

Shad Lacefield (00:00):

When you stay relevant, it's being engaged with your students and figuring out, or what are, what are they liking? And every year it's gonna be different. And that helps you stay relevant. When you have conversations and you build relationships with your kids, Eric Cross (00:13):

Welcome to science connections. I'm your host. Eric Cross. My guest today is Shad Layfield. Shad is a teacher at garden Springs elementary and a part-time professor at Asbury University in Kentucky during the first year of the pandemic, Mr. Layfield dressed up in over a hundred costumes to create a unique and engaging online learning experience for his students. He also created Vader visits, where he visited students at their homes, dressed as Darth Vader to celebrate their online successes and keep them encouraged. During a challenging time. In this episode, we discuss how creativity impacts engagement, transferring lessons learned from distance teaching back to in-person instruction, and how upper grades can apply the same principles to improve student learning. I hope you enjoy this discussion with shad lays field. So you've been in fourth grade for four years, and then you were in second grade and fifth grade. And so like how long have you been teaching for like total?

Shad Lacefield (01:09):

So this is my 15th year teaching.

Eric Cross (01:12):

Really? Yeah. You've been in the game for a while.

Shad Lacefield (01:15):

Yeah. Yep. It, it doesn't, and it's always surprising to parents too during that, that first like, come in and meet your teacher. And I walk in, I'm like, yeah, I've been teaching for 15 years and every time it gets 'em, they're like no way. And I'm like, yeah,

Eric Cross (01:28):

That's, that's a good thing though. That's a good thing. Right?

Eric Cross (01:31):

You know? So like, well the energy and then, and you're just how you're perceived. Like you're, they're just, I don't know. It's something about work with young people. Like it keeps you young.

Shad Lacefield (01:39):

That's what it is. Absolutely.

Eric Cross (01:41):

So how did, how, like, what's your origin story? Like, how did you become a teacher? Like what, what was it? Was it something like you knew second career, like right outta school? Like how did you end up in the classroom?

Shad Lacefield (01:53):

Yeah. No, and I love this question cause I'm a big Marvel and, and superhero. So origin stories are all, I love a good origin story. So I grew up on a 13 acre farm in a little bitty town called Gustin, Kentucky, and

very early on, like we were instilled my parents, amazing, amazing parents. But they really instilled like a, a super important work ethic in our lives of like, it's, it's all about hard work and it's important that you're working hard in whatever it is that you do. And I'm one of six kids as well in my family.

Eric Cross (02:24):

Where are you in the—

Shad Lacefield (02:25):

I'm second to last.

Eric Cross (02:26):

Second to last. Okay. So you're the second youngest.

Shad Lacefield (02:29):

Yes. Okay. And and so, and so growing up, like with that, like, you know, I worked in tobacco, I worked in hay, you know, we did things being on the farm and stuff like that. And within my family as well, there's four boys. And so when I decided to go to college I was the first guy in my family to go to college. And the first and only boy that ended up going to college. And so it was like this big deal, like, oh, you know, we got one of our boys gonna go to college. So what is he gonna be? And I was like, well, if I'm gonna put forth the, the time and effort and then the financial strain that it would cause cuz we were not poor at all. My dad worked two jobs to make sure, but I really felt the responsibility of like, if I'm gonna go, I'm gonna work in a profession.

Shad Lacefield (03:09):

That's gonna make a lot of money. And here I am as a teacher now. So I didn't go to college to be a teacher. I actually was pre dentistry. I thought, now here's a profession. You can, a lot of money. You don't work weekends or holidays, you know, I can still be the doctor thing. And so I'm gonna be pre dentistry. But like all good origin stories. There was a, there was a flip. So in my first year I started working at the most majestic place that you will ever go. It's called Squire, boon, caverns. It's a cave in Southern Indiana. And it's an amazingly beautiful little place. You have to like one lane highway, like road to go back there up and down. Like you, you think you're never gonna make it. And if it rains too much, the bridge will flood and you actually can't even get back there.

