

The Shakespeare Channel

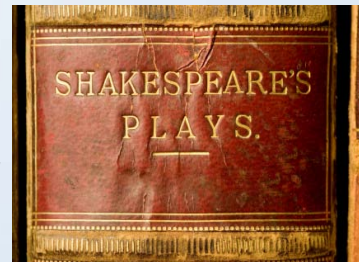
A Fully-Developed Interdisciplinary Project Using the Power of Technology to Increase Learning for Grades 6 through 12



Overview

The Shakespeare Channel is an interdisciplinary project that uses technology to broaden your students' learning experiences. It immerses your class into the life and times of William Shakespeare, fosters a deeper, richer understanding of his works, as well as engages and encourages your students' natural creativity. This project involves students in a simulation of launching a new cable television station; The Shakespeare Channel. Students work cooperatively to plan and implement programming on the cable channel, based on research and their understanding of a Shakespearean play. In addition to addressing performance standards in Reading, Writing, Listening and Speaking, this

project provides interdisciplinary activities that address performance standards in Social Studies, Mathematics, Science and Art.



Project Scope

Traditionally, teaching Shakespeare has been the sole responsibility (and privilege) of the English Language Arts teacher. However, experts agree that an interdisciplinary approach to learning can give students a richer understanding and increase their interest in a topic, as well as provide context for learning. One of the better ways to do this is to have several teachers from different content areas collaborate in presenting this project.

The curriculum scope is presented in three phases:



Phase One:

Introduction: Students are introduced to the project and the play (or plays) on which the class will focus. Students will demonstrate their understanding of major themes on the play (or plays) by creating multi media "movie trailers".

Phase Two: Body of Work: The main part of the project provides a menu of activities for students to demonstrate learning. Each activity is based on real-world television programming. Examples of activities include creating a budget for a show, producing a "news" show, developing an animated series, and programming a weekly schedule. Some of the activities are content specific while others are more generic and can be applied to more than one content area. Teachers can assign one or more of the activities or allow students, working cooperatively, to choose among activities. Each activity addresses a specific learning objective.

Phase Three: Conclusion: The culminating phase of the project is the "launching" of the new station. Students can showcase their work in front of a real audience.



About Project Based Learning

Project-based learning is a comprehensive approach to instruction. As students participate in engaging, multi-faceted investigations, they develop an array of interdisciplinary skills. Project-based learning allows teachers to create tasks whose complexity and openness mimic problems in the real world. Students collaborate with peers to tackle real-world problems.



Key Components

The key components to project-based learning are clear objectives, student autonomy, investigative activities, and real-world results:

- Teachers clearly define the instructional objectives: The first step to creating your own project is to define your objectives. Knowing where the project is going is more important to reaching the destination than any other single variable.
- Students direct their own work and take control over their own learning: Students work independently as well as participate in flexible cooperative groupings. Rather than divide students by abilities, allow students with similar interests to work cooperatively. As the range of materials and interests of the students develop and expand, so will the need for different kinds of collaborations and group interactions.
- Students conduct multi-faceted investigations: Students use authentic tools (including technology), seek resources, and solve problems in response to an overall challenge. Students learn that knowing how to find information and making connections is more important than memorizing the facts. They use primary source documents, conduct experiments, construct models, and conduct interviews and surveys.
- Students create real-world products: Students make choices about how to demonstrate learning and are accountable for the choices they make. Products can include multimedia presentations, letters, posters, brochures, newsletters, maps, videos, and more.



The Shakespeare Channel is an example of project-based learning with all of the above components. You can use this project as a model to create your own projects based on specific content and curriculum by adapting many of the activities.

Orientation on Project Based Learning Summary

- Establish an Essential Question for the group to answer.
- Teacher laptops or desktops used for research on the essential question. How to training is in real time and in context.
- Grouping; 4 to 5 Teacher Students working towards the same essential question.
- Teachers will experience Cooperative Learning using different strengths of colleagues for final product.
- Inquiry Based Learning exercised to reflect research and decisions and answers to the essential question.
- Differentiated Learning; how each student individually shows understanding with final product presentation.
- Engaging thematic activities through collaboration, creativity and decision making.
- Final Activity Product created on the essential question to present at the end of the day.

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