

The mission of the South by Southwest Education Conference, affectionately known as SXSW Edu, is to engage and empower all stakeholders in education to make advancements in teaching and learning. As you would imagine, many sessions focused on innovation, creativity, problem solving and looking forward to the future of education. Since the focus of this conference is to encourage all learners to identify and attain their academic and career goals, the sessions I attended fit well with the district's personalized learning initiative. At SXSW Edu there are a variety of topics and ideas that are organized by 16 thematic tracks such as *Accessibility & Inclusion*, *Emerging Technology* and *SEL (Social Emotional Learning)*, to name just a few. As an administrator I chose to focus on the *Leadership* track along with the *Data*, *Emerging Technology* and *Science of Learning* tracks. Within these tracks, I focused on selecting workshops since these provided deeper dives into the themes. Each workshop provided hands on, practical information and strategies over a 2-hour period so I was easily able to attend 12 workshops over the four day conference in addition to the memorable keynotes and evening socials introducing a variety of emerging technologies.

I also walked away from the conference with a variety of resources for the math, science and English Language Arts classrooms. Here is a sampling of those:

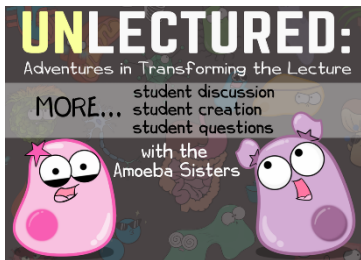
### **30 Days of Insanity! Or Writing a Novel in 30 days**

This session focused on implementing a 30-day writing project based on the National Novel Writing Month and provided detailed hands-on tools to guide teachers in guiding their students to write a high quality (and published) novella just over 30 days. Student exemplar work was shared along with pitfalls and triumphs from the planning to publishing phase (and all of the editing that happens in between). #30daysofinsanity

### **Making Math Add Up for All Learners**

Educators agree that a strong foundation in mathematics is critical for opening the doors to STEM opportunities and careers for students. This session focused on learning disabilities in math, the research on high-leverage, evidence based teaching practices and strategies. Although research into math learning disabilities lags behind research into reading and writing deficits, the session presenters provided valuable insights and resources related to Piaget's theory on the importance of providing learning opportunities that begin with concrete experiences then sequentially move to semi-concrete and abstract experiences. The focus on this theory is consistent with John Hattie's meta-analyses on influences on student learning where Piagetian programs are ranked #2 with a 1.28 effect size just after self-report grades. <https://visible-learning.org/glossary/>

### **Unlectured: Adventures in Transforming the Lecture**



This workshop highlighted how two sisters, the Amoeba Sisters, are transforming the traditional science lecture and notes using humor, videos, GIFs, comics and aligned handouts and resources.

These videos and resources are accessible at the website: <https://www.amoebasisters.com/>

Without the opportunity to attend conferences and trainings through the Career Development Grant funds, it would be challenging to find the time during the academic year to keep up to date on current educational technologies and new resources for proven strategies. I would like to thank the Kenai Peninsula School Board for supporting me in my continuing professional development.

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