Exploring Borders, Boundaries, and Edges: Crossing Disciplines with Peer Faculty

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Who We Are: Kent Place School

- Summit, NJ
- Upper School PLC (Professional Learning Communities)
- New schedule, Center for Innovation
- Global Perspectives theme: “Borders, Boundaries, and Edges”

Today's Goals

- Share our experience
- Brainstorm: Borders, Boundaries and Edges
- Extensions and classroom applications
- Acknowledge challenges and propose solutions
- Takeaways for our stakeholders

Our Motivation/Inspiration

- Embracing complexity beyond discipline
- Learning as part of teaching
- Understanding student experience
- Finding symmetry across disciplines and themes
- Practicing collaborative and intellectual work
- Valuing process over product

Our Model

- Met once a month during PLC block (about 6 times)
- Rotated through group with one leader each month
- Shared relevant texts, art, or other resources in advance
- One person led discussion and activities that related to their discipline, but also inspired connections.

Our Topics

- Lydia: "On Borders, Home, and Language"
- Rose: "Climate Refugees: Causes and Consequences"
- Chris: "Borders, Numerology, & Mathematical Superstition"
- Lisa: "The Borders of Originality"
- Ami: "The Perils of Cartography"
- Ken: "What is Human?"

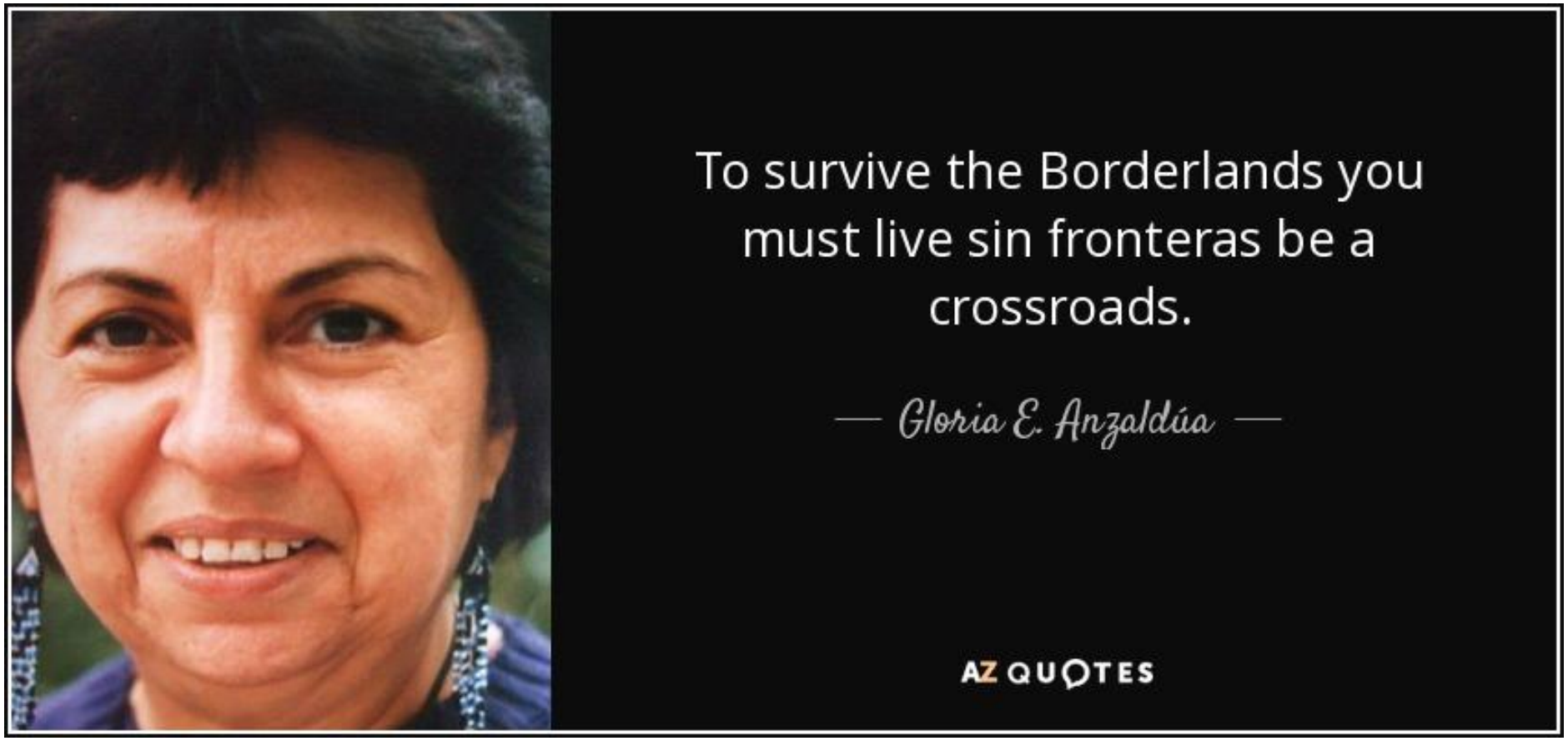
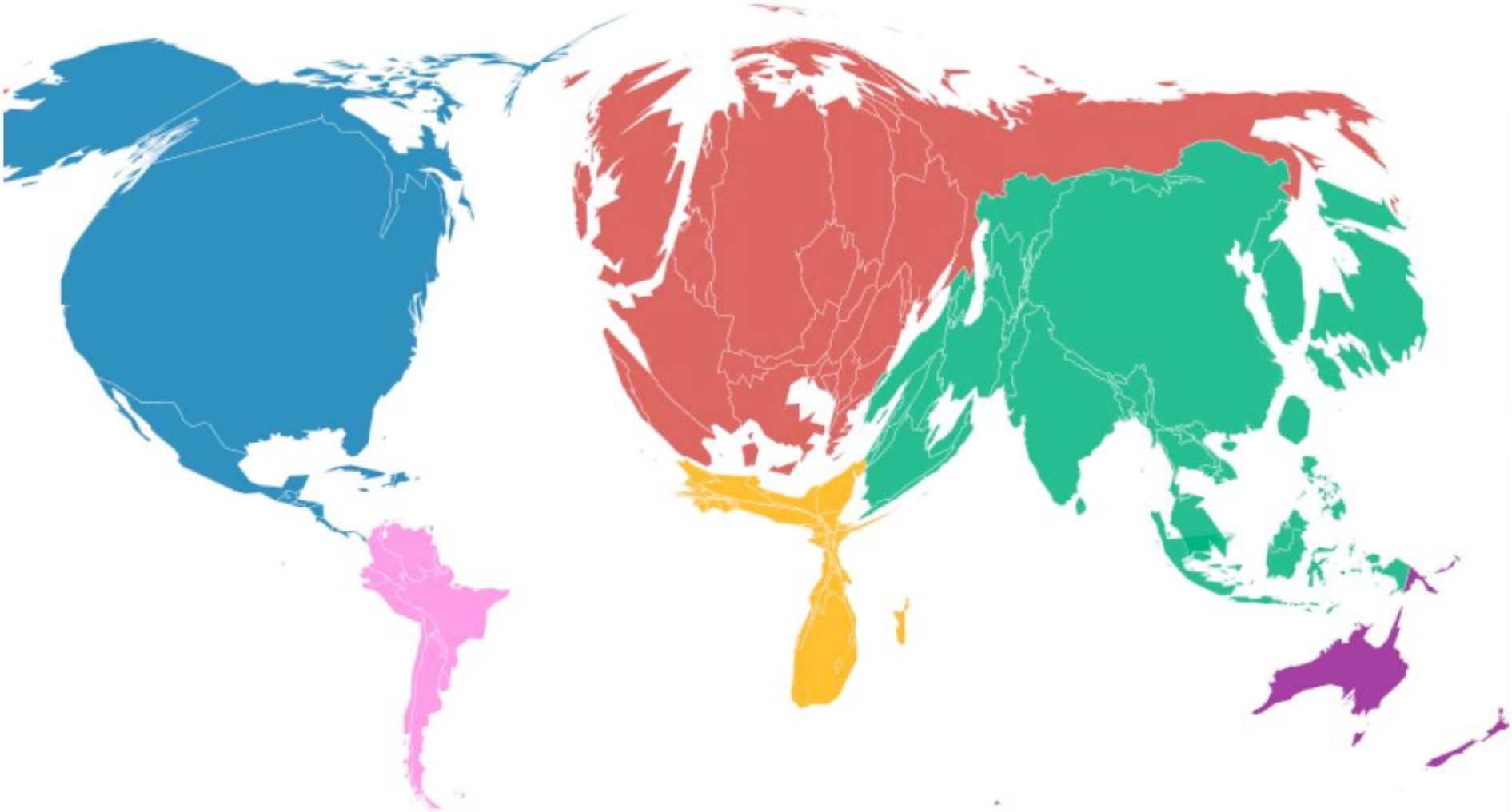
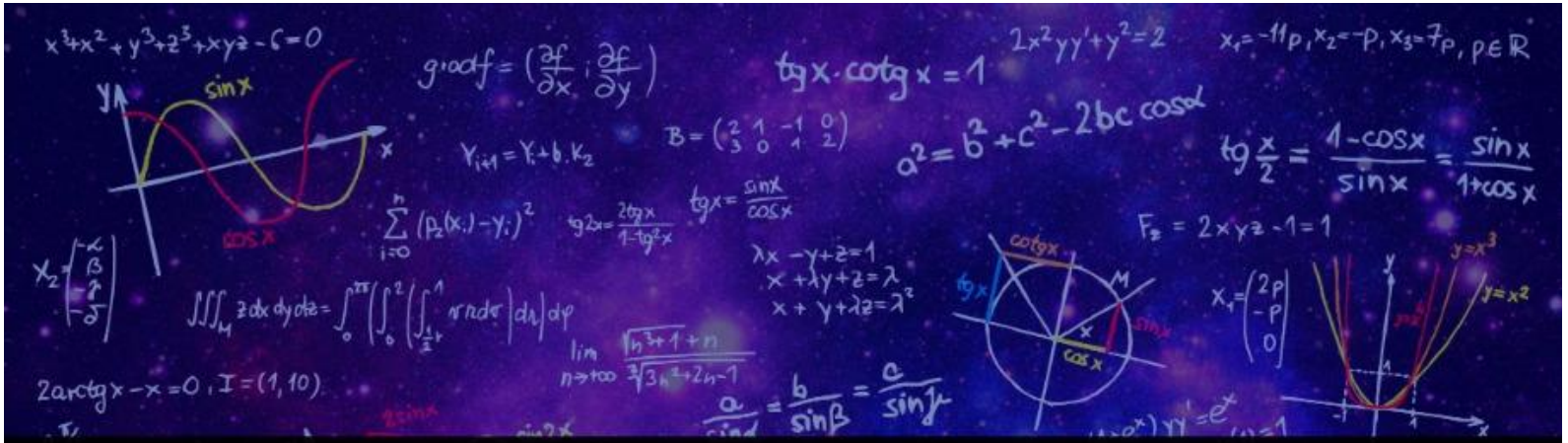

