

The Arts in STEM: Advancing Meaningful Integration - Arts Integration Paper

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Art Form

The art forms that I have selected to enhance a lesson are drawing (Visual Arts- VA:Cn10.1.3.a Develop a work of art based on observations of surroundings) and creating animations (Media Arts- MA:Pr.4.1.3 Practice combining varied academic, arts, and media forms and content into unified media artworks, such as animation, music, and dance.).

I've chosen drawing as one of the art forms to enhance my seed growth lesson, as I think drawing the stages of a seed germinating and growing will provide students with an added level of engagement in the lesson. Many of the students in my class are quite artistic and enjoy drawing, and when given the option on assignments, most of them choose to include drawings in order to demonstrate their understanding.

I've also chosen animation as the other art form to include, as the lesson was built around a coding lesson for a previous Endeavor course. I hadn't given any thought to specific arts integration at the time, as I was previously unaware of the existence of the National Core Arts Standards. However, as the lesson outcome is to produce a stop motion animation, it makes sense to include a media arts producing standard. As a former technology integration coach, creating animations always provided a heightened level of engagement and allowed students to showcase their creativity.

Lesson Enhancement

In terms of enhancement, by intentionally including the arts standards through drawing and animation, it broadens the transdisciplinary nature of the lesson to incorporate even more aspects of STEAM. Students' scientific observation skills should be enhanced through careful drawing of the seed,

along with the stages of germination and growth, and hopefully their drawing skills will also demonstrate improvement, through repeated drawing of the seed and its growth.

I think integrating the arts into lessons and the overall curriculum can be a powerful motivator for students who struggle with writing, as it still allows them to participate and demonstrate their understanding of a concept. In my experience, drawing is also a calming exercise for third graders and helps to develop focus and mindfulness by being in the moment and really concentrating on turning what you are observing into a drawing. When my class practiced 3D drawing during our Unit of Inquiry into structures, their concentration on the video lesson was unlike anything I'd seen up to that point in the school year. Regardless of their drawing competency, students were focused and engaged in trying to do their best.

Interdisciplinary context

Drawing can be used to create interdisciplinary lessons and activities as it is another outlet to demonstrate thinking and understanding. Sketching out ideas in the plant growth lesson can be brought into ELA through perspective story writing, with students describing and explaining what would happen if they were a seed being planted. As the plant grows, drawing daily observations and recording the amount of growth could be used in a line plot in math. More detailed drawings of plant could be labeled with the correct scientific terms, which would be more authentic than having students simply fill in blanks on a worksheet.

On the whole, drawing can connect to multiple content areas. Drawing can be used to help plan and solve math problems. Drawing in science lessons can help develop observational skills. In social studies, science, and language arts, drawing, through visual note taking when researching or reading can also be beneficial. Everyone has different strengths and weaknesses. Having a high population of English as an Additional Language students in my class means that they can still demonstrate their learning and understanding without necessarily having to write things down.