Exploring Rhetoric in Politics through Project Based Learning and Technology:

Curriculum and Appendices

Maklynn St. Clare

De Anza Academy of Technology and the Arts

Author Note

Standards Addressed in Unit

One of the benefits of a cross-curricular project-based approach is that multiple standards can be addressed at once. Some of the Common Core State history Standards addressed in the Exploring Rhetoric in Politics through Project Based Learning and Technology unit include the following: identifying aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose, such as loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts **(RH.6-8.6)**; integrating visual information such as charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps with other information in print and digital text **(RH.6-8.7)**; and distinguishing among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text **(RH.6-8.8).**

In addition, key English language arts standards include: introducing claim(s), acknowledging and distinguishing the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organizing the reasons and evidence logically **(W.8.1.a)**; analyzing the purpose of information presented in diverse media and formats and evaluate the motives behind its presentation (**ELA-Literacy.SL.8.2**); delineating a speaker's argument and specific claims, evaluating the soundness of the reasoning **(ELA-Literacy.SL.8.3)**; and integrating multimedia and visual displays into presentations to clarify information, strengthen claims and evidence, and adding interest **(SL.8.5)**.

Table 1

Rhetoric in Politics Unit Plan

Blocked Language Arts and Social Studies class: 100 minutes

Schedule	Unit Plan	Lesson Details	CA CCSS Addressed
Day 1	Rhetoric lesson: ELA	Students take notes on the three types of rhetoric: Ethos (authority, character, ethics), Logos (logic, reason, statistics), and Pathos (emotions).	
Day 2	Campaign Ads - Whole Group	Journal: Still pictures of campaign banners interpreted for use of each style of rhetorical device	
	Democratic vs Republican	Appropriate websites compiled onto teacher created Sqwirl.com list. Using a notes sheet, students research each side's major views on military, gun control laws, abortion, gay rights, death penalty, taxes, minimum wage, role of government, foreign policy, immigration, and civil rights.	
Day 3	Conservative or Liberal	Discuss additional layer of Right-wing Conservative versus Left-wing Liberal and the extremist possibility of each in different contexts	

		- social, economic and political. Discuss additional layer of Right-wing Conservative versus Left-wing Liberal and the extremist possibility of each in different contexts - social, economic and political. Students will understand that there are many nuances to political preference and someone could be an economically conservative-Democrat or a socially liberal-Republican.	
	Self determination	Students are individually asked to determine the issues that are most important to them and decide their political and social affiliation at this time in their lives.	
Day 4	Campaign Commercial transcripts & videos	Groups of four students assigned to one teacher created Google.doc "The Living Room Candidate: Presidential Campaign Commercials 1952-2012" Directions: identify if the ad is <u>for or against the Republican/Democrat party</u>. Identify <u>at least ONE</u> form of rhetoric (ethos, logos, or pathos) in each ad and explain by inserting a comment. Next, the accompanying video related to the ad	

		transcript is played and students add at least ONE more example of rhetoric. Make sure you use all three forms at least once.	
Day 4-5	Small groups assigned a current political candidate	Group will create a video or live-action campaign ad for or against a candidate. Make sure you include at least three obvious rhetorical devices in your presentation. Explain in the table below how you will use certain words and images in your ad to persuade. This should be about 3 minutes long. See rubric. Political Campaign Focus/Pro or Anti Candidate: Script of commercial: Will you do voice-over narration, acting out a town hall meeting moment, graphics, images, first-person speech, or community interviews? Write a brief script of your ad using Power-Words and adjectives.	
Day 6	Research candidate online on their official websites	Utilize original Sqwirl of teacher approved sites to find official campaign website for their candidate (PBL would suggest student choice here but I wanted class to see a wide variety of candidates. Each group assigned a different campaign ad focus:	

		- Pro Donald Trump / Anti Donald Trump - Pro Ted Cruz / Anti Ted Cruz - Pro Marco Rubio / Anti Marco Rubio - Pro Hillary Clinton / Anti Hillary Clinton - Pro Bernie Sanders / Anti Bernie Sanders - Pro Martin O'Malley / Anti Martin O'Malley	
	Assign group roles	Group Responsibilities: Everyone must participate and explain exactly what they did. This project will be peer/teacher evaluated. Choose and list participation roles below, and at the end of the project each person will comment on how the person succeeded at their role. The Facilitator, The Recorder, The Summarizer, The Presenter Includes: Final Peer Evaluation How successful do you think your overall presentation was? Would you have done anything differently if you had more time or resources? Did viewers clearly understand your Political Campaign Focus/Audience?	

