Choices Made By Elementary Teachers When Implementing Digital Literacies

by

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Statement of the Problem

It is a Thursday morning as I arrive at Maple Elementary School* (all names are pseudonyms) in the ABC School District, ready to substitute in a 4th grade classroom for the day. The classroom is quiet with 24 desks and chairs anxiously waiting for students to come and occupy them once again. I walk towards the teacher's desk to read the day's plans and see what is store for the day ahead of me. As I walk over to the desk I notice a cart filled with laptops, iPads, and Nooks and I am instantly intrigued by what this class could possibly be doing today.

The meticulously organized desk has a stack of materials with today's schedule and plan on top. Sitting in the cushioned chair behind the metal desk I begin reading the plans, eager to see if the students will be using the technology today. Before getting to the day's plans I notice the teacher has a folder with *important information for substitutes* listed on top. Inside are small snippets about students in the class who have an IEP, an Individualized Education Plan for students with special needs. These snippets help me paint a better picture of the class I will be working with. Looking back at the schedule and plans I see in bold letters ELA, English Language Arts, students will complete centers using lap tops while substitute pulls small groups for reading instruction. Using centers during ELA is a common practice often used by elementary teachers, however, centers using laptops was a new concept for me.

As ELA approached I asked one of the students what the procedures usually are for centers. The student told me everyone takes their laptops out of the cart and works independently on completing the different activities listed on their center planner. A center planner is given out by the teacher in the beginning of the week and lists/describes what work the student is to

complete during the week for ELA. I observed students during ELA working on various literacy tasks using the technology in the classroom. I watched as one of the boys carefully took an iPad from the cart, and logged onto RazKids, a web 2.0 site that matches books to students' reading abilities and assesses them after the reading with multiple choice questions. The next student was using a laptop at his seat and looked like he was on blog. I soon found out the student was responding to another student's writing assignment through the blog. The first sentence of the student's entry began "Sarah I really like how you…" The student was giving a critique of another student's writing. I was amazed by what these students could do. As centers continued I noticed a girl walk over to the Smartboard, an electronic white board. She began opening a file on Smart Notebook and up popped a prefixes/suffixes phonics activity. The girl used her finger to drag the word parts and definitions to create a match. The program then told her which were correct and which were not.

I noted that every student in the class was using a literacy technology at some point during centers but not necessarily all the same technology tool. I became very curious about how the teacher found and chose the various literacy technologies for the class. Why were some students listening to a book on the iPad, while others were using Web 2.0 blogging? What is each student's purpose for using the literacy technologies? With a diverse group of learners, it must have taken the teacher a great deal of time and consideration to choose each literacy technology carefully for the class.

Significance of the Problem

I believe technology is an integral part of our society. Every day people encounter some form of technology. From computers, to iPads and other tablets, to smartphones and smart technologies; to be successful in the 21st Century one must be proficient with technology. We

type documents for classes, do research using online databases, send emails, text friends and family, and use smartphones to keep organized with virtual calendars. Technology is also used for personal enjoyment; reading books, writing stories and illustrating. These authentic uses for technology encourage us to be independent and successful within the advanced global economy in which we live. The terms commonly associated with literacy technologies are digital literacies, new literacies, multiple literacies and ICTs, and information and communication technologies. There are many different definitions of what a digital literacy is but the International Reading Association (2009) recognizes four main ideas:

> (1) The internet and other digital literacies require new social practices, skills, strategies, and dispositions for their effective use; (2) Digital literacies are central to full civic, economic, and personal participation in a global community; (3) Digital literacies are rapidly changing as defining technologies change; (4) Digital literacies are multiple, multimodal and used to support language and reading/writing instruction with technology. (p. 2)

School Districts strive to keep up with our ever evolving global community in which we live. This includes educating students on technology and using technology frequently throughout the school day. The Common Core Standards now require students to learn how to critically analyze and produce text using technology and media (Dalton, 2012). There are many ways for teachers to incorporate digital literacies into their instruction and classroom. Electronic talking books are texts on the internet that "feature not only written word but also multimedia elements such as animations, narrations, music, and video" (Oakley & Jay, 2008, p. 246). Electronic talking books contain support features such as narration, playback, feedback, and sound effects that help students learn to read. Digital literacies have the capability to support students by embedding technology in engaging and portable devices (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2007). The technology allows children to read stories and words and receive audio phonics assistance for an entire text.

Digital literacies can be a huge motivator for students in the classroom, which becomes a tool for teachers. When students engage with digital literacies they experience a fun, varied way of learning and often do not think of it as work (Saine, 2012). Technology offers teachers a way to engage students with print using new media technologies (Mills & Levido, 2011). "One of the learning benefits of digital literacies is that students are provided with multiple modes to communicate by combining words, images, and audio elements into their writing" (Mills & Levido, 2011, p.89). The opportunities provided by digital literacies motivate students with reading and writing in the classroom.

With the push for inclusive classrooms, classrooms have a wide range of diverse learners. Inclusion is an educational approach of placing students with special needs in general education classrooms (Gokdere, 2012). Students with special needs may require various teaching approaches and a single classroom of students can possess several different learning styles. Differentiation, a way of meeting all the needs of students in the class, is necessary in all classrooms and even more in inclusion classrooms. This is why choosing appropriate literacy technologies is so important for students. Narkon, Wells, and Segal (2011) say that using technology in literacy instruction can boost student learning and enhance teachers' teaching. They have shown how the uses of electronic word walls are stimulating literacy activities for students with special needs, specifically autism (Narkon, Wells, & Segal, 2011). The use of technology here is to motivate the students to practice sight words and learn new vocabulary while taking minimal risks.

Assistive technologies, a piece of technology used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of individuals with disabilities, achieves positive outcomes if teachers understand how to use and incorporate it in the classroom for a student (Boyd, 2008, p.31).

Technology can also play a large role in early literacy development, as well. The learning opportunities include vocabulary instruction, interactive reading, phonics, writing and even math (Fantozzi, 2012).

There are many choices of digital literacies which have a variety of purposes, as shown above. With all this technology at our fingertips teachers are given an even harder task of deciding what is appropriate to use and what is most beneficial for the students. Lap, Moss, and Roswell (2012) believe that an effective digital literacies teacher possesses some key roles within the classroom: the teacher must be digitally literate themselves, to be able to teach students how to navigate the technology and reading, and ensure that the digital literacy supports learning through a wide variety of text types. The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE, 2008), has developed 5 NETS, National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers that should help teachers make better choices when implementing digital literacies. The standards are to facilitate and inspire student learning, design and develop digital age learning experiences and assessments, model digital age work and learning, promote and model digital age citizenship and responsibility, and engage in professional growth and leadership (ISTE, 2008). These opportunities for interacting with technology require teachers to make thoughtful and careful decisions about what type of digital literacy to use, when to use it and which students to use it with.

Through my study I sought to answer the following research question:

What might influence a teacher's choice of digital literacies for her or his students?

Keeping in mind the expansion of technology, this study examined choices teachers made when choosing digital literacies for a group of students and what some of those digital literacies

are. Technology is used for a wide range of literacy tasks and activities: I believe choosing appropriate ones that will be most beneficial for students can be a difficult task. The task can become even harder because the term beneficial can mean something for one teacher and something entirely different for another teacher. The idea of what is beneficial is also contested in the literature(Zawilinski, 2009; Parette & Stoner, 2007).

I designed this study to explore how teachers are choosing literacy technologies for their students and what decisions they need to make in the process. This study aligns with my teaching beliefs of using authentic approaches to literacy instruction. I believe students must be able to navigate through various forms of literacy technologies to be successful in today's technology global community. I believe all students can benefit from digital literacy instruction when the teacher has carefully selected a digital literacy that is appropriate and within the students' zone of proximal development. I fully believe that the choices teachers make in regard to literacy instruction with technology will affect a student's success and proficiency within our technology based world.

Definitions

The following terms are used throughout this study. These definitions will clarify their usage within this context.

