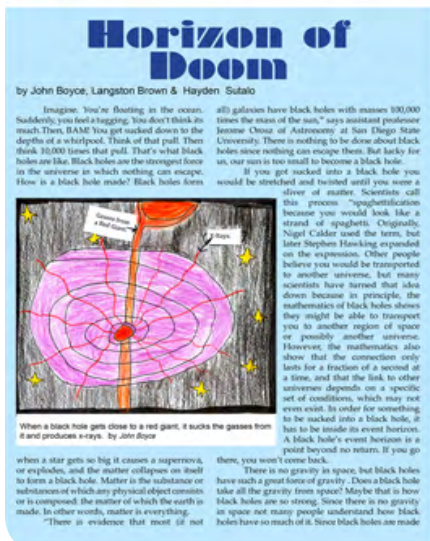


'THE END OF THE WORLD UNCOVERED



The End of the World Uncovered

Bobby Shaddox, Allie Wong, and Mike Vasquez

6th Grade Integrated Project

High TechMiddle

Students and teachers built this project from scratch. We started with students' questions about the world and themselves. From those questions, an overarching theme for a semester project emerged: The end of the world. After brainstorming and selecting doomsday topics, students conducted authentic research on a wide variety of topics, stretching across academic disciplines. Each group arranged field trips and interviews with local organizations and experts in order to get answers to their essential questions. Finally, they wrote, illustrated and designed a magazine to reveal their findings. The published piece was accompanied by Flash animations. Our magazine launch party (exhibition) took place the day before the supposed Mayan apocalypse (December 21, 2012). We sold 65 copies in just two hours!

Teacher Reflections

The democratic design of this project has shifted my mindset about project design and learning. I watched my class tackle complex issues in their research, interview college professors and take the lead on scheduling field trips. Together we found natural connections between science, mathematics, English, technology and social studies. The project proved to me that a democratic approach to learning is definitely a way to deepen learning.

—Bobby Shaddox

Throughout both the design and execution of this project, I was continually blown away by students' ideas, effort, and collaboration. Students stressed over how important it was for them to make their own choices and work with others. In this project, I definitely felt more like a facilitator or even a participant than a teacher. One of the best parts was watching students make decisions about how to design a project that were similar to decisions I would have made.

—Allie Wong

Student Reflection

I remember the satisfaction that I felt when I was presenting my work at exhibition. They were amazed that a group of 6th graders could do this type of work. When we actually have a say in the project, it makes it more fun for all of us. We had design input which made it more interesting. I would definitely want to try this again.

—Langston

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