Day 6-8	Create transcript and storyboard	Students write a 3-5 minute campaign ad for or against their assigned candidate, filming storyboard is used to plan where rhetoric will be inserted. Music and narration is encouraged	
Day 8-9	Revision	Students Student groups show they presentation to another small group and gain feedback based on how well they get their specific message across.	
Day 10-11	Final presentation assessment and audience participation	During final Movie Maker, Google Slide, or PowerPoint commercial presentation by student groups, audience identifies types of rhetoric they see. Comments are blogged onto classroom blog Edmodo.com (or Todaysmeet.com, or Google Classroom)	

Appendix A

Project Handout 1

Title: The Living Room Candidate, Presidential Campaign Commercials 1952-2012

Essential Question: What techniques do politicians use to convince you of the validity of their positions?

Directions: Identify if the ad is for or against the Republican/Democrat party. Identify at least ONE form of rhetoric (ethos, logos, or pathos) in each ad and explain by inserting a comment. Once you view the commercial, add at least ONE more example. Make sure you use all three forms at least once.

Example of commercial transcript from site:

2008 OBAMA VS. MCCAIN

"Country I Love," Obama, 2008

OBAMA: I'm Barack Obama.

[TEXT: Barack Obama]

OBAMA: America's a country of strong families, and strong values. My life's been blessed by both. I was raised by a single mom and my grandparents. We didn't have much money, but they taught me values straight from the Kansas Heartland where they grew up. Accountability and self-reliance. Love of country. Working hard without making excuses. Treating your neighbor as you'd like to be treated. It's what guided me as I worked my way up, taking jobs and loans to

make it through college. It's what led me to pass up Wall Street jobs and go to Chicago instead,

helping neighborhoods devastated when steel plants closed. That's why I passed laws moving

people from welfare to work.

[TEXT: Moved people from welfare to work]

OBAMA [and TEXT]: Cut taxes for working families.

OBAMA: Extended health care for wounded troops who'd been neglected.

[TEXT: Extended health care for wounded troops]

OBAMA: I approved this message because I'll never forget those values. And if I have the honor

of taking the oath of office as President, it will be with a deep and abiding faith in the country I

love.

Appendix B

Project Handout 2

Title: Campaign Ads: Pro or Con?

Directions: One person in your team will make a COPY of the Google Doc. S/he will SHARE with their team and allow COMMENTS. The team will decide the group roles and brainstorm ways to create a campaign ad for or against a candidate. Make sure you read directions carefully and be prepared to present a convincing ad!

In your group, you will create a video or live-action campaign ad for or against a candidate. Make sure you include at least three obvious rhetorical devices in your presentation. Explain in the table below how you will use certain words and images in your ad to persuade. This should be about 3 minutes long. See rubric.

Political Campaign Focus/Pro or Anti Candidate: _____

Script of commercial: Will you do voice-over narration, acting out a town hall meeting moment, graphics, images, first-person speech, and/or community interviews? Write a brief script of your ad using Power-Words and exciting adjectives. Identify how you will use Ethos (authority), Logos (reason), and Pathos (emotion).

Group Responsibilities: Everyone must participate and explain in the box exactly what they did. This will be peer/teacher evaluated. Choose and list participation roles below, and at the end of the project each person will comment on how the person succeeded at their role.

The Facilitator... • provides leadership and direction for the group. • leads discussions.	Name: _____ In the commercial I _ Peer Evaluation

- suggests solutions to team problems. - helps members clarify points. - protects members from attack. - makes sure that every voice is heard. - focuses work around the learning task. - says, "Let's hear from_____ next." - says, "That's interesting, but let's get back to our task."	Peer Evaluation Peer Evaluation
The Recorder... - keeps a public record of the team's ideas and progress. - checks to be sure that ideas are clear and accurate. - uses charts, multiple colors, and other techniques to highlight and summarize the ideas of the team. - says, "I think I heard you say_____; is that right?" - says, "How would you like me to write this?"	Name: _____ In the commercial I __ Peer Evaluation Peer Evaluation Peer Evaluation
The Summarizer... - restates the group's conclusions and responses. - prepares a summary of the group's efforts. - checks for clarity of understanding. - says, "Does this accurately reflect what we've done today?" - says, "Have I left out anything important here?"	Name:_____ In the commercial I __ Peer Evaluation Peer Evaluation Peer Evaluation
The Presenter...	Name: _____

• regularly contributes to the team's efforts. • presents the group's finished work to the class. • says, "How would you like this to sound?" • says, "How much of what we discussed should be shared with the class?"	In the commercial I ___ Peer Evaluation Peer Evaluation Peer Evaluation
• How successful do you think your overall presentation was? • Would you have done anything differently if you had more time or resources? • Did viewers clearly understand your Political Campaign Focus/Audience?	