-Digital literacy is the ability to use technology and communication tools to create, evaluate, and organize information (Lapp, Moss, & Rowsell, 2012).

-Web 2.0 tools are interactive experiences in the form of blogs, wikis, forums, etc. that plays a role with communication and information through the Internet (Mills & Levido, 2011).

-Scaffolding is when teachers take their students through four key phases: focus lessons, guided instruction, collaborative learning and independent learning. Each phase offers students more independence while maintaining a level of support (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012).

-Differentiation is used to provide students with different avenues to acquire content knowledge, how they acquire that knowledge and how they demonstrate the knowledge based on the student's readiness level (Kaplan, 2011).

-Assistive Technology is any device that is used to assist with a student's functional capabilities (Boyd, 2008).

Study Approach

This study followed a mixed methods approach using both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from teachers in elementary school settings. I designed this study to gather data on how teachers choose literacy technologies for their students and what the guidelines are for "good" literacy technology, and inform my own practices as a teacher.

The study took place in a suburb of a mid-sized city in Western New York. The participants for this study are teachers in a school district in Western New York. The suburban school district has approximately 300 students in each class. Teachers who will be included teach grades K-5 in one of the four elementary schools. The school is currently equipped with a computer lab, two classrooms with laptops, and two lap top carts that can be reserved by teachers. Each teacher has a Smartboard and Elmo for use in the classroom at all times throughout the day. Students in this elementary school come from middle to low socioeconomic status families with a range of two and single parent households. This district currently provides

workshops throughout the school year for teachers to attend that provide assistance with technology ranging from Smartboards to web 2.0 and other literacy programs.

I gathered data on how teachers choose literacy technologies to be used with their students. More specifically, I surveyed 16 teachers to determine how they choose technology for their classrooms and their proficiency with various forms of technology. Using the surveys, I created more in-depth questions and interviewed four teachers. I then examined the data for trends or patterns on how teachers choose literacy technologies. I analyzed the data collected from the interviews looking at specific technologies chosen by teachers. I also observed two teachers who were also interviewed, in their classrooms during ELA instruction. While observing I looked at what literacy technologies were used by the students and what the purpose for the literacy technology was.

Rationale

The main goal of this study was to gain clarity and understanding of how teachers choose literacy technologies for their students. A mixed methods study enabled me to explore the problem and develop a better understanding through the use of surveying and interviewing the participants. I used the surveys to ask general questions. A survey seemed appropriate for my study because I wanted to get a larger perspective of what teachers in the field are actually doing when choosing modes of technology. The interviews assisted in understanding and painting a clear picture of the process teachers undertake when using literacy technologies. The interviews allowed for open-ended questions and a chance for teachers to show me examples of literacy technologies they use with their students. The observations let me observe what really happened in a classroom. I was able to see how the teacher conducted the classroom while utilizing digital

literacies. The teachers chosen for the interviews and observations were chosen to best represent a range of different teaching experiences, which hopefully helped give better insight on the choices teachers make when choosing digital literacies. The process of surveying, interviewing, and observing allowed me to best understand how teachers choose literacy technologies for the students.

Summary

My teaching experiences and the observations I have made while substituting have left me wondering how teachers are choosing literacy technologies for their students. With increasing pressure from state standards and the goal to have technologically capable students sparked my curiosity around this topic. Research shows that using technology to support literacy can be a great motivator for students who are reluctant to read and write. It also shows how it can be used to differentiate for students with special needs. Technology is a powerful tool in the classroom and teachers have a large responsibility when choosing to use it. They must navigate the programs, websites, and instruments to find ones appropriate and useful for their students. I think it is both important and purposeful to analyze how teachers are choosing the digital literacies used in classrooms. The information gathered from this study will assist my own teaching practices and hopefully those of my colleagues as well.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

Teachers have a lot of choices to make throughout each day in the classroom, including what types of digital literacies to expose students to. The purpose of my study is to investigate those choices teachers make when choosing digital literacies for the classroom. In order to contextualize my research I have reviewed and synthesized literature related to the shift from traditional to new literacies, scaffolding, differentiation, student motivation, students with disabilities, web 2.0, and teacher guidelines. Each section contains key information that assists in understanding digital literacy as a key component of literacy instruction in a technologically driven century.

Shift from Traditional to New Literacies

Fully functioning in today's 21st Century society requires us to use new literacies that include the skills and innate abilities to adapt to the changing technologies influencing the world in which we live. "New literacies in literature span a broad spectrum of concepts, from literacy as a social and cultural practice, to literacy as digitally mediated, to literacy as multimodal and as multi-literacies" (Lapp, Moss, & Rowsell, 2012, p. 367). Hett (2012) defines 21st century skills as a combination of digital, global, technology, visual and information literacy. Each of these literacies requires today's society, including our students, to use skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, evaluation, and synthesis intertwined throughout each day (Hett, 2012).

Boyd (2008) discusses how the Partnership for 21st Century Skills has placed stress on the importance of technology tools as one of the key and vital elements of today's learning for students. The No Child Left Behind Act includes resources for technology literacy and best practices for effective teaching using technology (Boyd, 2008). Literacy teachers must transform

print based practices, which have dominated our instructional practices since before the 21st Century, into the new literacies or digital literacies of today. By transforming to today's technological changes teachers are able to reflect the authentic uses of literacy for students and how they can and will be used outside of the classroom (Mills & Levido, 2011). In the research study conducted by Lapp, Moss and Rowsell (2012) they noted how the fourth grade teacher "remixed traditional literacy with new literacies by engaging students with ELA material while modeling how to create an understanding of academic language, content information and new literacies" (p. 370).

With the shift from traditional literacy to new literacies districts are seeing many benefits arise from incorporating technology in the classrooms. Student independence, motivation, peer support and achievement are among some of the benefits due to the shift in ELA instruction from traditional to new literacies. Giving new mediums for students in reading and writing can be a "breath of fresh air for those who find the traditional modes difficult" (Hett, 2012, p. 4). This shift in teaching practices will benefit students' learning in a way that allows them to experience and explore their own learning, making education more meaningful and also allowing them to participate in the public, community, and economic life (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012; Hett, 2012).

Scaffolding

The Gradual Release of Responsibility model based on the work of Vygotsky is grounded on the foundation that effective teachers provide scaffolded instruction to students (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012). The GRR model is based on Vygotsky's (1978) theoretical notion of the zone of proximal development; the distance between what a student can actually do without assistance

and what the student can do with the guidance of a teacher or peer. The zone of proximal is the umbrella over gradual release of responsibility model (Vygotsky, 1978). The gradual release of responsibility model is carried out through scaffolded and differentiated instruction (Vygotsky, 1978). Scaffolded instruction begins with providing an enormous amount of support for students when practicing new strategies then gradually pulling away, letting them take over ownership of their learning (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012). During gradual release of responsibility teachers support students as they transfer from beginners to "capable thinkers, learning new tasks" (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012, p. 368). In a scaffolded learning environment teachers take their students through four key phases; focus lessons, guided instruction, collaborative learning and independent learning (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012). Each phase offers students more independence while maintaining a level of support. Lapp, Moss and Rowsell (2012) believe that when mixing scaffolded instruction with new literacies teachers can create instructional models that move students from passive to active and engaged learners.

Barone and Wright (2009) conducted a research study that included an elementary school that carefully scaffolded new literacies instruction for all students. Instruction begins in kindergarten, where students visit the computer lab and are exposed to how to visit, explore, and learn from websites, along with some practice using a word processor. As students continue onto third grade, or the transitional year, they are in classrooms with laptop stations. As the students enter fourth and fifth grade they each work on their own laptop throughout the day. The teachers build on students' new literacies knowledge from past years. This scaffolded experience leads to students leaving the school better equipped with new literacies that they will be required to use in their futures (Barone &Wright, 2009).

