

Session 3 Transcript: Kelly Hanning

- Hello everyone. My name is Kelly Hanning, and I am the art teacher in The Gates Chili Central School District here in Rochester, New York. Today I'm gonna be telling you about ways to integrate ELA visual art and theater into a cohesive unit of instruction. So, I'll be giving you five steps today for integrating the three into an authentic interdisciplinary unit. And as we're thinking about these strategies today, please keep in mind in your own head, how these strategies can be implemented in your classroom, regardless of what discipline you are, think about as we're going through each one, how does this relate to me in my instruction personally and for my students? I'm gonna start off by showing you one of the end results so that you can see where we're gonna be going throughout this presentation and the final result of this integrated process was a transformative mask, where students created a front mask of who they are today and an inside mask of who they will become. So this is where we are going. I'll show you the five steps on how to get there. So step one, in our classroom, we had to think about what the theme of the Broadway musical "The Lion King" is? So this is the lens I'm gonna be using for my project today. And my presentation today is our study of "The Lion King." So in order for students to think about the theme, or any theme from a Broadway musical, I use song lyric analysis. And that's just one way that you can access different modes of instruction is through music, through reading through writing. You can refer to my handout on Howard Gardner's "Theory of Multiple Intelligences" to get a little bit more background on multiple modes of instruction in learning, But what I did was for students to understand the idea of Simba and his identity, and how it can relate to them, is by listening to the song he lives in you he lives in me. So the beginning of the unit, students were thinking about what is Simba's journey? Why is it important? And how will they learn about Simba's journey? So step one, learning about Simba's identity and who lives in him through song lyric analysis. And step two is internalizing that so how is it relevant for individual student experience? Students were then asked to think about who lives within themselves. So who are they today? Step two, is beyond relating it to your students. How are they gonna show that they've been relating this idea and theme from theater to their own ideas in the art room with their writing with their creating? So students were asked to think about you can refer to my handout, who lives in them. So after listening and analyzing to the song who lives in you, students sketching, listening, reading, students underlining and circling some of the important messages in the song. Students were able to relate that to themselves and think about, "Okay, so Simba thinks about who "he is in the song. "How can I show who I am?" Students are asked to brainstorm things all about themselves, about their school, about their family and their interests, and then turn that into a visual representation on the back of that handout and show in a mask their identity in who lives in them. So this is just step two and with that students were able to connect the physical mask making and the idea of masks to the masks of the the musical "The Lion King." So students were then asked to look at two different masks side by side. So we're going back to the theater aspect of it and looking at Mufasa's mask and Simba's mask and the differences between them. So how do we know that Mufasa is the good guy? How do we know that Scar is the bad guy? Well, Scar's mask is pointy and spiky, and there's angles in it and it's darker. Whereas Mufasa's

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mask is round and it's balanced, mirroring that circle of life. The facial expression is not as angled out, it's a lot more relaxed and a lot more peaceful. So, students for step three, were relating this to their own experience, not only who they are, but who they will become. So for students to think about the second theme besides who I am within my community in the "Lion King," who do we become in our community, so students were listening to and analyzing the song, I just can't wait to be king. I have an example of student work where they listened to it for the first time, second time around, did sketches and notes in the third time around, but then add drawings and underline and anything else they needed to in order to really absorb the song and understand what that song was about. So after realizing that that song is about Simba's character arc and who he becomes, as an adult students had to think about, well, who will I become what can I just not wait for? So this is going back to step two of relating this to your own students experience. Once you have the theme, your student experience and then how will they show what they've learned through their art making. So students had to think about their future careers, they had to think about their future style, what they just can't wait for, something they're looking forward to what kind of person they want to become they had to describe their life goals. And once they got to that point, they were able to then flip that handout around where students were able to draw and sketch a second mask showing who they will become. So again, it's mirroring those ideas in the Lion King where Simba has one mask in the beginning when he's a child, like when he's a cub. And then he has a brand new mask at the end when he's an adult. So that difference in just stage makeup when he's a child to the mask when he's an adult, will mirror that idea of I'll show this again, who I am now and then the difference of who I will become in the end. So, students were able to brainstorm and sketch these two ideas entities and these two ideas while using song lyric analysis, costume analysis, stage analysis and listening to music looking at the theater design, and then internalizing that and creating something to show how it's relevant to them and what they've learned. So moving forward from the brainstorming process, I wanted to bring in one more piece of visual art and I connected this to the Pacific Northwest transformative masks, and these masks open up and turn into different identities. So one, you'll notice as a bird, when you open up the beak, it has a whole different identity on the inside. So it's again this other idea of identity in showing who we are in more than one way within theater within personal student art work and within the greater art world. Step Four will say, "how will we make learning visible?" And that ties directly into step five which is reflection. So for example, here is another mask that I wanted to show off. So a student is showing that they've learned their identity, they've learned how to show us who they are with their artwork in their pastel in their coloring in their painting in their use of symbolism. And they've learned how to show their future identity as well. So we have step one who lives in me and step two, who I will become, and students were also asked to think about what these masks mean. So this one particular student says, "I just can't wait to be a teacher "because I want to be able to help others around me. "And teachers can eat food whenever they want. "I can also write on the smart board." So this student is showing who she is now, and who she will become when she's a teacher. So I'm gonna show

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you another example and this is by another student who was able to use yard as a manipulative to help communicate his concept of being on a football team. And so here he is as a football player. And in the future, he is a football announcer. So who lives in me who I am today, and who I will become? Well, I just can't wait for and this students reflection says, "I just can't wait to be a football coach "because it is my favorite sport. "I would make up all the plays and I would always win." And finally, we have another students here. And you can also see students were able to embellish and add to their masks as another way of communicating their ideas. So if it's gonna be colorful, what is that gonna say? If it's gonna be spiky what would that say about your mask? If it's gonna be interactive and manipulative with extra playful things on the end what can that say about your mask and who you are? So this student has who she is now. And then you open it up and who see will become. And this student says, "I just can't wait to be a computer teacher "because I can know all the websites and how to get in. "I also will know how to type really fast, "I feel like it would be hard work." So, in a summary for these steps on how to integrate the multiple strategies of ELA and theater and visual art, students first think about the theme of the show, in our case, "The Lion King" theme that we talked about was identity and who we are today, who we will become. And second, we learned about how we can relate this to ourselves. So I used song lyric analysis, costume analysis, mask analysis, and individual reflection to teach this concept to my students. And step three, relating it to their own personal experience by having them think about many different ideas, pick the ones that inspired them the most and show those ideas in their sketches of their masks who they are and who they will become. And next, students had to make that learning visible. So they had to physically make that mask that showed step one and step two of their identity, who they are and who they will become. And they had to reflect and create a write up, telling me about the concept behind their mask. So all of these things come together to create an authentic learning experience for students that integrate all of these different disciplines like theater, and similar to ELA strategies of reading and listening to music for the song lyric analysis and then showing their learning in a visible way using traditional art techniques of drawing, painting and reflecting and writing at the end. So, I hope that you can take some of these strategies back to your classroom. And I would love to see some of your ideas in the future. Thank you so much for being here in my presentation.