Shad Lacefield (03:52):

So that's how we're talking like way back in the sticks. But once you get back, back there totally worth it. And as part of the job you were a tour I also did grist mill demonstrations and gym mining adventures, or, you know, as they're gym mining and stuff like that. And within that, I started working with school aged kids and on very large tours and stuff. And my manager at the time, Claudia, I'm still great friends with and we still take our kids back there. Every summer she, to me, you're really good with kids. Like you're really good with kids. We have this scout program that's on the weekends. And then during the summers and you would be teaching kindergarten through eighth grade kids, geology and forestry. What do you think about doing that? And I said, well, right, let's try that out. And then I got the teaching bug and it hit and I was like, oh my gosh, like I don't wanna spend my life doing something that is all about money or, or that is like, this is where it's at. Like, I love this, I enjoy this. I enjoy the response that I get

when I'm talking. And kids are excited about learning and getting new information and learning new stuff. And so then I change my major and here I am now, all these years later teaching instead of being a dentist,

Eric Cross (05:04):

Are there, are there days, do you ever have days where you're like, you know, dentistry, it's still an option. Like I can, I can go back.

Shad Lacefield (05:12):

Oh, rare, rare occasions. Rarely. Yeah.

Eric Cross (05:16):

Okay. Yeah. All right. All right. Fair enough. I, I, I always joke and say that like we have, you know, sometimes I have my, my alternate job on the hard days, which is for me, it's working at the gap where I just want to fold clothes and go home at the end of the day, you know, on those really rough days. And you know, it's never the kids, right. It's always other things. The kids are like the great part. And then there's all these other things. And I just wanna work at the gap. I just wanna work at the gap. Fold some clothes. Yes, sir. Yes. Ma'am absolutely. I can find that size for you. And then I just go home cause about their job when they go home at the end of the day, when you work at the gap, at least sorry, gap workers. I'm sure hard of that, but my perception in my mind is that you close up shop and then you're done. Yeah,

Shad Lacefield (05:52):

Absolutely. Like you said, they can turn it, like it's a turnoff at the end. Exactly. As teachers we know, like you don't ever turn it off, it's always there.

Eric Cross (06:00):

Yeah. So one of the things that I was super excited about when I, when I first heard about you is I went on your website and there's so many things I feel like I can just talk about your website and just the, the content that you've produced. I, I, there's so many directions I can go. But one, one of the things I want to ask you is, is about that. Now, one of the things that's on there, and this is coming from a fellow star wars, Fisha who finished Bobba FET and the Mandalorian recently and is Jones in four OB one to come out.

Shad Lacefield (06:33):

Oh, so yes,

Eric Cross (06:35):

I live in Southern California next to Disneyland visited Galaxy's edge star wars. You have these things called VA Vader visits. And so what do you do in those? And like, where did you get the idea for these Vader visits?

Shad Lacefield (06:50):

So the costumes were bringing the kids into the classroom. But when they left my room because you would, we only had them for a certain amount of time. There was still a lot of extra work that they needed to get done. And what I was seeing was I could get them to come in and they were really engaged during my lesson. But then afterwards, when it came to work completion or getting things done, there was, it was starting to fall off. As you know, we were experiencing, you know, more and more craziness of what's going on. So then as an incentive, I decided if you have everything turned in, by the end of the day, I'm gonna dress up in my Darth Vader outfit, full costume, the, you know, the, the full helmet, like everything. And I'm gonna show up to your house and we're gonna hang out and play any game at all that you wanna play.