Appendix C

Project Handout 3

Title: Democrat or Republican?

Directions: Let's learn more about today's politics. What are the differences between Democrats and Republicans, and Liberals and Conservatives? Use the Democrat_or_Republican Sqwirl (http://sqworl.com/1gjxlk) to fill in the missing issues. Paste the URL under the issues where you found your information. Then, choose six issues that you feel are the most important and move them onto your Google slide. Finally, choose one question to give a personal response in 1st person (I, me, my). Write as passionately about the question as you can by using powerful adjectives, comparisons, and/or examples.

Appendix D

Project Rubric

		PRESENTATION RUBRIC for PBL **(for grades 6-8; Common Core ELA aligned)** **BUCK INSTITUTE FOR EDUCATION**		
	Below Standard	**Approaching Standard**	**At Standard**	**Above Standard** ☐
Explanation of Ideas & Information	• uses too few, inappropriate, or irrelevant descriptions, facts, details, or examples to support ideas	• uses some descriptions, facts, details, and examples that support ideas, but there may not be enough, or some are irrelevant	• uses relevant, well-chosen descriptions, facts, details, and examples to support claims, findings, arguments, or answer to a Driving Question (CC 6-8.SL.4)	
Organization	• does not include important parts required in the presentation • does not have a main idea or presents ideas in an order that does not make sense • does not have an introduction and/or conclusion • uses time poorly; the whole presentation, or a part of it, is too short or too long	• includes almost everything required in the presentation • moves from one idea to the next, but main idea may not be clear or some ideas may be in the wrong order • has an introduction and conclusion, but they are not effective • generally times presentation well, but may spend too much or too little time on a topic, a/v aid, or idea	• includes everything required in the presentation • states main idea and moves from one idea to the next in a logical order, emphasizing main points in a focused, coherent manner (CC 6-8.SL.4) • has an effective introduction and conclusion • organizes time well; no part of the presentation is rushed, too short or too long	
Eyes & Body	• does not look at audience; reads	• makes infrequent eye contact; reads notes or slides most	• keeps eye contact with audience most of the time; only	

	notes or slides • does not use gestures or movements • lacks poise and confidence (fidgets, slouches, appears nervous) • wears clothing inappropriate for the occasion	of the time • uses a few gestures or movements but they do not look natural • shows some poise and confidence (only a little fidgeting or nervous movement) • makes some attempt to wear clothing appropriate for the occasion	glances at notes or slides (CC 6-8.SL.4) • uses natural gestures and movements • looks poised and confident • wears clothing appropriate for the occasion	
Voice	• mumbles or speaks too quickly or slowly • speaks too softly to be understood • frequently uses "filler" words ("uh, um, so, and, like, etc.") • does not speak appropriately for the context and task (may be too informal, use slang)	• speaks clearly most of the time; sometimes too quickly or slowly • speaks loudly enough for most of the audience to hear, but may speak in a monotone • occasionally uses filler words • tries to speak appropriately for the context and task	• speaks clearly; not too quickly or slowly (CC 6-8.SL.4) • speaks loudly enough for everyone to hear; changes tone to maintain interest (CC 6-8.SL.4) • rarely uses filler words • speaks appropriately for the context and task, demonstrating command of formal English when appropriate (CC 6-8.SL.6)	
Presentation Aids	• does not use audio/visual aids or media • attempts to use one or a few audio/visual aids or media but they distract from or do not add to the	• uses audio/visual aids or media, but they sometimes distract from or do not add to the presentation	• uses well-produced audio/visual aids or media to clarify information, emphasize important points, strengthen arguments, and add interest (CC 6-	

	presentation		8.SL.5)	
Response to Audience Questions	• does not address audience questions (goes off topic or misunderstands without seeking clarification)	• answers some audience questions, but not always clearly or completely	• answers audience questions clearly and completely • seeks clarification, admits "I don't know," or explains how the answer might be found when unable to answer a question	
Participation in Team Presentations (if applicable)	• Not all team members participate; only one or two speak	• All team members participate, but not equally	• All team members participate for about the same length of time • All team members are able to answer questions about the topic as a whole, not just their part of it	

Appendix E

Edmodo Classroom Website Blog Directions

Active Listening Audience Participation during presentations

Directions: As you watch, notice and write specific details:

1. Identify one rhetorical device and explain

2. Give one specific compliment

3. Give one helpful suggestion