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Reflection paper four.

**Demonstrate understanding of technology and technology integration.**

Technology has become embedded into our daily lives and its role in how we work, play, and communicate with others continues to increase. In order to function in the modern world it becomes more and more important that our students learn how to utilize this technology, and that we as teachers adapt to technology as it continues to evolve. Despite technology's growing importance to society it is still not uncommon to see teachers in my school baffled at how to use even basic tech skills. If teachers cannot grasp how to cut and paste from the Internet how can they effectively teach technology to the students who depend on them to do so?

I believe that technology is a critical gateway to engaging our students and preparing them in a relevant and authentic way to take their place in society. I try and keep this as a guiding principle as I develop my lesson plans. I have found that students are much more likely to be engaged when I successfully incorporate technology into my lessons and thus retain more information at a deeper level of knowledge. One of my greatest hurdles is discovering new ways to bring fresh technology into my classroom, but my students tend to light up every time I do so.

In order to meet my obligation to bring fresh technology into my classroom I continuously seek out opportunities to learn new technology and new strategies. For example, this summer I am attending a Schoology seminar, and a STEM class on engineering design for elementary teachers so that I can bring new materials into my classroom next year. Only by taking classes and actively seeking out new technologies and ways to implement them can teachers keep current and incorporate the technology skills our students need into our classrooms.

Evaluating current and emerging technologies and using appropriate technologies to accomplish professional and instructional tasks is my first indicator. To demonstrate this I have selected a web quest that I developed in CIEC-635 and adapted for use in my classroom. This web quest guides students through using grade appropriate technology to discover he definition of figurative language and explore several types of figurative language that we use every day. Originally I designed this lesson to cover 4 elements of figurative language, but as the lesson progressed I was forced to reduce it down to just 2 due to time constraints. Web quests provide an excellent opportunity to incorporate technology into lessons and my students truly enjoy exploring them. Also, web quests allow students the freedom to use technology to explore topics and to discover their own interests while completing tasks.

In project one I have my students read stories, listen to audio books, and explore interactive stories through Tumble books. As they progress through the lesson they explore the use of figurative language, so that they will be able to give examples of Onomatopoeia and Alliterations. Finally, they create a graphic organizer to demonstrate their understanding of figurative language. By allowing students to participate in their learning through the use of technology they became much more deeply involved in the lesson and explored the topic much more deeply than I thought they would. This project allowed me to take my students to the next level by implementing skills learned during my time in the Marshall graduate program.

Demonstrating my use a variety of technology tools to develop engaging learning experiences and assessment techniques is my second indicator. To show a wide array of these tools I have included projects 2, 3, and 4. For example, project 2 was developed for CIEC-635 and lists numerous technology strategies for incorporating technology in the classroom. Many of these strategies have already found their way into my classroom and I will attempt to incorporate others as the opportunity arises.

Project 3 shows an assignment I created for CIEC-635 how I used excel for a lesson to reinforce square area and perimeter skills. This particular lesson involved having my students take popsicle sticks and figure out how to use them to construct a fence with the largest perimeter and area. They were able to use the excel product to check their answers and verify their understanding of the concepts.

Project 4 is a link to the 3rd grade web page I developed in CIEC-534 to reinforce math skills primarily focusing on multiplication skills. Although, the webpage has continued to evolve over the past year. The page includes my student’s login information for the online resources we use each day in the classroom as well as links to the resources. From this webpage they can follow the Journeys Reading Series links to find their vocabulary words, their reading assignments, and even spelling words. In addition, this page allows parents and students to follow their grades, assignments and access them from home if they have access to the Internet.