LeapFrog from SchoolHouse, a literacy curriculum using technology adopted by a special education teacher, provides an electronic form of scaffolding for students while they are engaged in literacy activities (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2007). The program provides activities for the student, based on ability, and then monitors progress, and adjusts support as needed. This type of "electronic scaffolding makes possible a form of cognitive ownership by allowing the child to engage in a complex, authentic, reading activity in which the support available to the child eventually fades." (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2007, p. 3-4)

It is important to use Vygotsky's idea of Gradual Release of Responsibility when introducing new material to students, especially when incorporating new literacies (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012). For students to be successful with new literacies or digital literacies they need to be guided with a level of high support and gradually pull that support away as students become more independent (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012; Barone & Wright, 2008).

Differentiation

Technology offers opportunities for teachers to differentiate instruction throughout the day. Differentiation is defined as a response to the cognitive, affective, and physical characteristics that distinguish what and how students learn (Kaplan, 2011). Effective differentiated instruction includes both whole group and small group instruction so that a teacher may target specific student interests and needs in relation to meeting the goals of all the students. Research shows that flexible small learning groups may be more effective because the teacher is able to cater instruction based on students' current needs, skills and interests (Connor, 2011). According to Connor (2011) small groups allow the teacher to be more sensitive to student

responses to the content being learned and can easily change instructional techniques to optimize learning for the student.

Many technology tools like the internet/ Web 2.0 offer opportunities to differentiate instruction to meet student needs. For example audio books allow struggling readers to preview new reading material ahead of the class so they can receive extra exposure, practice the reading and still meet the goals of all the students in the class. By previewing the book ahead of time a struggling reading may develop the confidence needed to read aloud and participate in class discussions about the book (Hett, 2012). Barone and Wright (2009) share an example of how one teacher differentiated instruction using Web 2.0 for a student preparing for a high stakes test. A student can log onto the KidBiz (2014) website, read an article at an appropriate reading level and answers questions on the computer following the reading. Next, a small group discussion takes place between the teacher and a few students who also read the article to extend meaning and comprehension. Following the group discussion the student can log back onto the computer and open a webpage with a list of all books read by the class. The student then chooses the one he/she read to get help with vocabulary and character development. The inputs specific vocabulary for each student to practice (Barone &Wright, 2009).

Lapp, Moss and Rowsell (2012) claim that remixing traditional literacies with new literacies allows the teacher to offer new "literacy experiences as a way to support differentiated learning across social, cultural and economic differences" (p. 376). Socially apt students are able to practice collaborating and communicating with peers in the classroom and around the world. Those students who come to school with many new literacies experiences and strengths can expand their linking while students such as English Language Learners, ELLs, have additional and varied communicative opportunities.

Technology and Student Motivation

When it comes to motivating today's students Barone and Wright (2008) said it perfectly:

> What really makes today's kids sit up and fires their minds is technology! Kids don't see laptops, MP3 players, cell phones, and video games as technology; it's just life to them. Schools need to connect education to the students' lives with technology. (p. 298)

Today's students have grown up with technology as a part of their everyday lives and teachers can use that connection to help motivate them in the classroom. Laptops in particular are being made more and more available to students, which has been helping to stimulate and motivate young minds. Students are sitting up and "leaning into their learning" (Barone & Wright, 2008, p. 301). Research shows that increased attention, motivation and engagement occurs when students are working with technological tools (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2008). Technological tools, such as laptops, also encourage students to work cooperatively with one another, which leads to academic achievement, and positive social interactions within the classroom walls (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2008).

While technology motivates just about all students, the motivational gain from technology is extremely beneficial to the success of reluctant readers/writers and struggling readers/writers (Foranzi & Leu, 2012; Jerles, 2012; Hett, 2012; Oakley & Jay, 2008). Students prefer technology-based writing assignments to paper and pencil assignments (Jerles, 2012). In a research study conducted by Jerles (2012), he found that as students became more comfortable with technology based writing, such as blogging, students started to "use more words and an expanded vocabulary as they took their time to write carefully crafted responses" (p. 86) that would be seen by the global community. Jerles (2012) discusses that when reluctant or struggling writers find out their writing audience is much larger than the teacher or classroom their

motivation to write changes drastically and it encourages them to participate more fully in classroom writing activities.

Audiobooks can be huge motivator for students struggling with reading for a plethora of reasons. CDs, MP3 players, online books, iPads, Nooks, and tablets have contributed to the rise in popularity of audiobooks because they are so accessible on so many mediums. Schools can take advantage of the various locations online for students to listen to audiobooks through the computer while following the text on the screen (Hett, 2012). Students who struggle with reading can "move beyond just reading the words. Students find audiobooks easier for comprehending the storylines, the themes and the characters…" (Hett, 2012, p.5). Struggling readers who use audiobooks find this form of reading more pleasurable which leads to more motivated readers (Hett, 2012; Oakley & Jay, 2008). Another motivator of audiobooks for students is the ability to quickly preview the book before reading and the ability of students to choose what they want to read. Even if it is only limited choice; choice can contribute greatly to a student's motivation to read (Oakley & Jay, 2012).

Technology offers a lot of features that all aid in motivating students during ELA instruction and help them gain information. Some of these features include audiobooks, video websites, interactive animations, and social networks. (Foranzi & Leu, 2012).

Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities may have difficulty retaining newly learned information, may learn at a slower pace, and may need specially constructed instruction to meet their needs (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2007). Students with severe cognitive impairments, for example, need explicit instruction, repetition, scaffolding, and multisensory instructional techniques to master

reading skills such as phonics, fluency, decoding, and comprehension. Recent gains in technology can support reading instruction for students with disabilities (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2007).

The Literacy Center curriculum supplied by LeapFrog SchoolHouse provides a multitude of support for students with disabilities. The program includes the LeapPad personal learning tool, which is a portable reading platform based on the LeapFrog Near Touch technology. This technology allows students to read stories and receive sound by sound, syllable by syllable or word by word assistance for the entire text. LeapFrog Near Touch technology allows students to read, be read to, or read with someone simply by touching the text. This choice and assistance provided by the technology has been found, through Ogura, Coco, and Bulat's (2007) study, to assist with literacy development for students with moderate to severe disabilities. Technology is engaging and motivating for students with disabilities which leads to fewer behavioral outbursts and creates student independence (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2007).

Many technology tools have built in assessment tools for the teacher to use. Research has found that these assessment tools can be better suited for students with severe cognitive disabilities rather than district mandated assessments. District assessments require students to respond verbally when testing early literacy skills like the letter name test. Verbal assessments can hinder students with severe disabilities because of speech and language impairments and "primarily reinforce what the teacher already knows; that the students are not preforming at grade level standards" (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2007, p. 8). The assessments offered by some technology tools are visual and kinesthetic activities that show more accurately what the student can do and what the student needs to work on. These assessments can be used to document

student progress over time and track student goals on Individualized Education Plans, IEPs (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2007).

Assistive technology, according to the Technology-Related Assistance for Individuals with Disabilities Act, is defined as "an item, piece of equipment, or product system that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities" (Boyd, 2008, p. 31). Assistive technology can achieve positive outcomes if teachers understand how to use the technology appropriately for the right students. Assistive technology aims at supporting students academically while assisting computer literacy skills at developmentally appropriate intensities. (Boyd, 2008) Appropriate and carefully chosen assistive technology devices can also reduce the copious challenges encountered by students with mild to severe disabilities (Erickson, Hatch & Clendon, 2010).

Erickson and Clendon completed a study in which they investigated the impact of the *MEville to WEville: Early Literacy and Communication Curriculum* on 23 students' early literacy development (Erickson, Hatch & Clendon, 2010). All 23 students had severe intellectual disabilities. Assistive technology was used to support students with book sharing, vocabulary and other lessons related to language learning. The study was done over eight weeks and concluded that the early childhood students had moderate gains in print knowledge. The researchers also concluded that this program with assistive technology provided important opportunities for building emergent literacy skills that will be used for reading and writing success in the students' later school years (Erickson, Hatch & Clendon, 2010).

Augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices are designed to help a person communicate (Wilkins & Ratajczak, 2008). These devices come in a variety of types and

sizes to accommodate a variety of cognitive and motor abilities. Many are similar to laptop computers, accessible through touch screens and keyboards. AAC devices allow the user to develop words, sentences, write e-mails, and communicate through webcams. Communication is produced through voice recorders or speech synthesizers. Speech synthesizers create sounds and words using inner computer programing. According to Wilkins and Ratajczak (2008), AAC provides students with opportunities to participate in literacy and group activities. It also helps to develop students' reading and writing skills. A study conducted by Erickson and Hanser on the *Literacy Through Unity* program, concluded that the program has the potential to improve literacy and communication skills for students with significant intellectual disabilities using communication software on AAC devices (Erickson, Hatch & Clendon, 2010).

Teachers have reported on three direct benefits of assistive technology for a student; attending behaviors, behavior in general and communication skills. Attending behaviors include focusing on the task at hand and appropriate participation. For example, Parette and Stoner (2007) reported that when a teacher displayed large screen projections of activities developed from assistive technology devices it resulted in an increase in the attending behaviors of students with disabilities in the class. These projections could then be used for whole group literacy instruction. Disruptive and distracting behaviors that may be exhibited by students with disabilities are reduced with the use of assistive technology devices. For example, the assistive technology device Boardmaker (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, 2006) can create visuals aids to assist students with challenging activities during ELA to keep them on track and less distracted. The visual aids are in sequential order to help move students from one activity to next. Boardmaker (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations

for Early Learning, 2006) assists students with disabilities to be more independent and self-motivating to complete work (Parette & Stoner, 2007).

Teachers also claim student growth of communication skills with the use of assistive technology tools. The tools help to "facilitate both expressive and receptive communication for young children who are at risk or who have disabilities" (Perette & Stoner, 2007). Various assistive technologies like Boardmaker (Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning, 2006) and Cowriter (Don-Johnston, 2009) have a range of literacies activities that support student communication skills (Parette & Stoner, 2007; Erickson, Hatch & Clendon, 2010).

Web 2.0

Communication today is progressively more digital and multimodal. Print today is now combined with audio, visual and spatial modes (Mills and Levido, 2011), like podcasts, wikis, and blogs. As technology and internet access become more of the norm in classrooms, teachers are being encouraged to engage students in online discussions as a means to support communication and learner engagement (Larson, 2009). The National Educational Technology Standards for Students: The Next Generation says that teachers should "provide opportunities for students to communicate information and ideas effectively…using a variety of media and formats" (International Society for Technology in Education, 2007, n.p.)

Web 2.0 is any internet website that offers opportunities for collaboration, communication, and interaction such as blogs, wikis, video-sharing sites, social networking, and podcasts. Mills and Levido (2011) say that Web 2.0 has increased the ease of sharing information with the global community. It provides a means for quick feedback and encourages

collaboration across age levels. Web 2.0 is especially manageable for children who "often learn best through actively constructing knowledge through complex experiences" (Foranzi & Leu, 2012, p. 422). Literacy skills needed for Web 2.0 includes selectivity and judgment to select texts from a significantly larger amount of online information.

Benefits of Web 2.0 include authentic literacies, conventional literacies, multimodal literacies, creative text production and critical literacies. With Web 2.0 students are exposed to communicating with real audiences that extend beyond the classroom. Writing conventions are taught within the context of digital formats such as blogs and wikis. Exposure to multimodal literacies gives student opportunities to communicate with words, audio, visuals and spatial features in their texts. Students are also provided with more options to be creative with modes of design and production. (Mills & Levido, 2011) Web 2.0 promotes critical and analytical thinking while becoming a powerful medium for increasing access to quality information (Richardson, 2010).

Blogging is an easy way to begin preparing students for the new literacies of today (Zawilinski, 2009). This opportunity for networking transforms the learning process from in class teaching to also learning outside of the classroom (Chen, Liu, Shih, Wu, &Yuan, 2011). A blog is an easily editable webpage with posts or entries organized in reverse chronological order (Zawilinski, 2009; Jerles, 2012). Using a blog enables a student to post articles, make corrections, give suggestions to others' work and share his/her own work with an online community (Chen, Liu, Shih, Wu, &Yuan, 2011). There is a link between blogging and continuing writing practices outside of school. Many educators are working hard to provide authentic opportunities to broaden the audience for student thinking and writing. A blog provides that authentic opportunity for collaborating outside of the typical classroom (Jerles, 2012). "With

a blog, student work can be read by classmates, parents, extended family members, school community members, project partners, classroom teachers, pre-service teachers, and anyone around the worlds who locates the class blog" (Zawilinski, 2009, p. 652).

An advantage to using blogs is that they can erase the limitation of classroom walls and offer students opportunities to connect with others outside their classroom. Another advantage is teachers and students can use past blogs to reflect on writing and learning that has occurred (Chen, Liu, Shih, Wu, &Yuan, 2011). Jerles (2012) describes one of the biggest advantages to using blogs is the "impact it has on students' consideration of their audience" (p. 85). With blogging, student writing is seen by more than just their teacher which results in students choosing their writing topics carefully, paying closer attention to grammar, and a growth in self-confidence with writing and communication skills (Jerles, 2012). Other common writing practices are also strengthened through blogs; such as research, organization, and the synthesis of ideas (Richardson, 2010). All of these are important to improved literacy and writing. The idea of student work no longer ending in the classroom creates a shift in the way teachers think about assignments and what teachers ask of students (Richardson, 2010).

Lisa Zawilinski mentions in her study that blogs are an easy way to begin to integrate the new literacies instruction into the curriculum and begin preparing students to use new literacies (Zawilinski, 2009). Currently, blogs are being used as class portals, online filing cabinets for student work, e-portfolios, and collaborative space (Richardson, 2010). Effects on student bloggers can be tremendous in school. Richardson shares one fifth grader's insight to using blogs in the classroom: "One of the greatest things this year was the chance to use blogs. At first I thought it would be *extra* work, but then I really started liking it. We have learned so much and I

hope future generations will have a chance to experience what I have" (p. 37). This student is excited about writing, which will lead to her success as a student writer (Richardson, 2010).

The teacher in Larson's (2009) study used an online message board, similar to a blog, to promote discussions between students while responding and answering questions about the literature. Larson noted that student reactions to the online messages were extremely positive. One student even wrote, "I love using the message board. Having online conversations is really fun!!! It reminds me of an online book club" (Larson, 2009, p. 640). Through his study, Larson (2009) found that the online message board engaged students and encouraged them to read each other's responses thoughtfully before carefully responding themselves. Larson (2009) concluded that the online message board helped students to think deeply about literature, type carefully constructed responses to the literature and consider the multiple perspectives of classmates. This authentic digital form of communication prepares students for today's society.

A podcast is another Web 2.0 feature that promotes literacy development in elementary students. A podcast is a digital audio recording, with or without visual effects, that is published on the web for others to listen to or view. Podcasts offer students another medium to "write" in the classroom and out of the classroom (Richardson, 2010). Willowdale Elementary school in Omaha, Nebraska has created a podcast titled "online radio shows for kids by kids." Each show has a host, and unique segments like a poetry corner and joke corner. The basis of the shows is to cover current science and social studies material and reader's workshop (Richardson, 2012). The reader's workshop podcasts are intended to promote better understanding of the reading process along with the themes, plots, characters and events for the books being read in class. Practice with communication and speaking skills are huge benefits of podcasts. Students have the

opportunity to record their voice, listen to it, and practice their communication/speaking skills (Richardson, 2010).

Teacher Guidelines

To help support teachers as they make decisions on which technologies to incorporate in the classroom, the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE, 2008) has developed 5 National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers (NETS) that should help teachers make better choices when implementing digital literacies. The NETS encourage teachers to work, learn and teach in a growing, global environment. The standards are to facilitate and inspire student learning, design and develop digital age learning experiences and assessments, model digital age work and learning, promote and model digital age citizenship and responsibility, and engage in professional growth and leadership (ISTE, 2008). Effective teachers will plan, implement and assess digital literacies using these standards to provide effective instruction for students. With the evolving technological world in which we live, teachers must be comfortable learning alongside their students and colleagues.