To survive the Borderlands you must live sin fronteras be a crossroads.
— Gloria E. Anzaldúa —
AZ QUOTES

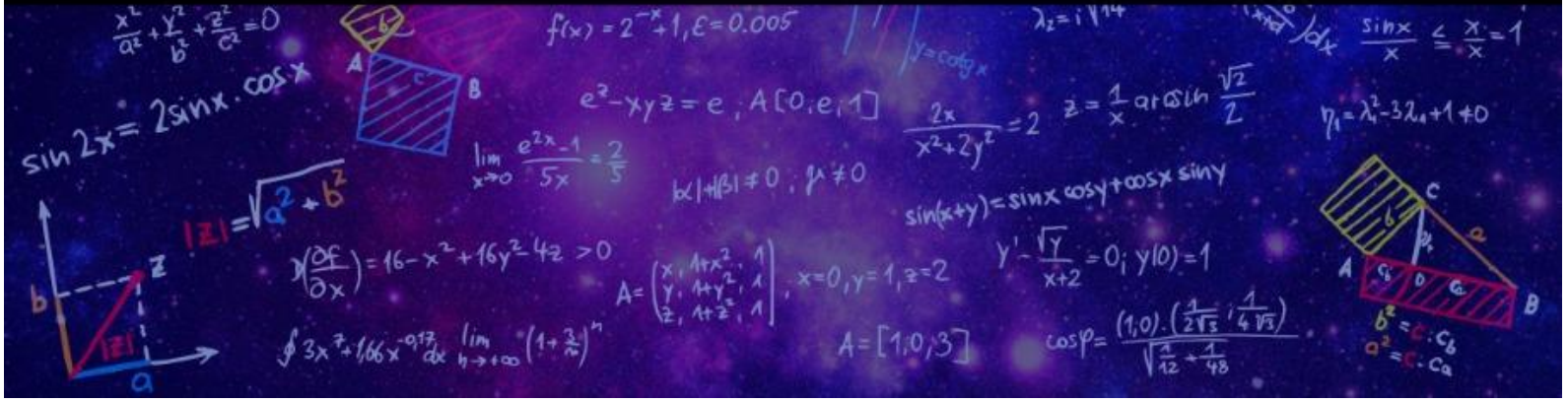
Figure 2: Historic CO_2 emissions from energy use 1850–2011

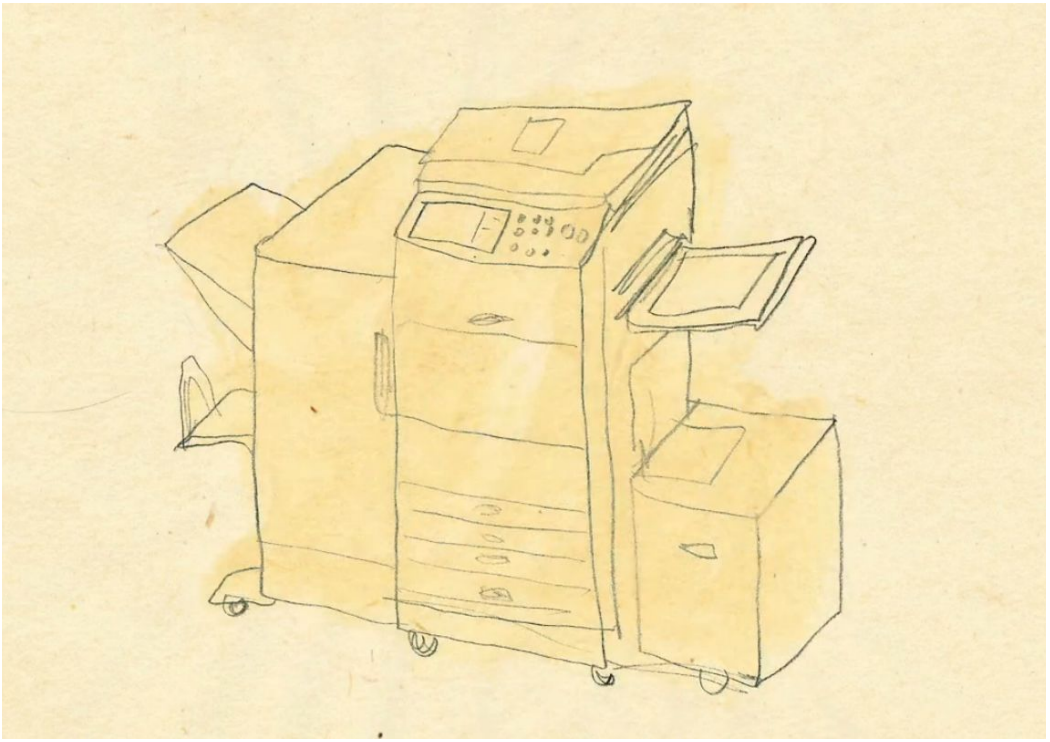




"Mathematics directs the flow of the universe, lurks behind its shapes and curves and holds the reins of everything from tiny atoms, to the biggest stars."

