



DRIVING QUESTION

What makes someone a tragic hero, and how do Hamlet's choices compare to those of modern figures who fall from greatness?

PROJECT SUMMARY

In this project, students will investigate what defines a tragic hero by closely reading, analyzing, and performing key scenes and soliloquies from Hamlet. Students will research a modern figure and compare that individual's rise, tragic flaw, key decisions, and downfall to Hamlet's using textual evidence, research, and thematic analysis. Throughout the project, students will engage in sustained inquiry, structured checkpoints, peer feedback, and revision as they develop a Tragic Hero Verdict Podcast.

REAL-WORLD CONTEXT

This project has a real world context by asking students to analyze how society evaluates the rise and fall of influential individuals based on their choices, character, and leadership. Students use real world processes and tools by conducting research with credible sources, developing evidence based claims, addressing counterarguments, and communicating their analysis through a podcast format similar to that used by journalists, critics, and cultural commentators. The project makes a real impact by publishing student podcasts to the VMCCA YouTube channel, increasing accountability and purpose through a public audience. Students also learn real world quality expectations through podcast recording and revision, with production coaching and feedback from Mrs. Erika Woodard before publication.

PRODUCTS & AUDIENCE

Students will create a Tragic Hero Verdict Podcast, a structured argumentative audio presentation in which they evaluate whether a modern figure qualifies as a tragic hero when compared to Hamlet.

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

- "I learned how to work with podcast equipment and what's the difference between the strong and the weak podcasts."
- "The peer feedback was the most helpful because it allowed other people to give suggestions and point out things we could improve. This helped us make our project clearer and stronger before the final presentation."
- "It was interesting being able to readjust our tone and enthusiasm for the product."

NC PORTRAIT OF A GRADUATE SKILLS GAINED

 COLLABORATION

 COMMUNICATION

 CRITICAL THINKING

 PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY

 LEARNER'S MINDSET

TEACHER REFLECTION

Overall, this PBL was very successful, and students were highly engaged throughout the process. One of my biggest "aha" moments was seeing how well students responded to feedback from both me and their peers and how much their podcasts improved from draft to final product. Their growth in organization, clarity, and confidence as speakers was impressive, and I was extremely proud of the effort they put into revising and strengthening their work. Overall, students worked very hard and demonstrated meaningful growth in collaboration and communication.