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CELEBRATING OUR SENIOR STUDENTS!

GRADE 8 &
R SMART

WE LOVE THE ARTS



ROCK ON CONCERT

INTRODUCTION TO A SPECIAL PROJECT # 1:

For AITs and Grade 8 Teachers ONLY

WHAT'S HAPPENING?



GREETINGS ARTS INTEGRATION TEACHERS

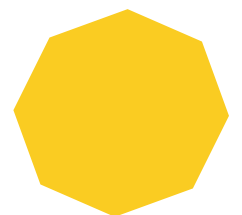
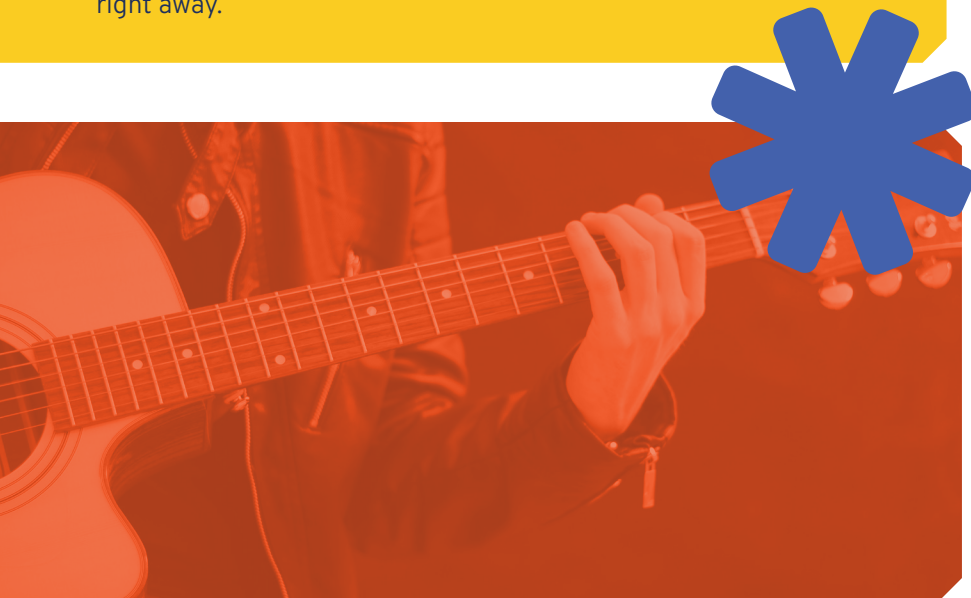
WHETHER you are a classroom, itinerant or planning time teacher, this explanation is being shared with you, so we are all on the same page before we get involved in many months of prep for a PBL Project event for **GRADE 8 STUDENTS ONLY!** We are excited at creating such an innovative, creative way to collaborate at many levels! We hope you will become excited too! Buckle up - **YOU ARE IN FOR A RIDE!**

UP AND COMING PROJECT

MANY of the music lessons leading up to transitioning to Dance in the grade 8 **ARTSAROUND** program this year, seemed to all include presenting or performing. There are only so many lessons that allow for that to happen and so many times you can organize an audience. A PBL project is being introduced to you through this article for both the itinerant and Gr 8 classroom teachers, to provide ample time to help your students present a powerful performance...in a few months! We all know that performing is an important part of arts celebrations, yet there is so little time, to rehearse, use props or costumes etc. As I was creating and juggling curriculum expectations for senior kids to enjoy, it occurred to me that this series of lessons do not have to end... right away.

FEEL THE FEAR AND DO IT ANYWAY!

AH-HA...they could continue, when and how this evolves in each school will be left to the AITs and Gr 8 classroom teachers (*depending on their very booked calendars*) and of course-the students-to decide what would work best. However, **WHAT** the students choose to perform is the concern of **ARTSAROUND**, since the reason to perform is to show confidence when performing before their school community, by demonstrating arts curriculum skills through some form of integration. Gr 8 students will demonstrate the skills they learned in the arts, integrating it to real life wherever possible. Not skills they are good at. New skills they have not previously developed. Yes, they **'FEEL THE FEAR AND DO IT ANYWAY!'**





A COLLABORATIVE VENTURE

THIS could be the greatest school community collaborative project **EVER!** Something Grade 8s will remember **FOREVER!** Thank you for being an important player in making this a great success!

This briefing is an outline of the culmination of several **ARTSAROUND** Music lessons taught to all grade 8 students. Below is a list that reminds you what could be included in **WHAT** the Grade 8 kids could perform before a school community audience. **WHEN** and **HOW** will be left up to each school community. The **WHAT** is part of the curriculum, so that is outlined below + the additional ideas from your students matter. While their PBL project is unraveling, dance classes will start. These also provide potential performance possibilities.