- Edward Frenkel





Immature poets imitate; mature poets steal; bad poets deface what they take, and good poets make it into something better, or at least something different. [...]
A good poet will usually borrow from authors remote in time, or alien in language, or diverse in interest.

T. S. ELIOT, *THE SACRED WOOD*, 1921


INDIA BEFORE AND AFTER PARTITION
British India
Princely states
External boundary of independent India
N W F P States
Gilgit
JAMMU & KASHMIR
N W F P
WEST PAKISTAN
(later Pakistan)
PUNJAB
PUNJAB STATES
BAHAWALPUR (Punjab States)
BALUCHISTAN
KHAIRPUR (Punjab States)
BALUCHISTAN STATES
RAMPUR
DELHI
RAJPUTANA
UNITED PROVINCES
COOCH BEHAR
ASSAM
KHASI STATES
AJMER MEWAR
GWALIOR
BENARES
SINDH
GUJARAT
MANIPUR
BIHAR
STATES OF WESTERN INDIA
BENGAL
TRIPURA
CENTRAL INDIA
EASTERN STATES
JUNAGARH
CENTRAL PROVINCES
BURMA
EAST PAKISTAN
(later Bangladesh)
BARODA
BOMBAY
I N D I A
HYDERABAD
KOLHAPUR AND DECCAN STATES
MADRAS
MYSORE
COORG
ANDAMAN AND NICOBAR ISLANDS
LACCADIVE ISLANDS
MADRAS STATES
CEYLON

1 of 7

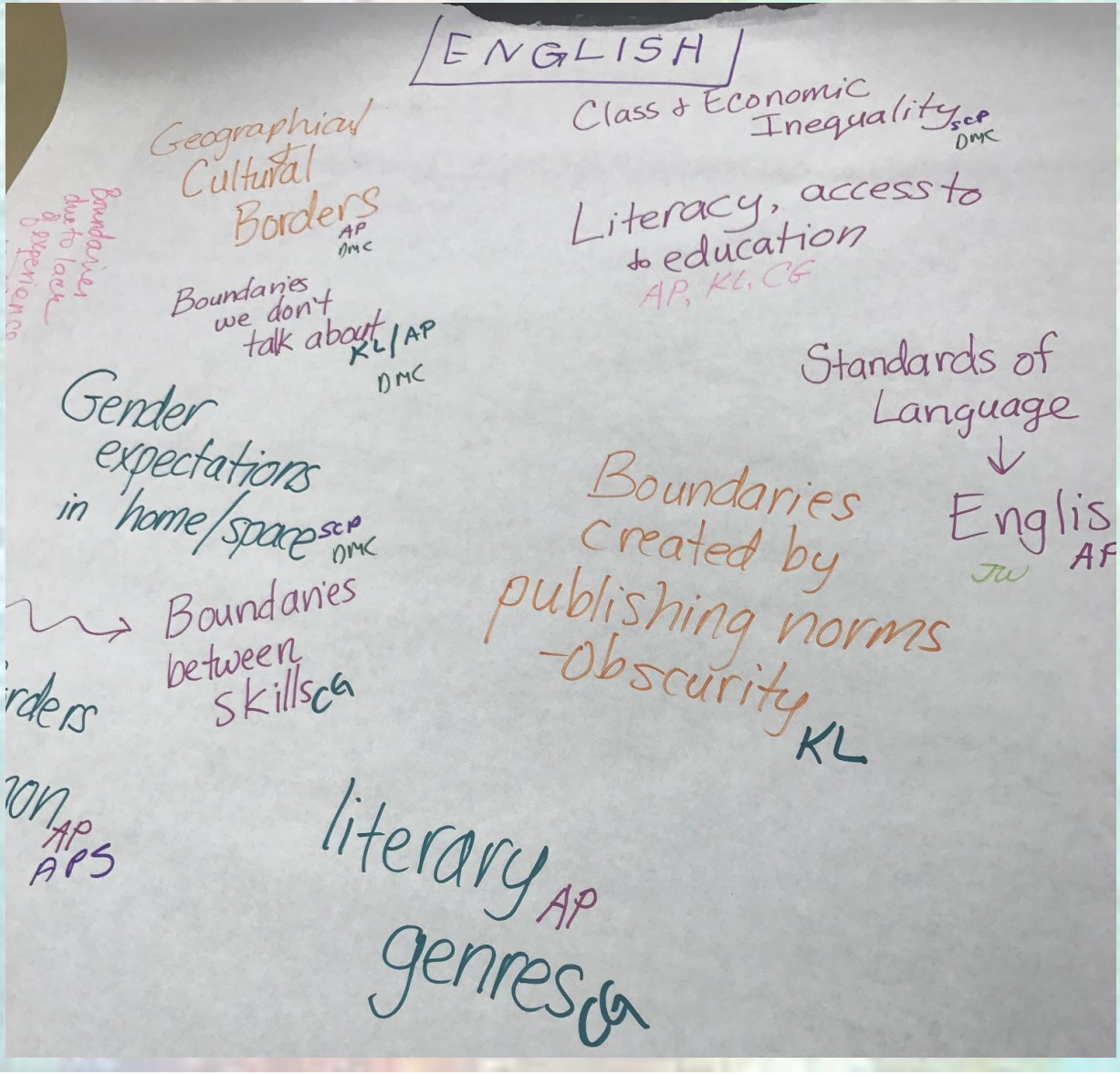
In 2014, an Argentina court ruled that Sandra was a sentient being with thoughts and feelings, and that she was a “non-human person” who had been wrongfully deprived of her freedom in the zoo. See → . This photo was used to illustrate Brandon Keim's article “An Orangutan Has (Some) Human Rights, Argentine Court Rules,” Wired , December 22, 2014. Many of the advocates were inspired by Peter Singer, Animal Liberation (1975). Photo: Roger Schultz/Flickr.

