

SCOTT JAMESON PRESENTS

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Contact: The Magic of Communication

Five examples of curriculum connections to the VT Standards and Grade Expectations

VT History and Social Sciences Grade Expectations, Diversity and Unity

“Students understand the concept of culture, including the cultures of indigenous peoples.”

As students are getting seated I play an ancient Australian wind instrument called the Didgeridoo. I later demonstrate how Aboriginal tribes used this instrument in storytelling as a way to preserve their history and culture before the creation of a written language.

VT Framework of Standards, Communication Standards, 1.15

“Students use verbal and non-verbal skills to express themselves effectively.”

To demonstrate how body language and facial expressions can be powerful tools for communication, a student is invited onstage and in a matter of minutes is taught a difficult juggling stunt, all without the use of words. At the conclusion of this routine the audience as a whole is taught how to applaud, laugh, and say ‘Thank You’ in American Sign Language.

VT Non-Native Language Grade Expectations, Curiosity, Cooperation and Challenge

“Students show understanding of how knowing another language and culture influences lifelong choices by appreciating and accepting challenges inherent in the learning (e.g., trying multiple times, using different methods, coping with frustration, persevering).”

A student is invited onstage to participate in an interactive illusion presented almost entirely in Spanish. This routine demonstrates the importance of learning foreign languages, and also explores techniques for overcoming language barriers (e.g., repetition, non-verbal cues, rephrasing, visual associations...).

VT Science Grade Expectations, Sections 23-29 (Enduring Knowledge)

“Energy is necessary for change to occur. Energy transfers and transformations exhibit the characteristics of systems with inputs, processes and outputs.”

After dealing with an unruly, and hysterically funny, telemarketer, a piece of solid matter magically travels down a thin wire connecting two tin cans. This routine visually illustrates how telephones convert sound vibrations, produced by the vocal cords, into an electrical signal, and then back into sound.

VT Framework of Standards, Science, Mathematics, and Technology Standards, 7.18

“Students understand that people control the outputs and impacts of our expanding technological activities in communication. This is evident when students identify the positive and negative consequences of technology.”

In the final routine of the show students learn that the technology created to make the telephone possible paved the way for the invention of the radio. They also learn that the radio changed the world by delivering information faster, and to a broader spectrum of society, than previous forms of media. And then, after I search the dial to find appropriate musical accompaniment, my huge 1930’s radio vanishes in mid-air.