Classroom teachers will be introduced to an **ARTSAROUND** PBL project, followed through by you- the AIT. S/he really needs your help as they carve out additional time, each week, for your Gr 8s to plan, collaborate and rehearse. This will only be successful IF the AIT informs Gr 8 teachers every step of the way. Here are a few ideas to consider, but your students will develop it much further-as they should! First, AITs will brainstorm with the class, so everyone is excited! The Gr 8 teacher will be coaching, mentoring and advising too. Below is a quick overview of Music lessons so far....

EXPLORING IDEAS FROM MUSIC LESSONS SO FAR

1. From the **'Evolution of a Song'** lessons, you have content that would work for the students to create a new cup song, with lyrics. In this case the lyrics must be connected to a school topic studied this year in any subject. **(singing)**
2. From the **'Ghostly Affairs'** Lessons, you have access to several suspenseful, funny or whimsical scenes that were rehearsed. **(drama)** Or the actors can write their own scenes and dramatize them for their performance. **(improvisation)**
3. From **'Funky Town Disco/Blast from the Past'** lessons could include anything from **student-produced music, lyric writing, dancing, playing instruments** or suggestions from the kids themselves. After all, it is THEIR PBL Project. They MUST take the lead. They could create their own band if they want.
4. From the **'Havana'** lessons there are many possibilities. **(dance, improv, comedy and more)** Beyond that... depending on when you are planning this 'performance' there are lessons that will continue in both Dance **(movement)** and Drama **(make-believe)** that may inspire them, too. You are aiming for a winter concert (not in December). A January-March timeline might work best. A great way to spark enthusiasm over those dreary winter months.
5. From earlier lessons there may be a song a student / pair/trio would like to sing when they get your approval. Or they may create a song they write and perform. **(song writing)** or a dance for that matter. Or all three? **(total integration)**
6. They can re-create a Drum Circle **(percussion accompaniment)** with audience participating using body percussion or found objects. The possibilities are endless. Just keep in mind that they ALL do need to be assessed for their efforts. A complete PBL Teacher's Guide will be provided for you at the AA website. More about that later. You have a lot to digest here already.



7. Using drums, Orff, percussion and keyboards, they could form a band and play or write songs. **(music integration)** Dancers could accompany them, or actors could dramatize a scene that is directly related to the lyrics of the song. Or all three.
8. Media influencers are content creators who often post their results on social media in the form of YouTubes or reels etc. Some students may be interested in downloading apps to create a new song or background sounds for a few scenes that some of the kids in the class are presenting at the **GRADE 8: WE LOVE THE ARTS: ROCK ON CONCERT!** Many schools also have GarageBand. **(media influencers)**
GarageBand is a tool to record music on several tracks and to mix the tracks. You can add effects to real audio tracks (if you record your singing, your guitar, your piano or similar), or play virtual instruments using a midi keyboard and then let GarageBand synthesize the sounds. A student who is interested in musical productions might find this a great PBL choice. **(music/media producers)**
9. In the best-case scenario, as you generate ideas with them and as they chat with each other, before you give them the PBL Forms to fill in, *(provided for you shortly)* be

sure to encourage them to partner or recruit a classmate who can provide what they need. In other words, encourage the kids to negotiate with their own peers, as you did with them and your Grade 8 teachers. Example: three students want to dance but they want music. So, they collaborate with a classmate who will write and produce a song for the dancers to use?? WOW, now that's **collaboration!**

10. **Words of Caution AITS:** There are students who take 'special lessons' after school, in the arts. Example: dance; gymnastics; piano; singing/choir; theatre workshops; jujitsu or any martial arts etc. There is a chance some of your kids will just try to get you to let them perform what they already do well. **PLEASE** do not agree. The main goal here is for your students to demonstrate courage by going after a new performance idea they are interested in working on, to practice a skill to demonstrate to an audience. A skill that they considered to be weak or non-existent before they started. They will finally be given ample time to perfect it. Self-fulfilment makes every one of us proud! If they do what they know, it is simply entertainment. Counter-intuitive to what we are trying to do!

GRADES 8S R SMART: WE LOVE THE ARTS ROCK ON CONCERT

AT THE END OF THE YEAR Grade 8 Graduation and the school final assembly are different reasons to celebrate. All valid! **"GRADES 8S R SMART: WE LOVE THE ARTS ROCK ON CONCERT!"** is something totally different. Do not confuse it with the Christmas Production, or the Sharing Dance school yard flash mob, or the end of the year Graduation or Award Assemblies. Each has a different reason for existing. This 'special project' performance has been planned to take a moment in time to pay tribute to our senior students, as they are leaving elementary school life.

So, there it is AITs and Gr 8 classroom teachers, too! This will look different in every school BUT only if YOU and your Grade 8 classroom teachers are excited to participate can real-life integration and collaboration happen! Our Grade 8 seniors need to be celebrated all year long-not just at graduation. Leaving this 'celebration' until May or June is TOOO far away. Strike when the iron is hot and keep them curious and passionate now, so the excitement is palpable!