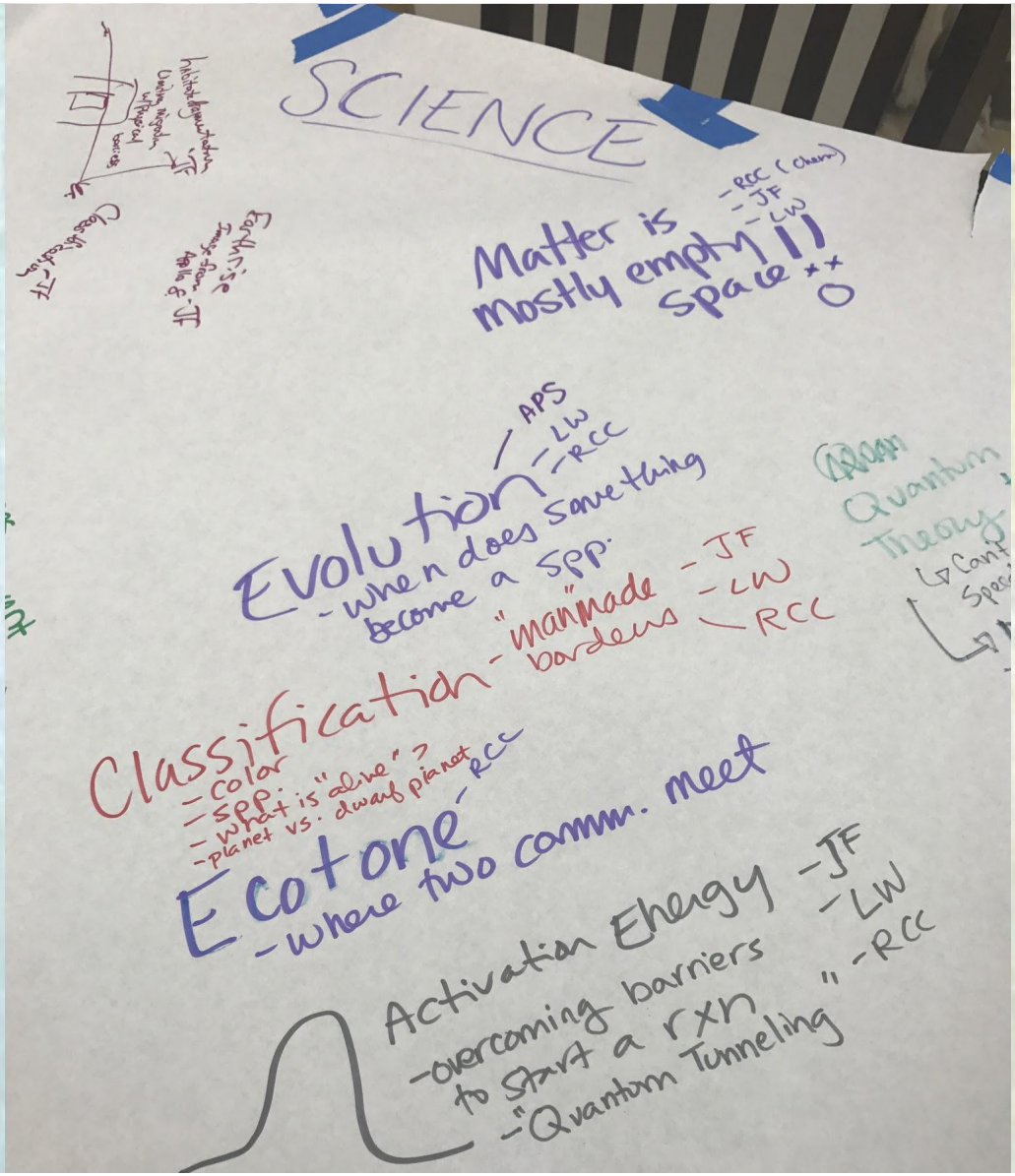
Brainstorm: Borders, Boundaries, and Edges