Amber Parks (2014), a former teacher and now teacher educator, works with teachers to improve the "quality of instruction and increase assessment scores…through implementation of the Common Core Standards" (p. 7). She believes technology is becoming more the norm in our country's schools and quickly becoming the way we communicate in college, the workplace, and daily life. Parks (2014) explains that educators must be mindful of the ever changing digital world we live in and consider 3 key components of digital literacy, while planning for instruction; reading digital text, writing digital text, and developing technical skills necessary to digest and create these texts. As we consider the 3 key components educators need to understand

that technology has shifted the idea of teachers as the expert, to teachers as the facilitators and co-learners. With teachers acting as the facilitators the gradual release of responsibility model comes full circle. Teachers provide the scaffolding needed to help students develop higher level critical and creative thinking along with a deeper understanding related to digital literacies; eventually becoming independent users of digital literacy. In order to promote this innovative thinking and collaborative work in the classroom teachers must provide students with authentic learning opportunities that are enhanced through digital literacies (Parks, 2014; Media Smarts, 2014). Teachers also require training on how to use digital literacy to enhance learning and meet curricular needs of the 21st Century (Media Smarts, 2014).

As New York State continues to transition to the Common Core Learning Standards, specific guidelines to help teachers make difficult choices with digital literacies is limited. As educators delve more into the Common Core Standards each year, more guidelines are created to assist teachers with the choices presented by digital literacies. The Common Core Standards, starting in kindergarten, require students to use word processing software to produce and publish their writing (Dalton, 2012). The ultimate goal of the Common Core Standards is to create meaningful, relevant, and rigorous learning opportunities that utilize digital literacy skills and tools.

<p align="center">**Conclusion**</p>

My review of the literature has revealed that integrating technology with literacy has significant benefits on students' development of literacy skills. Research has linked the use of technology with student motivation during reading and writing. Web 2.0 has been shown to improve students' writing through the use of blogging and online messaging boards. In addition,

assistive technology has proven to help facilitate and support students during literacy activities. The literature also shows that in the 21st century there has been a dramatic shift from print based literacy to digital literacies and that instruction and exposure to digital literacies will aide students of tomorrow to be academically successful.

Chapter 3: Methods and Procedures

The main purpose of this study was to take a closer look at the choices teachers consider- specifically when choosing literacy technologies for their students. Analyzing the surveys, interviews, and observations helped to determine what factors teachers consider to provide authentic learning opportunities in the classroom while utilizing digital literacies.

Research Question

What might influence a teacher's choice of digital literacies for her or his students?

Context of the Study

The study took place in one public school district in Western New York. The school district is located on the west side of a mid-sized city. The school district includes four elementary schools with around 1,800 students in grades K-5. The average class size is twenty-two students (retrieved from school website). Through my own observations while substituting in the schools I have observed that each elementary school contains a computer lab that is accessible to all classrooms K-5. Teachers may choose to reserve the computer lab for use. I have also observed two computer lab carts that are available for teachers to reserve and bring right into the classroom. Every classroom, I have noted, is equipped with a SmartBoard, Elmo, and at least 3 computers. Each classroom's specials rotation includes a technology class. In this class students learn basic computer skills and computer language, from the technology/enrichment specialist in the building, while involved in a number of activities that help to reinforce the new skills. I have substituted for the technology teachers often and am familiar with what students do during that time. Each school includes a group of classrooms labeled as *21st Century Technology Classrooms* (Downey, March 1, 2013). These classrooms

each have a set of student laptops, iPads, and Nooks that remain in the classroom all day (Downey, March 1, 2013). These classrooms push students to use digital literacy skills throughout the entire school day and especially during reading/writing (Downey, March 1, 2013).

Study Participants

Survey Group

The participants are all elementary teachers in the ABC School District-specifically at Maple Elementary School. The group of chosen teachers have been teaching for a wide range of years; 0-20 years. There is wide range of experienced teachers and a wide range of technology experience. Some teachers use technology consistently throughout each day, while some may use it briefly each day. I have seen postings in the school district for technology workshops so teachers have the opportunity to stay current with the changing times. Since I used an anonymous method of data collection I do not know specifics about the participants who complete the survey.

Interview Group

The 6 interviewees have a wide range of teaching experience, 0-20 years. I took interviewees from varying levels of experience. From substituting frequently in the district I was aware of teachers who use technology consistently in their classrooms. I chose six teachers, however I was only able to interview four. It is expected that with a range of experience there is also a range of technology experience.

Observation Group

I observed two teachers who used technology consistently throughout their day, especially during ELA. I have substituted in both classrooms frequently throughout the year, and co-taught ELA with one of the teachers last school year. Both teachers teach in the district at Maple Elementary School and teach 21st Century Classrooms. Dana was a grade five teacher and has 22 students in her class. Her class is a mixture of cultures, races, and academic abilities. There are approximately 10 students with IEPs in the classroom, 3 Black students, 1 Hispanic student, and 1 Muslim student and the rest of the students are Caucasian. Since there were a large number of students with disabilities in this classroom, a special education teacher pushed in to co-teach during the 120 minute ELA block every day. In addition to the special education teacher, an aide pushed in three times a week for 30 minutes during ELA for additional support. The general education teacher used the SmartBoard and Elmo to teach and model the writing goal for the day/week and then students used the laptops to draft, revise, and edit their writing. The teacher has looped up with the students from fourth grade, which made it the second year the students had been using the laptops.

Tracy is a grade four teacher and has 20 students in her class. All students in the class were Caucasian, with a mixture of academic abilities. A few students had IEPs. One student had a 1:1 aide for daily support. The aide also supported the class as a whole when needed. A special education teacher supported two students during ELA for 40 minutes each day. There were six yoga balls that students rotated using for the day in place of their chair. The yoga ball was intended to stimulate focus and concentration throughout the day. The general education teacher used centers each day during the 60 minute reading block. She pulled a reading group to the back horseshoe table while the other students worked on reading/writing centers utilizing the laptops,

iPads, or Nooks.   During the centers students were working on blogs, wikis, RAZ Kids and using other literacy sites. Some students listened to books on iPods and followed along in the paperback book, while other students read the paperback book to themselves.

My Positionality as the Researcher

For the purposes of this research study I held the role of interviewer and observer. I interviewed teachers, observing in classrooms that use technology and surveying a group of anonymous teachers. It is important to describe my own positionality due to wanting to acknowledge any beliefs, philosophies, and more that may impact the research. I am a 26 year old Caucasian, female teacher living in a mid-sized city Western New York. I am from an upper middle class family and grew up in the suburban town where the study took place. I graduated from Niagara University in May of 2010 with certification in Early Childhood and Childhood Education (B-6) and Students with Disabilities (B-6). After graduating I continued my love for education by substituting in a few neighboring school districts (including the one I am currently employed by), working as a Special Education Teacher in two different long-term positions, and teaching first grade in a long term position. My own schooling continues as a I work toward a master's degree in Childhood Literacy at The College at Brockport, SUNY. I am in my final year of classes.

After substituting and numerous long-term assignments I am now teaching sixth grade in a full year, long term position, and hopefully will be a probationary teacher the following year. I am now teaching 21 students in a co-taught classroom. My classroom has six students with disabilities and three use assistive technology in the form of iPads and netbooks.

My educational philosophies shape the way I teach, the interactions I have with students, and how I deliver instruction in the classroom. I believe it my role as an educator to shape and guide my students' development as they navigate the world them. Six graders go through major changes-emotionally, mentally, and physically. It is the last year they are considered an elementary student and the last year they are with the same 20-25 classmates all day. As a sixth grade teacher I believe it my responsibility to help mold independent, self-sufficient learners who take responsibility for themselves and their education. With an academically and socially diverse group of students, a 'one size-fits all' approach would not be appropriate. Students come to school with different skill sets, interests, needs, and learning styles. It is my responsibility as an educator to determine what each student needs to be successful and planning lessons using that knowledge in conjunction with beliefs from the universal design for learning (Retrieved from http://www.cast.org/udl).

