Technology for Teaching and Learning: My Philosophy

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30 June 2021

Technology in Teaching: My Philosophy

Teaching Philosophy

Every child has the right to an excellent education fostered by nurturing teachers who ensure an equitable environment that promotes each child's learning and advancement while safeguarding his/her/their health, safety, and well-being.

The best teachers learn as much from their students as their students learn from them. Teaching requires constant improvement through continuing education, self-assessment, peer reviews, and student evaluations. And, teachers must foster engagement, motivation, and openness to stimulate creativity, critical thinking, interdisciplinary, and human connections.

Integration of Technology and Tools

Technology offers teachers new and alternative ways to engage students in the content and transform their interactions with English, literature, and language arts from a static interaction to a collaborative, innovative, and transformative relationship that enables each student to maximize his, her, or their learning. Technology offers a means with which teachers can meet students where they (the students) are; motivate students to engage with content in ways relevant to them; and provide students with myriad options to demonstrate knowledge acquisition personally and effectively.

Main Purpose of English and Language Arts (ELA) Education

The purpose of ELA education is fourfold:

- Instill in students a love for and appreciation of language as an evolving organic entity.

- Guide students in finding and exploring the human and interpersonal connections we each have with literature and language.

- Enable students to interpret history and current events through literature, with special attention to the unspoken or otherwise silenced voices.

- Expand my students' worldview and my own through the introduction and study of literature and language representing diverse cultures.

Integrating Technology into ELA Classrooms

The main purpose of integrating technology into English and language arts education is to help students to develop and expand skills across the categories defined by the National Educational Technology Standards for Students: creativity and innovation; communication and collaboration; research and information fluency; critical thinking, problem solving, and decision making; digital citizenship; and technology operations and concepts. In other words, integrating technology into a 21st century ELA classroom empowers students and teachers alike to participate actively in learning, marrying content with opportunities to design, construct, and connect thoughts, ideas, and principles to achieve new and greater learning goals.

In the classroom, my lessons employ technologies that allow my students to participate actively in their learning experiences while also enabling them to showcase their knowledge and understanding in a variety of ways. Boyd et al. wrote that studying "literature that reflects the ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds of students from diverse backgrounds encourages them to read; their identification with the characters and communities within stories also enables them to make classroom contributions richer in depth and breadth." Just as we explore diverse cultures, we leverage

technology and tools that expand our abilities to capitalize on individual experiences, backgrounds, and passions. I am their partner in learning, and they are mine,

As a teacher, I am very deliberate about what tools we ultimately do use based on content standards and what instructional strategies (pedagogies) would be best employed to teach that content. Only from there should I select the best tool to accomplish specific learning objectives. The TPACK framework underpins this philosophy that the tool should come last in the decision tree, and it is consequently a framework I embrace. It outlines the overarching universe in which content, pedagogy, and technology exist: contextual knowledge. That universe is constantly evolving, and can be impacted and enhanced through continuous development, experience, and continued acquisition of knowledge. Determining content and pedagogy up front, and then choosing the technology that best supports learning goals and desired learning experiences, will be key. To that point, I most recently tapped into the TPACK framework when creating a technology-infused grammar lesson plan for eighth grade students.

I am forever growing and evolving as a teacher and a user of technology. I favor digital storytelling applications but also see the value in giving students agency in selecting, with some parameters, technologies that enable them to best articulate their mastery of knowledge. Furthermore, I rely heavily on continued education and feedback to influence technology integration and lessons taught. Student input and interaction are paramount. My classroom is a place for learning and exploring, and for me to be at my best for my students, I require their input into what we do and how we do it. Colleague input and interaction is important, as well, and I expect to continue learning with and from my peers in my professional learning groups as we explore new ideas and face

challenges together. Lastly, new and revised pedagogical strategies, continuing

education, and my ever-growing collection of internet-based references and articles all

play valuable roles as I continuously evaluate pedagogy and the use of technology in

my lessons, across my classes, and with my students.

References

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