

Waverly and United Kingdom connect over Internet

CONTINUED FROM A1

one of Kyle Lambert's YouTube videos went viral: a portrait of Morgan Freeman done entirely on an iPad. The video almost has 13 million views.

"We watched that as a class, and we were just all amazed," Meyer said.

Meyer wanted to introduce the world of digital art to her students, but also how much of impact it can have and how far its reach is in an increasingly digital world.

For a new project, Hannah decided to research Kyle Lambert's art and create a video about him on YouTube.

It wasn't long before Meyer was contacted by Kyle Lambert's publicist, who was very impressed by Hannah's video.

"Oh my goodness!" Meyer said recounting the moment she realized Lambert was attempting to contact Hannah.

Lambert commented on Hannah's video, leaving a positive message, and before long Meyer was setting up a GChat session between Lambert and the art class.

When Hannah told her mother about Lambert reaching out, her mother wept with excitement.

"She said she was really proud of me that I could do something like this, that I could be so passionate about something," Hannah said.

Meyer and her class discussed the importance of branding oneself at a young age and blogging to connect to the world.

"The Internet can be used for really bad things, but there are also these really amazing things kids can do," Meyer said. "How blogging gives them a voice, and how they can use social media to actually connect with an expert."

"Hannah spent all this time on her artist research project, but she never actually thought the artist would be watching," she continued. "It helps us realize how we're all connected."

Hannah was in complete agreement with her teacher.

"Everything is connected," Hannah said. "I did this project weeks ago, I was done with it and had my grade. When I found out he had contacted me, that just took the project to a whole other level. I learned a lot about Kyle, and I learned a lot about how things can get out there."

As Hannah waited in the classroom, about 20 minutes before Lambert con-

nected with the classroom, she was giddy with excitement.

"I didn't believe it at first," Hannah said. "I thought it was fake. It took me a while to finally realize he was reaching out and trying to connect with me."

"I don't know how to feel," she continued. "I'm shocked. I'm amazed. I'm still trying to grasp it."

The noise picked up as students filed into the classroom, but soon everyone was shushing one another as Lambert's chat invitation rang in.

"Hi!" the class said in unison, and Lambert responded with a smile and a hearty, "Hello!"

Lambert discussed his array of artwork, which included the iPad art, along with his computer animation and various celebrity portraits.

Then, what the students had really been waiting for: the question and answer session.

Hannah was up first, as she inquired about his age and how accurate her research project on Lambert was. It was very well researched, Lambert assured her.

There were a slew of other questions asked: What inspires you? What project



Kyle Lambert speaks with Hannah Folkerts after giving a presentation on his artwork and answering questions from students.

are you currently working on? Where do you work? One student even wished Lambert a happy Valentine's Day.

And then, as time ran out, Lambert said goodbye to the class, but remained around a little longer for

some one-on-one time with Hannah.

"It was really amazing to watch the presentation you put together on the web," Lambert said to Hannah. "The whole idea of the Morgan Freeman video was that it would inspire other

people to create artwork, and your video was clarification of that."

"That means so much to me right now," Hannah responded. "I'm amazed that you even noticed it. I never thought this would happen in a million years."

A moment in time at W-SR Middle School



Lunch is a busy time at the W-SR Middle School. Below, seventh-grader Carter Langreck fractured his fibula three weeks ago and Luke Velky his 50 metatarsal during recent basketball practice. But the two friends did not let the crutches dampen their spirits.





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