As an educator I believe it is my responsibility to prepare students with the tools they need to successful academically and socially by providing instruction that is differentiated and scaffolded to meet the needs of each student. Using Vygotsky's gradual release of responsibility model I can ensure that students will take on new concepts and eventually use them independently (Vygotsky, 1978). I value authentic reading and writing, especially in the sixth grade so they can make connections to their lives and see the value in what they are learning. I truly believe that students who are engaged and motivated learn the most which is why I strive to provide lessons that encourage communication, collaboration, and movement. Students also learn best when there is a safe and welcoming environment, which is why I value spending time creating a good rapport with students. I also believe in showing students that I, the teacher, can make mistakes, and thus will help transfer our classroom into a risk-free environment. I believe

students learn through explicit, modeled teaching with opportunities for shared, independent, and guided practice. Students respond best to praise and acknowledgment of their hard work. I believe all teachers should be motivated to stay current with teaching strategies and trends (such as digital literacies) and therefore I value professional workshops to help educators grow and continue their own learning. The International Society for Technology Education has standards for teachers that help them stay current and improve teaching (ISTE, 2008). I also value daily reflection on lessons and activities to look for ways of improving to better service the students.

I chose this research topic after substituting and observing students use technology in the classroom. These experiences lead to my own interest in digital literacies and my curiosity of how teachers are using it in the classroom. This curiosity and wonder is the ultimate effect of my desire to continuing growing as a professional in the educational field.

Data Collection

I collected data through the use of a funneling approach beginning with a survey, then moving on to interviews, and classroom observations.

Survey

I gained a preliminary understanding of teachers' views and opinions of literacy technologies or digital literacies through this survey. The survey provided information on how often teachers engage their students with a range of digital literacies. Using a survey gave me an understanding of the district as a whole in regards to digital literacies. I used the free site Survey Monkey to create my survey. Using SurveyMonkey.com allowed my participants to remain anonymous. A copy of the survey is attached as Appendix A.

I then distributed the survey to teachers in ABC School District through my ABC email address. The survey was sent out to all K-5 teachers in one of the four elementary schools.

Interviews

I arranged for meetings with four teachers (when it was convenient for them) to interview them in their classrooms. The teachers were chosen by the number of years they have been teaching and if they currently use technology in their classroom: one teacher has been teaching 0-5 years, one has been teaching 6-10 years and two have been teaching more than 10 years. This allowed me to have a range of interview data collected from somewhat experienced to highly experienced teachers. Since I substituted in the school regularly I was aware of the teachers who use technology in their classroom and interviewed four of those teachers. The interview included open ended questions for the teachers' responses. Each teacher received the interview questions in advance to prepare and gather any materials they wanted to share with me. The questions I asked teachers are listed below:

1. Can you show me an example of individual student academic goals and how digital literacy supports that goal? What is the digital literacy(s) used?

2. What ELA areas are best supported by digital literacy (i.e. word study, fluency, writing process)? How are they supported by digital literacy?

3. What is the common language you use when speaking to students about technology?

4. What factors do you consider for your specific makeup of students? Which factors do you think about first? Why?

5. Can you show me a common digital literacy that you use and tell me about its importance/use/benefits?

I recorded the interview, with the interviewees' consent, using an audio recorder and then transcribed the interviews afterwards.

Observations

To get a clear picture of teachers using digital literacies I observed teachers in their classrooms during ELA while they use literacy technologies. I observed two teachers in the ABC School District. I observed each teacher one time for ninety minutes. The teachers I observed are teachers of 21st Century Classrooms in the ABC School District. These teachers have had special training on incorporating literacy technologies in the classroom. During these observations I looked for specific types of technology being used, how the teacher introduced it, how students interacted with the specified technology, and what purpose the technology serves. It gave me the opportunity to ask the teacher *why* a student is using a particular digital literacy. I used anecdotal notes to record activities, technology used and language the teacher used with the students.

<div align="center">

Data Analysis

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Survey

I analyzed the survey data to gain an understanding of the digital literacies used in the school districts, teacher knowledge of, implementation of, uses of, and teacher choice in regards to digital literacies. I reviewed the survey data using constant comparison (Mertler, 2008) methodology looking for trends and patterns in the data. The analysis of the survey helped form my questions for the teacher interviews.

Interviews

I used a constant comparison (Mertler, 2008) methodology to analyze the data. I examined the teachers' responses to the interview questions to find patterns and categories. From this I looked for commonalities and differences throughout the interviews.

Observations

I examined the language teachers use when talking about digital literacies to note any patterns for each of the observed teachers and then compared and contrasted the two teachers. I also compared and contrasted how the teachers use digital literacies in the classrooms and what parts of ELA it is being used for. Also, I looked at the specific technologies students are engaging in and the purpose of the engagement. I looked for similarities and differences amongst the classrooms. The constant comparison (Mertler, 2008) methodology will be used to analysis the observation data as well.

After I analyzed each kind of data I looked across the data as a whole using constant comparison (Mertler, 2008) methodology. I looked for patterns that occurred throughout the data and connections between the survey, teacher interviews and classroom observations. Looking at the data as a whole allowed me to comprise an overall understanding of what teachers *do* with digital literacy*,* how they *react* to digital literacy, and how they *choose* digital literacies for students.

Procedures

Listed below is the weekly schedule of how I completed my research and answered my research question.

Week 1
- Created and distributed surveys to teachers utilizing the free site SurveyMonkey.com
- Teachers returned surveys within two weeks

Week 2
- Started receiving surveys and began analyzing the data

- Sent a reminder email out to teachers to please complete survey

- Began developing questions for interviews to dig deeper into the research question

Week 3
- Collected the rest of surveys and analyzed the data, looking for trends and patterns
- Arranged for teacher interviews based on teacher schedules
- Arranged for classroom observation visits

Week 4
- Finished analysis of surveys
- Finalized interview questions

Week 5
- Interviewed teachers
- Observed Classrooms
- Began transcribing the interviews

Week 6
- Interviewed teachers
- Observed classrooms
- Began organizing classroom observation data
- Transcribed the interviews

Week 7
- Finished transcribing the interviews
- Organized the classroom observation data
- Began analyzing interview data and classroom observation data

Week 8
- Analyzed interview data and classroom observation data

- Began looking across the data

Week 9-10
- Finished Analyzing data as a whole (looking across the data)

Criteria for Trustworthiness

As the researcher I was determined to conduct this study in an ethical and unbiased manner. Conscious of my educational philosophies and beliefs, I committed to staying objective in my research study. I collected and analyzed the data as they were presented. It is important that all measures are taken to ensure validity, accuracy, authenticity, and reliability of the data. To ensure trustworthiness I used variety of data collection techniques. I used surveys, interviews and observations utilizing triangulation of the three data sources. I used prolonged engagement of the collection of data, throughout eight weeks, to ensure I had gathered a sufficient amount of data. I was engaged in persistent observations and interviews with teachers as I gathered data on the use of digital literacies. My participants were debriefed on my intentions for the survey, interview and observations. I ensured transferability by including a detailed description of my participants in the context of the research. Also I ensured dependability of the research through my detailed description of the research process.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study was time. I was not able to observe a large quantity of classrooms. A reason for this was I was unable to take off multiple of days of work in this short period of time. If I was able to observe a larger quantity of classrooms, however, that would have allowed me to look more closely at what teachers are doing in regards to digital literacies. Eight weeks is a relatively short period of time to collect enough data to gain a true understanding of how and why teachers are using digital literacies in the classrooms. Another limitation is that it

was the end of the school year when I began my research so I ran into trouble being able to interview six teachers as I had originally planned to do, thus I could only interview four. The end of the school is an extremely busy time for teachers and school districts.