Shad Lacefield (07:34):

So then it was a way of rewarding. My kids for getting everything turned in. But same time I felt like it would also help me build a relationship with them. That was a very challenging part of online learning. Like, again, I want you to feel like you're a part of my classroom. I wanna feel like I'm invested in you and wanna learn about you. And it was a commitment because some of those kids put me through the ringer, whether it was we're gonna do gymnastics on a trampoline. And again, I'm in full costume doing gymnast on the trampoline, or we're doing soccer drills with their soccer coach at their house playing football games. I mean, all kinds of stuff. I made a Yachty game for a kid that loves Harry Potter. And it was really a big part of getting work turned in because, and it's the crazy thought they wanted to spend time with me. Like that's what it was. And so it was like, yeah, absolutely. I'll keep dressing up. I did over 50 plus Vader visits. It wasn't just for my homeroom. It was for all of fourth grade. So I went over 50 visits and it was cool to see kids in their home and talk to them and meet their parents. It was a great opportunity for me to engage with parents as well. How is online learning, going, what can I do to support you? Do you guys have any questions and stuff like that? So

Eric Cross (08:39):

This thing of relationships is like leading to work completion, which isn't, which isn't always the, the thing that we think to as educators of like how, you know, work completion. A lot of times we think of like structures or you know, certain protocols that you do in class get work completion, but here you are addressing as Darth Vader. And, and you said students were turning in more work because they're connected to, you saw an increase in, in yeah. Engagement.

Shad Lacefield (09:07):

And absolutely. And, and I remember even saying that to myself, like this is, this is what's getting them. But it, it was, and as part of the Vader visit as well with the videos we recorded all of them and I said, I'm gonna make you a YouTube star. And so I would, I, I recorded them. I put 'em on my YouTube channel. And so a lot of the videos that are on my website, all those Vader visits are like the kids showing off and playing against the teacher. And I promise you, I didn't take it easy on any one of those kids. Like when it was like a verse match, I went all out and I told 'em. I was like, if you beat me, you know, it's gonna be like, you earned it.

Eric Cross (09:38):

What a great way to leverage, just what, what is relevant to our students? Like you used your platform and then now you're showcasing them on your, you know, your platform or what you were using. And

then they're seeing each other. And I could just see, regardless of the grade level, like just students, like beam from, from getting that kind of positive praise through, through, you know a medium that doesn't, that tends to be more of a, just content consumption, but you're kind of watching other folks do stuff, but now it's about them. Like, and they're, they're getting that attention directly. Now I have to ask about the Vader costume. Did you, did you buy it for this event or did you already have that Darth Vader costume in your closet?

Shad Lacefield (10:19):

I had parts of the costume, but not the complete costume. And honestly, the very first Vader visit I had, I had the Vader mask that makes sounds, and like you could talk and it makes you sound like Vader.

Eric Cross (10:29):

My dark saber is on order. Yes. And it keeps getting delayed from best buy. It's supposed to arrive in April, but I do have dark staple and order that I ordered back in November. So the best to your point, I don't know who doesn't have one, I'm waiting for mine though.

Shad Lacefield (10:42):

There you go, come on. Best buy come through for us. So

Eric Cross (10:44):

You, you did all this investment in time and, and you created all this content, but then we went back in person. Were, were you able to bring this back into the classroom or any of the things that you had generated during distance learning back in the classroom? Or are you, are you using some of the things that you learned? Like what, or is it just completely separate and you're just doing something completely different. Now

Shad Lacefield (11:04):

That's a great question. So I still try to dress up at least once every week, if not once every other week just to make whatever we're doing fun, cuz I already have costumes that were connected to the content that I was doing. So had I had made a character called captain Soundwave that will use when I'm teaching my amplify lessons over sound. And so then I, you know, I have that or I would have, you know, specific characters that were designed for certain lessons that I would do. And so I still

Eric Cross (11:32):

Lemme interrupt you real quick. Where did you get these character ideas from? Cause they are super creative. I clicked on one random one. And you have had like a, a knitted like skull cap and like some blue shiny like cloak and I like who is this guy? I think, is that him? Is that captain sound wave? That's

Shad Lacefield (11:48):

That's hilarious. That was, that was my attempted Elsa. Oh, that was yeah. Started buying more and more costumes and and making characters and putting costumes together. And so yeah, it just ends up being this thing where you never know when I'm gonna show up in a completely random costume and be like today, we're getting ready to learn about how sedimentary rocks form. And I dressed in my rock outfit, which is the old school rock with the turtleneck and the gold chain with,

Eric Cross (12:16):

Wait, do you have a Fanny pack too?

