Arts Integration

Elizabeth Lundeen

Endeavor STEM Teaching Certificate Project

Arts Integration

Art Form

The art form I would like to integrate into my third grade lesson on weather is painting. I chose this art form because my students do not get to experience the visual arts because we lack an art specialist for third grade. I often integrate the dramatic arts, music and digital arts into my own curriculum, but have neglected to pull out the paints and paintbrushes for my students. A focus of my Title 1 school site is technology and we have a Chromebook for every student. Between school and home, my students spend a large portion of their day in front of a screen. A computer provides immediate stimuli response and gratification often leading to sensory overload, whereas painting encourages calm, creative thinking, focus and concentration. Unfortunately, many of my students come from challenging and chaotic home situations. Painting can be a sanctuary and stress reliever for these children. It is a soothing, quiet activity that can provide therapy for many students.

Lesson Enhancement

My Final Arts Integration Lesson is Earth Science: Clouds Can Predict the Weather! In this lesson, students explore how by observing clouds, we can predict the weather. Students learn that clouds have particular shapes, color and texture which correspond to varying weather patterns. Similiarly, an artist uses elements such as shape, color and texture to express feelings and ideas. I was thrilled when I discovered ARTSEDGE: Lessons for Elementary School and found “Exploring Weather Conditions Through Painting” (Arieli-Chai &Garran, 2018). In this lesson, “students will learn about how weather influences culture, daily life, and mood by examining paintings depicting different types of weather. Students will demonstrate their understanding by painting a picture depicting a particular weather condition” (Arieli-Chai

&Garran, 2018). The essential question is: How can different weather conditions be depicted in painting? Students learn about the elements of art and then identify and analyze the depiction of weather in famous works of art such as, *Paris Street in the Rain*, *Danube Landscape*, the *Hay Wain*, and the *Starry Night*. Students observe these paintings and discuss with their groups questions such as: What kind of feeling or mood does the painting generate? How does weather express emotion? How are the colors used to convey light or darkness? Next, students use watercolor paints to compose their own painting of a weather/landscape scene based on their own particular experiences. Finally, students write an artist's statement explaining their techniques and what factors influenced their work. I think using these works of art could inspire and motivate my students to create their own masterpieces as they learn how cloud observations can predict weather patterns. They may find similarities, such as texture and color. They may find differences, such as practical weather predictions and the soothing emotion of soft rain.

Interdisciplinary Context

An interdisciplinary approach used in my classroom that combines the hands-on nature of science, technology, engineering, arts and math (STEAM) can result in more motivated students who are ready to creatively tackle challenges and engage in a growth mindset. Subjects are interwoven, so it is easier for students to learn material in depth (Gilchrist, 2018). According to Gilchrist (2018), "The world itself is multidisciplinary – there are no clear-cut divisions, so students learn to assess problems the same way they'll need to in college and their careers." Art that is woven into multiple content areas creates deeper connections and can spark student interest. As a teacher, I am excited and am feeling rejuvenated by this idea! I feel I can diversify more of my teaching methods and meet guidelines in more engaging and creative ways. For example, in science, my students make observational sketches, diagrams or models of the life

cycle of plants and animals. In social studies, my third graders research and design a Native American dwelling during our Native American unit. During a fraction unit, students make pizza box fractions allowing each student to create their personal size pizza using paper, buttons, string or fun foam. A unit in language arts can culminate with a collaborative digital storyboard of a scene students read about in their Book Club. According to Goodman (2016), art can add content and critical thinking to interdisciplinary STEM pedagogy. Through art students can make connections between unrelated things, people, or ideas. Art can lead students' imagination to create more possibilities and to think about consequences of our actions that might not be apparent otherwise by just reading a textbook (Goodman, 2016).

I believe students who are involved in art forms, such as painting, gain a lifelong appreciation of art and learn art can be another way to express the sciences. By teaching children this skill, we are opening them up to an entire world of artistic expression linked to the more calculated expressions of math, science and engineering. Through their intimate involvement with the act of creation, we also give students a closer connection to humanity. For instance, observing the night sky in Van Gogh's *Starry Night* can remind them that the natural world exists outside of human endeavors.

References

Arieli-Chai, H., & Garran, D. (2018). *ARTSEDGE: Lessons for Elementary School.* Retrieved from ARTSEDGE: https://artsedge.kennedy-center.org/educators/lessons/grade-3-4/Exploring_Weather#Instruction

Gilchrist, L. (2018). *5 Themes for STEAM.* Retrieved from Skyward.com: https://www.skyward.com/discover/blog/skyward-blogs/skyward-executive-blog/april-2017/full-steam-ahead

Goodman, S. (2016, December 13). *Arts Integration: 7 Ways Art Supports Interdisciplinary Work.* Retrieved from Edutopia: https://www.edutopia.org/blog/7-ways-art-supports-interdisciplinary-work-stacey-goodman