. However, when I incorporated the arts into my lessons, as well as giving the students the ability to choose the way in which they want to demonstrate their learning, I have seen an increase in excitement and a vested interest in the content.

I have incorporated art into the classroom to create multidisciplinary lessons, discussions or activities. I've done this through multiple ways and through multiple mediums. The one I will be using for this art integration lesson is the RAFT. The major objective of RAFTs is to encourage students and teachers to gain a deeper level of understanding of topics covered in a collaborative environment through the gathering of evidence and the solving of open-ended challenging problems with multiple solutions. Students learn best when they are engaged in what they are learning; and students learn best when they have the opportunity to explore, discuss, examine, and experiment with new concepts and skills. STEAM education incorporates all of these learning strategies in a hands-on group setting where students have the chance to practice these skills in a meaningful and interesting way. In STEAM learning, students are encouraged to take risks without the fear of failure in a stress-free and reassuring environment. For STEAM education to be successful, learning-conducive instructional strategies and educational practices should be introduced as project expectations including fostering curiosity, accepting failure, evolving and growing as a learner and learning in a community.

Connecting to multiple content areas, seems to be second nature when implementing STEAM lessons. STEAM is the incorporation of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics. When a project is started in math, like the RAFTs for example, the student will be assuming a new role and will be speaking, writing, creating, or coding to an audience they

normally wouldn't have on an open-ended, thought-provoking topic of the subject matter. When I have seen the students engage in RAFTs, they will ask me if they can bring/look at their other subject materials to help them create their RAFTs. Oftentimes, the category descriptions of the RAFT will dive into another subject area they are learning or leaned. Thus, encompassing multi-subject areas and creating a deeper understanding of their learning and the well-rounded education of the student.