- Cluster with a group of 3-6 people nearby
- Reflect; write on sticky notes; share
- How would you connect your interest and expertise to the theme “Borders, Boundaries, and Edges?”
- We’ll reconnect in about 5 min for informal sharing

Extension: KPS Faculty Workshop (June 15, 2017)

- Goal: Provide example of PLC use and support others in crafting their own experience.
- Structure: Brainstormed on theme by department and made organic connections across disciplines.


ENGLISH
Class & Economic Inequality SCP DMC
Geographical & Cultural Borders AP DMC
Literacy, access to & education AP, KL, CG
Boundaries we don't talk about KL/AP DMC
Standards of Language
Gender expectations in home/space SCP DMC
Boundaries between skills CG
Boundaries created by publishing norms -Obscurity KL
literary AP genres CG


SCIENCE
Matter is mostly empty space
- RCC (chem)
- JF
- LW
Evolution
- when does something become a spp.
- APS
- LW
- RCC
Classification
- "man made" borders
- JF
- LW
- RCC
- color
- spp.
- what is "alive"?
- planet vs. dwarf planet
Ecotone
- where two comm. meet
- RCC
Activation Energy
- overcoming barriers to start a rxn
- "Quantum Tunneling"
- JF
- LW
- RCC
Quantum Theory

Classroom Applications

- Spanish V and AP Environmental Science
  - Students explored immigration from multiple angles and reconciled with media portrayals.
  - Students took pride and saw their teachers engage in collaboration and problem solving.

- Women's Studies and Calculus
  - "Class and Economic inequality"
  - Collaboration across disciplines to produce research-based, action-oriented work

Next Steps: New Challenges

- What could the next iteration of this idea look like?
- What are other ways faculty can act on their learning?
- How do we inspire authentic interest by faculty?
- What other themes excite or interest you?

➢ Use sticky notes to suggest approaches

➢ Reconvene for share out

Closing thoughts for different stakeholders:

- For teachers
  - Make time to grow intellectually
- For administrators
  - Tap into the talent of your teachers
- For students
  - Recognize connections and bridges between subjects
- For parents
  - Teacher collaboration and communication strengthens learning experiences for all students

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