“WE LOVE THE ARTS” Performance should take place over the winter months. (NOT December) The kids may need the Christmas/March Break to work on their PBLs. The days are long, the weather is cold and having a fun afternoon ‘jammin’ and chillin’ is a great break and a chance for the whole school community to honour their senior students as they demonstrate their skills. Declaring how the arts have enriched their lives; made them laugh or cry; encouraged them to be an activist and provide a meaningful service to society; appreciate and enjoy music, singing, dancing, playing instruments; laughing, joking and cheering for each other as they discovered many concepts and skills, they learned in school, are directly connected to life, itself! Yes, **ARTSAROUND** really does integrate with reasons to celebrate at many levels!

COURAGE & CONVICTION

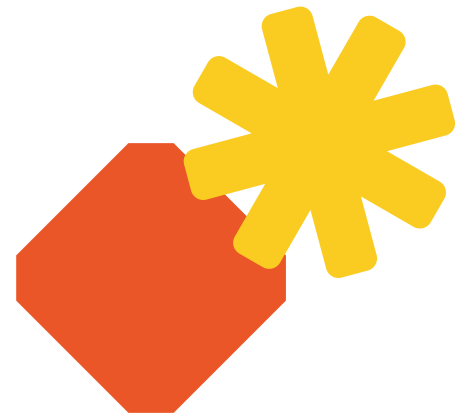
WHEN Grade 8 kids are hyped and collaborating with each other, a positive energy is released. Their brain chemicals do cartwheels. You want them to demonstrate ‘courage’ and ‘conviction’ through this process. It is not a competition. There are no winners or losers. However, it is **FINALLY** a chance for them to develop a project that each student is curious and passionate about. **THAT** is the theme of this performance. Encourage them to get out of their comfort zone. Awareness+ practice + application = a **BIG** pay off! (confidence +courage + a sense of fulfillment) This entire exercise is a great training ground for high school. They will remember what it feels like to summon up enough courage to **“FEEL THE FEAR AND DO IT ANYWAY.”** They need the practice that this project instills in them.

ENTERTAINMENT DUO?

JUST A THOUGHT...you may need an Entertainment Duo who will prepare the after party, as their PBL project. Students interested in Hospitality as a career may consider this PBL. Planning and implementing games, karaoke, dances, food etc. with everyone bringing in a treat. Hot chocolate and marshmallow stations would be yummy! To pull this all together, I will be sending you or including next steps in the actual ArtsAround lesson. It is left up to you, AIT, to forward it to your Gr 8 teachers, or brief them in person. They need to be informed along the way. They are your greatest asset and partners in fun. I am here to coach or trouble shoot or answer any questions. Keep me posted. Know that I am cheering you on, every day when I kick start my laptop and sit down to write another lesson. I can be reached at pat.gough@artsaround.ca if you have any concerns, or issues.

GET FOOTAGE

AM I ASKING A LOT? YES! Are you + your grade 8 teachers capable of making this spectacular- **ABSOLUTELY**. For each of you, it will translate differently and that is what **REALLY** makes it brilliant! Do not forget organizing a camera crew for the “We LOVE the Arts! Rock On Concert: to video, edit, format and publish a great send-off gift for every Gr 8 student to have for years to come: emailed directly to their homes. After the performance, please figure out a way that the students can have an ‘after-party’ back in the classroom or in the school gym, with music, games, singing and dancing activities that they plan and choose. Put all grade 8 classes together for this. Let this experience be all about them! 9 years is a long time to have friends they may not see again. Let them have fun sharing ‘remember when’ stories.





PERFORMING THEIR OWN SWAN SONG

KEEP ENCOURAGING and coaching your students and each other. They have it in them to produce a grand finale: their own swan song. They leave with 9 years of memories from a school where they were viewed as ‘cool seniors’ for the past few years, to soon experience being a ‘minor niner’ in high school. They do not know it yet but that is a big pill to swallow. You are building strength of character, grit, camaraderie, pride, boosting confidence, practice for self-soothing and resilience in this PBL project. They will need it!

Those skills will be put to good use when they begin to deal with life as a secondary teenager. We all know they are leaving an innocent life behind. Let’s give them all they deserve! A fun, boisterous, outrageous party celebrating them for all the years they contributed to their school community. A moment in time-just for THEM! It will be loud, filled with laughter, tears, joy and fun as they say ‘good-bye’ to their school family, while celebrating the ‘arts.... around’ them!

With some real authentic excitement behind this project, it will rub off on them and they will go out of their way to please you...and in turn.... themselves. Remember -it is a journey-not a destination! Enjoy every step along the way! Below is a powerful Grade 8 send-off message. Students who like to make signs, murals, posters or create banners could make sure there is one hanging outside every Grade 8 classroom and even on the school bulletin board or front hall. Each student can add a selfie of them to the banner, plus whatever photos they have as a memory from life in their elementary years at their beloved school! Continue to encourage your students to celebrate each small win that occurs along the way!



“SMALL STEPS TOWARDS BIG DREAMS START TODAY.”