Shad Lacefield (12:17):

I have a Fanny pack. Yes you have. Yep. You nailed it. And they're like, what does this guy

Eric Cross (12:22):

Do? He raise the one eyebrow. Can you do the, the rock eyebrow? Oh yeah, you got this. Oh, people on the podcast. Can't see. Chad's got it down. He's got it down. He's got the, he's got the eyebrow going. Okay, so you, so I feel like I can go on a tangent and talk about all your costumes that you have, but the thinking about this. So tons of engagement, younger people now taking like some of the principles that you've learned from this, how can, how can upper grades like bring this joy to their classroom? Like middle school students, you know, older kids sometimes, you know, they can, they're still kids, but you know, they might not be the same thing as fourth graders. Like would you, do you have any ideas of like how teachers and upper grades can kind of take these elements that you've done and, and apply them?

Shad Lacefield (13:04):

Absolutely. So some of the things that you had talked about, like with YouTube can also be applied to like TikTok videos and things like that, that kids are, are willing to watch and, and be engaged in. And so those things, I feel like I've seen other middle and high school teachers really utilize in their classroom. But honestly, and this is a new initiative that we've started in our district. Minecraft has been something that a lot of kids play and are really engaged in and has shown an amazing engagement for all of our kids when it comes to science engagement, particularly. And so with that, so there's 126 million active Minecraft players right now in the world. And Minecraft is one of the largest selling video games. The average age, cuz they're always like, oh, Minecraft is for kids who actually the average age is like 24.

Shad Lacefield (13:51):

So a lot of the older kids are playing Minecraft as well with the younger kids. And with that in mind, it was a way when I looked at Minecraft and specifically like Minecraft educational edition came out and it was during COVID and it was free. So if you had a school email or it's like the, what the go 365 account, you could get it for free and all of our kids got it for free. And so then, then we went from playing Minecraft on the computer as like a fun game to me looking at it and saying like, wait a minute. I feel like when I'm doing energy conversions, we can take Redstone and Minecraft and kids can now show how a simple system using different parts and devices can work and understand even more con creates how energy is converted from one form to another.

Shad Lacefield (14:39):

And so let's make this a, a, a, an actual activity. Let's take what I'm teaching in the classroom. And if they get done early as an enrichment piece, because there's not a ton of science and enrichment activities at times for kids to be able to do, like, what do I do when I'm done, Minecraft ended up being that. And so I could have these elaborate worlds that I would build for them that they could then go and play and be super engaged in and show me way more on this Minecraft world, what they knew than what they were writing on paper sometimes, cuz I, you know, you'd get like a sentences out of them on paper, but then

all of a sudden when they would build this elaborate system and you just had them record and talk, it was like, oh my gosh, you understand way more than I was thinking that you did with that last exit slip, an assessment that we did.

Shad Lacefield (15:25):

And so like, this is awesome. So then I went to my district and I actually proposed an idea what if we did tire Minecraft build challenges for the whole district? So our district has 37 elementary schools and I was like, I think this could be something that, you know, as we're looking for science, curriculum engagement and making kids excited about learning science and stuff again, cuz that was always the hard part. I feel like sometimes with COVID everything kids lost this love of, of being in the classroom and, and, and learning and that it was like, you know, getting them to come back into the classroom and, and finding, learning fun again. It was like this, this started to get 'em excited and like, yeah, I get to play in Minecraft and I'm learning at the same time. And it was working for all kinds of content areas.

Shad Lacefield (16:07):

We're doing a blast off to, to Mars. We it's called blast off to us. We're partnering with CLO of the future. They're working with SpaceX. Our kids will actually get to send postcards to space and yes, it's, it's a super cool thing. And I love my district and all of the office of technology, individuals, Ashley Josh and Kelly for putting this together. And so it asks this question if you could a community in space, what would it be like? And the goal is that kids will write on the back what they want. And then we send this postcard off to space, they stamp it saying it's been in space and the kids get to have it back and, and be able to use it. But what, what we decided, what we could do with Minecraft is what if they actually built the colony on Mars, like really research put time and effort into reading scientific articles about plants and how plants would grow and, and water and, and structures and apply all of that in a massive build challenge. And then that be, you know what we're doing? That can be the answer to the question. And so it's not just a couple sentences on a postcard, but it's like a week or two week unit that pulls all this scientific content and standards that we're working with and really allows kids to show so much creativity like on my Twitter I've been posting like pictures and stuff like that of some of the students builds. And I'm gonna continue to do that throughout the build challenge.

