

Chapter 30

Anchoring a Social Studies Teaching and Learning Experience with Digital Video: The Impact of a Collaborative Recursive Model for Teacher Education

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ABSTRACT

This chapter presents a technology integration model designed to help teacher candidates recognize the value of collaboration, inquiry-based instruction, and the use of technology to capture and sustain student engagement. Faculty from three courses collaborated to scaffold an instructional experience that included a field-based collaborative teaching component for early stage elementary teacher candidates. Using a Collaborative Recursive Model (CRM), which involved faculty teaching social studies methodology, instructional design, and a field experience course, candidates worked in teams to design a lesson that incorporated a digital video anchor created specifically to engage elementary students in the lesson. In addition to the technology-enhanced teaching experience, candidates learned how to create their own digital video resources. This experience was designed to help candidates recognize the value of collaboration, student engagement, and technology as a tool to support multi-modal learning. Results from teacher candidate reflections indicated that the CRM was an effective method for promoting candidates' appreciation of collaboration as well as supporting the development of content and pedagogical knowledge.

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INTRODUCTION

While teacher preparation programs continue to grapple with issues of technology access, effective technology-enhanced instruction, meaningful technology integration in field experiences and candidate assessment, standards associated with technology-enhanced pedagogy for PK12 students (21st Century Skills, 2008; National Educational Technology Standards for Students, 2007) move the bar higher for teacher educators and serve as guidelines, as well as reminders, that teachers are responsible for ensuring all students are not just facile with technology tools but are capable of discerning and using appropriate tools to complete a variety of tasks. Driven by a national concern for global economic competitiveness, the tasks 21st century students must be able to perform involve far more interaction with each other and with resources beyond the walls of the school. Expectations for PK12 student performance create an urgency for adjusting instructional methods to ensure all students are developing a solid base of content knowledge while simultaneously becoming facile with a skill set preparing them for full participation in a technology driven workforce demanding adaptability, flexibility, innovation, and problem-solving.

The rumble of bricks and mortar as education institutions morph to address 21st century anytime/anyplace asynchronous instruction is just the beginning of a profound period of change for higher education. The impact of a generation of digital natives and modern technology tools on instructional delivery in PK12 classrooms are now engendering profound changes in what teacher educators deliver. All 21st century teachers need to introduce, model, and develop attitudes and skills associated with a workplace that is asynchronous, international, and reliant on workers who are innovative, creative, collaborative and adaptive. While there will invariably be a variety of responses to this phenomenon, for teacher preparation there is only one acceptable and immediate response.

This chapter outlines one teacher preparation program's model to teach, support, and facilitate the development of candidates within the content domain of elementary social studies who value collaboration, facilitate inquiry instruction, and integrate technology in meaningful and relevant ways.

Theoretical Framework

The instructional model employed by the teacher education faculty capitalizes on social learning theory (Bandura, 1977; Vygotsky, 1978), primarily the concepts of modeling, scaffolding, and apprenticeship. Until all teacher candidates enter professional education programs with prior personal experience with non-traditional instruction, a need will exist for immersion in learning experiences that foster the development of instructional practices that promote collaboration, inquiry, and the use of technology as a seamless tool for information gathering, analysis, and product creation.

The cognitive base for the instructional model developed by the teacher candidates is built on the events of instruction (Gagne & Briggs, 1979) with attention to engagement, and Universal Design for Learning (Rose & Meyer, 2002). The best instructional design can be unsuccessful in the classroom unless the designer carefully structures repeated and various instances of engagement within the design, especially for younger or distractible learners.

Although lesson plan formats, style, and the degree to which students should be actively involved with their learning may differ among curriculum theorists, one generally agreed upon practice is the notion of gaining the attention of learners at the onset of any instructional sequence (Dick, Carey, & Carey, 2005; Gagné & Briggs, 1979; Hunter, 1984). Beal, Bolick, and Martorella (2009) note that instruction "should begin with some brief initiatory activity that arouses curiosity, puzzles the students, or somehow focuses attention on what is to be learned" (p. 109). It is clear that gaining

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