Achievement and Delight: When Mathematics and Literature Cross Paths

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Abstract:

This series of lessons will provide students in my majority-minority city career path high school a range of opportunities to combine their developing skills in language arts and mathematics in a way that is meant to foster current competency and a lifelong love of learning. Primarily intended for the 10th graders in my English 2 classes, a focus on blending math and ELA standards in the literature class will enhance their current achievement and their ability to excel in both standardized tests and challenging coursework as high school upper classmen, and as college and technical school students after they graduate. A happy coincidence of the sophomore scheduled reading, “The Sword in the Stone”), the availability of Cindy Neuschwander’s beautifully illustrated Sir Cumference and the Sword in the Cone and geometry as the 10th grade math course provides a ready-made opportunity for interdisciplinary collaboration.

Seniors in regular English 4 classes and Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition may have their confidence in both literary analysis and computation bolstered as they confront and deal with cold-blooded statistics in Jonathan Swift’s “A Modest Proposal,” metric units and French currency in Albert Camus’ The Stranger, and time payment calculations and batting averages in August Wilson’s Fences. Their teacher will gain confidence as she works with them in the role of learning colleague.