Eric Cross (17:26):

Now, are you using Minecraft EDU?

Shad Lacefield (17:28):

Yes. That is correct.

Eric Cross (17:29):

I love Minecraft EDU. Like it, it, you talking about it inspires me to, to try to dive back into it. One of the things sometimes I feel limited by is the time that I have and the things that we're trying to cover. And it's almost, it almost feels like we're doing something wrong using a video game to teach, but it's such a great educational tool. Like you said, you just said that students are able to show what they know in, in a way by creating something that's different than if they would've just written it, but they're actually creating, and this is one of the things, I guess you kind of hit on this, but I wanted to probe it a little more. Is do you have your students creating content like you do? Cause I kind of heard that they, you

were, did you say that they were explaining or doing a video recording or describing it? How are they, how are they, how are they doing that work?

Shad Lacefield (18:17):

Yeah. So what they actually do is they'll write a script and they will use Screencastify to record and then upload to Flipgrid. And then that way they can actually show their build to all of fourth grade. Since we weren't allowed to be in the same class, like we were all departmentalized, so then we will have voting challenges. So after you record, you get to see everyone's videos, you get to like and comment and leave feedback on their builds. So you can see what the other kids created. And then then from those initial videos and voting, we selected a certain of kids that then go on to the district level for our Minecraft build challenge. And then those videos are viewed by administration and other teachers to vote again. And then you end up having grade level winners and then an overall winner, which shout out to my boy in fourth grade, who was our overall winner, Eli, super proud of him.

Shad Lacefield (19:07):

He, he made this really, really space saving system, which was hidden stairs that ran off of Redstone and used motion, energy. And again, in his video, he talks about like how motion energy has changed to electrical energy and then back into motion through the process of how this hidden staircase would be in the wall. And then you'd be able to use this lever to then release that staircase. So you could go up and down but it was just, and again, when you, when you let kids talk about energy conversions and you let them build all of a sudden, you have kids making security systems for banks. Another kid that made a feeding system for kids for animals at the zoo, and it was just like, oh my gosh, I had no idea that this was what you guys could run out and do. When I, when I taught you how energy conversions work, that this is what you could produce and come over, like this is mind blowing. I love it,

Eric Cross (19:56):

What our kids can do and what they can create always kind of blows us away when we give them an opportunity to kind of have that freedom to, to create and take their knowledge and actually do something with it versus channel it into what, show me what, you know, but only do it like this. This is, this is the lane that you have to stay in. How do you get these ideas and, and stay, stay relevant? Like so many of the things like you're touching, like pop culture, you, you have this hand in education technology, you have you're, you're doing video editing. Like where are you drawing from? Cause I'm just thinking like, as a teacher listening to this, that might be newer. And they go to the side like, oh my gosh, this, this guy is doing these so many things like where are you drawing from for inspiration or ideas?

Shad Lacefield (20:39):

I think a lot of it is like you say, when, when you stay relevant, it's being engaged with your students and figuring out, or what are, what are they liking? And every year it's gonna be different. And that helps you stay relevant. When you have conversations and you build relationships with your kids to figure out, you know, what's going on. Because I was not a big Minecraft person. It was the group that came in that really challenged me to do Minecraft because it, it showed up on their Chromebooks one day and all of a sudden it's like, oh, we can play Minecraft all the time. And I said, no, you can't play Minecraft until that I've had training. And I know what's going on because I'm super nervous about this new thing. And I wanna make sure you guys aren't doing something that you're not supposed to.