Summary

Through the research study I was able to collect data by means of surveys, interviews and observations to answer my question; *what might influence a teacher's choice of digital literacies for her or his students?* The triangulation of data and prolonged engagement aided in ensuring my research was reliable, valid, and authentic. It was my intention that this research offered contributions to the education field.

Chapter 4: Interpretation of Data

Introduction

I designed this study in order to examine what types of choices teachers make when choosing technology to implement into their ELA instruction. I collected data over a period of six weeks. Teachers in one elementary school were given an electronic survey to complete, and four teachers of varying experience were interviewed. In addition, I observed in two classrooms with access to a class set of student netbooks.

Each form of data was carefully chosen. The surveys were annoymous and allowed for a general understanding of technology used by the teachers in the ABC school. The interviewees were chosen based on years of teaching experience to provide a full range of experiences captured in the study. I chose the classrooms I observed because of the availability of student netbooks throughout the entire day. Both of these teachers use technology throughout their entire day.

Research Question

This study was designed to use mixed methods, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from teachers at the ABC school over six weeks. My research was based on the following question:

What might influence a teacher's choice of literacy technologies for her or his students?

I collected data from observation notes, interviews and anonymous surveys. Observation notes were collected while students interacted with technology, the teacher interacted with technology and general observations of the two classrooms in regard to technology (i.e. location

of technology, accessibility of technology.) Anonymous surveys were electronically distributed

to teachers that asked about types of digital literacies used, frequency of use, duration of use,

evaluating statements about digital literacies found in my research, and where teachers stand

professionally in regard to utilizing the available digital literacies.   Interviews were conducted to

collect data on what kinds of digital literacies teachers choose, how digital literacies support

student academic goals, ELA areas best supported by digital literacies, factors considered when

choosing digital literacies, and finally, advantages and disadvanges of using digital literacies.

Teachers make a plethora of decisions each and every day. Thoughtful decision making is

a common term amongst teachers because decisions are made with their students in mind.

Student engagement and motivation have been constant decision making factors when it comes

to planning instruction. The 21st century has offered an abundance of options with the advances

in technology or digital literacies. Teachers now have a variety of digital literacy options to

choose from to integrate into reading and writing during the school day. The use of digital

literacies forces teachers to make educated and thoughtful choices on which technologies to

include.

After a thorough anaylsis, my research revealed that teachers do in fact make *many*

carefully chosen decisions about what types of digital literacies to incorporate into the classroom.

The digital literacies used by the elementary teachers in my study fit in the categories of either

web 1.0 or web 2.0 literacies, both chosen and utilized by the educators for various reasons.

Some Web 1.0 digital literacies provide teachers with another tool to identify students'

needs and can also show students' strengths through assessment data collected by the digitial

tool. Publishing tools, like Microsoft Office (2010), are chosen by all of the teachers in the study

to better acclimate their students to software that is issued on all of the computers throughout the district.

Web 2.0 literacies offer students the opportunity to interact with authentic writing opportunities such as blogging. Blogging also introduces students to real life social media that is so prevalent in our society today. Two teachers in particular see the benefits that blogging has to offer, such as adding another means to continue home and school communication.

I discovered that a common theme for many of the educators, in relation to both web 1.0 and 2.0 literacies, is the motivation that digital literacies give the students. As my research showed technology fires students up and get them excited about learning (Barone & Wright, 2008, p. 268).

While analyzing my data it became clear that the themes around the digital literacies teachers chose and why could be separated into two categories: web 1.0 and 2.0 digital literacies.

Web 1.0

Web 1.0 digital literacies provide opportunities to support student growth in reading. The literacies can motivate students through interactive games, independence the technology gives them, and just the sole oppportunity to *use* technology. The literacies also help to support student growth by giving the educators another tool in deciphering student strengths and needs.

Digital Literacy Gives Students Motivation

Student motivation, according to my data, was one of the number one factors that contributed to teachers choosing a digital literacy.

Table 1: Survey question on student motivation in relation to technology

Please evaluate each of the following statements. Please select one for each question.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
When using technology students are more motivated	43.75% 7 people	56.25% 9 people	0%	0%

The survey data show that of the teachers who responded, 100% either agreed or strongly agreed that students are motivated by technology. This finding directly aligns with Barone and Wright's (2012) notion that technology fires students up and gets them motivated for learning in the classroom. The survey also asked teachers to *elaborate on the number one factor they consider when integrating technology in the classroom.* One teacher replied simply "student engagement" (survey, 6/4/2013), which is closely linked to student motivation. Student motivation leads to student engagement. Another question that was asked on the survey was: *What is the role of digital literacies in school instruction?* Five of the 16 teachers included student motivation in their reponse. One teacher in particular posted, "Digital literacies truly integrates literature and technology into a package that is interesting and relevant to today's youth. The role is simple-keep student interest high so they can learn to read and understand" (survey, 5/29/13). Another teacher posted a similar comment, "It helps enhance student interest and it becomes more relevant to the world they are growing up in" (survey, 6/5/13).

One kind of Web 1.0 digital literacy that provides motivation for elementary students is RazKids (2014). During the interviews each teacher, spoke about using RazKids (2014). to support their students' reading skills because of its high interest and the motivation that high interest provides. RazKids (2014) is an online reading center with leveled books. Each child is registered and recieves a "library" of books at his/her reading level. The site provides

opportunites for the student to listen to a book, read the book, and then answer ten multiple choice questions in a quiz format about the book. Each level has ten books. Once all ten books have been read and the student has passed all of the quizzes they can move onto the next level. Students earn coins each time they read a book and take a quiz. The coins can then be used to play games in the 'arcade'. One teacher I interviewed, Christina, said "the coins earned to play games is very motivational for those students who are struggling with reading. It gives them something to look forward to as a reward for their reading" (personal communication, 6/3/13).

When I observed Dana in her classroom she had several different activities going on, ranging from centers to guided reading groups to a special education teacher pulling students out. I noticed that when the special education teacher would bring students back into the classroom those students immediately would take their netbook and log onto RazKids (2014). I asked Dana, *"Why are those students the only ones using RazKids at this time, and other students are using another website?"*

She replied, *"The students working with the special education teacher are reading a novel with her in a small, structured group setting. When they come back into the classroom they use RazKids to practice their independent reading skills. Most of those students do not enjoy reading much but when you watch them use RazKids* (2014) *would never know that because they love using the technology!"* (Observation, Dana, 6/3/13)

It is evident that the teachers of the ABC school have strong feelings toward the motivational benefits of technology and that is what leads many of them to use digital literacies in their classroom.

Digital Literacy Can Provide a Tool for Teachers to Help Drive their Instruction

My data show that teachers use technology to differentiate instruction for their students in both reading and writing. My survey data and interview data also show that online assessments can help drive instruction in the elementary classroom.

Differentiating Reading and Writing Tools to Drive Instruction

Table 2: Survey data that shows teachers use digital literacy to differentiate instruction

Please evaluate each of the following statements. Please select one for each question.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I use technology to differentiate instruction	43.75% 7 people	56.25% 9 people	0%	0%

According to my data all 16 teachers who responded either agreed or strongly agreed that they use technology to differentiate instruction. By using technology to differentiate instruction teachers are able to make sure that all students can accomplish the same task and have the opportunity to be successful doing so.

The survey further elaborated on this question asking teachers what types of technology they use. Some of the responses to this were Fusion Forte Writer (2014), Sound Out Simon Read Aloud (2014), and providing students with audio versions of class read books (Survey data, 5/29/13).

Writing Tools that Drive Instruction

Fusion Forte Writer (2014) is an assistive technology device that offers text to speech, word prediction, keyboarding skills and some math components. One teacher commented on the

survey that the Fusion Forte Writer (2014) has helped two of her special needs students who are struggling, unmotivated writers. With this tool the teacher is able to work on specific writing components with the students instead of just scribing for them. *"The students are now getting more writing instruction that is appropriate for them because I can really see where their writing skills are lacking"* (Survey Data, 5/29/13).