Shad Lacefield (21:13):

And like, they hounded me hardcore about you better do you need to do that training, Mr. Lacefield, you need to, we wanna play Minecraft. You better be doing this. Right. And so I was like, all right, man, I'll, I'll invest. I'll, I'll put some time into this training. And I'm so glad that I did yeah, again, that's it just like building relationships and having those conversations help you realize like, what's, what's what are they interested in? What what's going on and what would be really funny, even connecting that back to the costumes. What would it be really funny if I showed up in you know, today, princess Jasmine.

Eric Cross (21:42):

Yeah.

Shad Lacefield (21:43):

Been yes. Done that. That's a great one. I,

Eric Cross (21:45):

I, I just went to the social studies page. I, and I stop laughing while you were talking. Cause I saw the princess Jasmine.

Shad Lacefield (21:52):

Oh yeah. Folks.

Eric Cross (21:53):

I'm telling you, you have to go, you have to go to his videos and see what he's done. I mean, they're just, they're just amazing with my middle school students. They, I, I find myself having to be into things that I'm not normally into. And we have these intergenerational relationships, right? Like I think teachers are unique in this I aspect where I can connect with a 12 year old with what 12 year olds are in no matter where this 12 year old's from. Cuz I get 12 year old culture. But sometimes when I go back into my adult world, like I forget that like, Hey yeah, haven't watched a new anime you know, or, or whatever, you know, up

Shad Lacefield (22:26):

That. Yeah. No said too. And a kid will show up wearing a, a shirt to school and I'm like, I wasn't the world's that like, I've never even seen that before. And you're like, okay, I'm gonna have to learn what that is cuz that yeah.

Eric Cross (22:38):

And then the next student asks you about, Hey, do you like, do you like these this game? I'm like, yeah, yeah, let me go Google that game real quick. Yeah, I'm totally into it. I'm downloading on my phone real quick. And, and now I'm connected to all kinds of obscure random interests, but to your, to what you said, it like, it helps keep us fresh, right? With I, with ideas, there, there is something that is super practical that you've done that you've created that I've encouraged teachers to do. And I think you really nailed it. On your site, you have these video tutorials. When I look at those, I, I think about how much time you must have saved yourself of not having to explain the same exact thing multiple times. Because

you've created this virtual help section that allows students to log in amplify earth, check, Flipgrid, whatever. Like do you, when you're, when you're teaching students, do you, do you use those in direct students there so they can kind of support themselves? Or is that, what, how did that come to be when you, when you made these, these virtual tools? Because I could just imagine these are time savers for you.

Shad Lacefield (23:49):

Absolutely. Cuz again, like you said, it's it saves on time. So a lot of when you have kids that are already visual learners as well, and they love watching YouTube and they learn stuff from YouTube, why not? I mean, make the video and then attach it to my Google classroom, keeping everything online. Everyone always has access. And by still having those videos, it allows kids to hear the directions multiple time, but on their time and at their pace. So then it's posted on the assignment. So even though I probably still will give those directions verbally out loud if a kid forgets and maybe they feel a little nervous about asking in front of their peers, like, oh, how do I do this again? Or, oh, I don't remember how to do that. That video is linked on there. So that way they can go back and watch it.

Eric Cross (24:28):

It's almost like a little co-teacher that you have like a little aide that's like, but it's you, but it's like a mini you who's helping you out. I found that putting sometimes those tutorial videos on ed puzzle, where at different points in time, you can set it up so that at a certain timestamp, it asks a question and you can control it. So they can't move faster past it until they respond to the question and you have the question be about whatever you just said. And then it, it syncs with Google classroom. So you can import all the grades and you can see how far through the video they got. But that was one other layer that I was able to do. So I can have some accountability and make sure that okay, everybody watched it and they answered all five questions of like, how do you do this?

Shad Lacefield (25:07):

Oh, see, now you're sharing stuff with me, Eric, because I, I'm not as familiar with ed puzzle. I've used like near pod and per deck, but I mean just you saying that I'm like, okay, I need to check out ed puzzle and, and see what, what this is all about. Cause that sounds awesome.

Eric Cross (25:20):

Hey, I shared something with Chad and it it's useful. I'm I'm feeling good right now. I'm feel I'm feeling good. So as we, as we kind of wind down one, couple questions I wanna ask. One of 'em is you've been in teaching for, for 15 years and I, I talk to you like right now and I get this energy and this vibe that's just so upbeat, so positive. How do you stay fresh, fresh. And how did you stay fresh during a time when things have been so hard, you know, and it, and still is for so many educators, how do you stay encouraged? Like what, what have you done and, and to stay in, in education for, for this long,

Shad Lacefield (26:00):

I think it, it even goes back to like when I made my initial decision to switch my major to education, like I, I really felt like I found so thing that I thoroughly loved and enjoyed, and I always feel like you go through seasons. Like, and I definitely, when, when COVID hit, like you went through a season of where you start to feel again, that pressure like do I really like doing this as much as I thought that I like doing this and am

I ready for this next thing? And then I just go back to just the, well, why did I do this to begin with? And, and it gets me, you know, excited to be like, I did it for the kids, like, and it's about the kids. And I get joy when they're laughing and smiling. So again, with the videos, it's like, how can I make 'em laugh and smile because if they're laughing and smiling and having a good time, I'm gonna get, you know, jacked and ready to start teaching again.

Eric Cross (26:48):

And I just hear that so much in what you're saying is you're serving your kids is, is being more than that building the relationship, that connection. And then through all that, the learning happens. The last question I wanna ask you is who's one teacher that created a memorable experience for you or inspired you. Is it someone that you remember when you were in school or learn experience that just, that stands out to you to this day? Cuz as teachers, we remember thi like our kids remember us and it's weird to be in that position to think that we're gonna be that person. So is there anybody or anything that stands out to you that you remember from a, a teacher and experience?

Shad Lacefield (27:27):

Gosh, I have, I have a lot that you know, from my fifth grade science teacher, Mr. Goodman, who we did the ecology meet and the ecology team, and we went to OT Creek park and we competed against other schools about science, connected materials to my physics teacher in high school that let us build boats out of cardboard and take it to the only hotel in our town and the pool. And we had like boat races with the cardboard boats that we did. But really I, I go back to Squire boon and Claudia my manager and I remember not only was, she's such a, a pivotal like getting me into teaching. But I remember the, the curriculum that we were using at the time that I was. And again, it goes back to what if I was to teach that curriculum, I would not still be a teacher because again, as sometimes you experience with curriculum, it can be boring and not engaging. And I was already putting my own flare on it at SQUI boon during the scout lessons. And I said, what if I just completely rewrote this curriculum? What if I made it really fun and put my own, spin on it? And, and she was like, absolutely, absolutely do that. And I feel like that encouragement as teachers, when we encourage kids to be creative when we encourage kids to, to take risk and to try new things we end up getting such amazing results that we didn't even expect

Eric Cross (28:45):

Thought I out to Mr. Goodman for the ecology meet the physics teacher for the, the boat races, which are hilarious, by the way, if you've ever been able to watch students, did you make 'em at a cardboard?

Shad Lacefield (28:53):

We did. Yep.

Eric Cross (28:54):

Yeah. Those are hilarious to watch. And Claudia for giving the freedom to let you be a educational DJ and remix things to make it fun. Thanks for being on the podcast. Thanks for your inspiration and for sharing your stuff like publicly and letting other people see it and, and get ideas. It's, I'm sure there's more people than, you know, and more teachers than, you know, that are looking at that and getting their own ideas and coming up with their own. It might not be star wars, but coming up with their own inspiration, maybe it's like Harry Potter or Lord of the rings or some like that.

Shad Lacefield (29:26):

Yeah. Whatever. You're passionate about. Pull that in.

Eric Cross (29:31):

Thanks so much for joining me and Shad today. We want to hear more about you. If you have any great lessons or ways to keep student engagement high, please email us at stem@amplify.com. That's STEM@amplify.com and make sure to click, subscribe wherever you listen to podcasts until next time.