While observing Dana's fourth grade class I noticed a student was speaking into an iPad while the other students were using Microsoft Office (2010). I later asked Dana why this student was speaking into the iPad. I learned this student uses a program called Dragon Dictation (n.d.)) which is a text to speech software. He speaks into a microphone and the words appear on the screen. His job is then to add the proper punctuation needed. She did say that in order for it to copy exactly what was said the student must speak slowly, clearly, and loudly. The student uses this program because he was recently diagnosed with dsylexia. She informed me that before he was diagnosed his sentences, whether typed or hand written, were always very difficult to comprehend; it was a struggle to write anything. *"With this program I am able to really see what his writing skills and abilities are"* (Dana Observation, 6/3/13). This program is not only more effective for the student, it is more effective for the teacher in terms of teaching writing skills and noting the student's writing strengths.

Reading Tools that Help Drive Instruction

In my survey a teacher commented about providing students with books to listen to on an iPod or CD player. This teacher mentioned that the district requires each grade level to participate in book studies on specific books. Typically these books are very difficult and frustrating for some students to read. When a book is hard to read for a student the student's

comprehesion of the book is negatively affected. Students who are struggling readers benefit from listening to audio versions of books because they can focus on the story and understanding the book. Another teacher also commented that providing some students with audio versions of books can help drive instruction because the students are then able to contribute to the book discussions (Survey Data, 5/29/13). The teacher doesn't need to spend that extra time clarifying events that occurred in the book and making sure *all* students are on the same page.

While observing Tracy's classroom I noticed each student had a book bin filled with books for independent reading time. I also noticed that some students had mini iPods. When I asked Tracy about this she responded that with the diverse class she has not all of her students are strong readers and some of them do have audio versions of the books read as a class. She went on to explain how this is extremely helpful, *"It allows those students unable to access the book on their own a way to access it, it gives them a chance to participate in discussions around the book, answering writing prompts, and just aids in their comprehension" (Observation, 6/12/13).* The teacher is able to see where any misconceptions occur in the students understanding.

This data from both the survey and observation show how teachers use reading tools to drive instruction.

Online Assessments Used to Drive Instruction

Digital literacies also drive teacher instruction by providing feedback about students after completion of online assessments.

Table 3: Survey data showing teachers use of online assessments

How often do you integrate the following technologies into your instruction or materials? Please select one for each question.	**Regularly** At least once per day	**Frequently** At least once per week	**Occasionally** At least once per month	**Seldom** At least once per marking period	**Rarely** at least once per year	**Never** Never use it
Have students take online assessments	18.75% 3 people	12.5% 2 people	25% 4 people	6.25% 1 person	12.5% 2 people	25% 4 people

The survey data show that 5 teachers, 31% of those responding, have students take online assessments pretty frequently. These online assessments can easily generate information for teachers about their students that can help determine their students strengths and needs. The data also show that 7 teachers, 44% of the respondents, seldom to never use online assessments with students.

During my interviews I noted that 3 of the 4 teachers mentioned that RazKids (2014) provides important data about a student. After a student takes a quiz on RazKids (2014) the data are sent to the teacher informing them of what types of questions the student answered. Types of questions could relate to cause and effect, main idea, or anything else about the book. The data inform the teacher if the student answered the question correctly or incorrectly. The question itself is not provided in this data. When I asked Tracy to show me a common digital literacy that she uses and tell me about its importance she specifically spoke to the benefits of using RazKids (2014) to drive instruction. *"The teacher also gets information about whether it's inferring questions or cause and effect questions that the student is missing; so the teacher can gather*

data that way to drive instruction and it's motivational because the kids collect coins based on

reading and listening and answering questions" (personal communication, 6/12/13). This

information can be very useful for a teacher to help create flexible reading groups based on what

the students' needs are at the time. It is also helpful in gauging if there is a skill lacking by the

majority of the class that a whole group activity would be appropriate for. While Tracy

mentioned it was helpful to decipher student needs, it was not mentioned that RazKids (2014)

could also show student strengths. One teacher reported that she uses RazKids (2014) but did not

speak about the programs benefits or deficits.

I feel that it is important to mention that while it is evident that online assessments *can*

drive instruction by clearly showing data on student needs and possibly strengths, some of my

data pointed out that not all online assessments may be appropriate. During my observation of

Dana's class I noticed that some students were frustrated with the program Castle Learning

(2014), an online assessment tool with teacher generated questions and answers. I asked Dana

about Castle Learning (2014) and why some of the students were so frustrated. I learned that if

the student does not provide the same answer the teacher input as the answer the question is

marked incorrectly. I also asked about what kind of feedback the assessment provides and she

replied, *"It simply tells me how many questions the student got right and how many they got*

wrong. I can see the questions they answered incorrectly but I cannot see what they entered for

*an answer" (*Observation, 6/3/13). She went on to tell me that this isn't the best tool to use but

she likes it because it is easy to use and can be a good review of material for students. This was

the only time I saw this tool used and the only teacher whom talked about it. However, Castle

Learning (2014) was included in survey responses

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Web 2.0

Web 2.0 digital literacies are chosen by teachers to implement into daily ELA instruction for a number of reasons. Web 2.0 digital literacies provide meaningful opportunities for students to interact with authentic writing. By using web 2.0 literacies teachers can keep the lines of communication between school and home wide open. Using these literacies also allow students to actively engage in real world digital literacies.

Web 2.0 Offers Opportunities for Authentic Writing

Research has shown over and over again that providing authentic writing opportunities is extremely meaningful, engaging, and demonstrates a clear purpose of writing for students (Mills & Levido, 2011; Richardson, 2010; Larson, 2009). Teachers in the ABC school chose Web 2.0 literacies to provide these writing opportunities for their students.

The survey data show that some of the teachers chose to use web 2.0 for independent writing practice.

Table 4: Web 2.0 used for writing practice

How often do you integrate the following technologies into your instruction or materials? Please select one for each question.	**Regularly** At least once per day	**Frequently** At least once per week	**Occasionally** At least once per month	**Seldom** At least once per marking period	**Rarely** at least once per year	**Never** Never use it
Use web 2.0 for independent writing practice	12.5% 2 people	6.25% 1 person	6.25% 1 person	12.5% 2 people	6.25% 1 person	56.25% 9 people

While only 3 of 16 teachers use web 2.0 for writing practice it is still important to note this because it shows that a few of the teachers believe it is important to immerse their students in authentic digital writing opportunities. Teachers see the value in incorporating authentic writing opportunities. These opportunities help students become more successful.

Thirteen of the teachers hardly ever or never use web 2.0 for independent writing practice. When teachers were asked to provide additional comments on what prevents them from using technology in the classroom one teacher responded, "*When it comes to laptops, it is time. It takes time to get out all of our laptops, get logged on, make sure everyone is on the same page*, *etc*" (survey data, 5/29/13). A couple other teachers also mention that time plays a huge factor in their decision to use technology in the classroom and that usually there is not enough time.

Table 5: Integrating technology is important for student success

Please evaluate each of the following statements. Please select one for each question.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I believe that integrating technology into my curriculum is important for student success	68.75% 11 people	31.25% 5 people	0%	0%

All 16 teachers see the connection between integrating technology and student success. I believe this contributes to teachers choosing web 2.0 sites for authentic writing opportunities. Teachers know that to be successful in our society the students need to experience these opportunities.

During both of my observations I noticed students were posting to KidBlog (2014), a kid friendly blogging site. The site is safe to use with students because it is controlled by the teacher. The teacher creates a 'classroom' to monitor who can post to the blog. In Tracy's classroom students were posting about their school year. The directions Tracy gave her students were to

choose 4 things you have enjoyed learning about this year, and tell me about them. I observed

students logging into KidBlog (2014) and bringing up a new post screen. As I observed I saw

students immediately focus on the task at hand, and very seldom did I see a student become

distracted. I brought this up to Tracy after her ELA class. I asked her if that was a typical day for

her students using KidBlog (2014). Tracy told me her students see the benefit of using KidBlog

(2014). Rather than writing in a notebook, her students like the idea of writing on a blog and

being able to read each other's posts. She went on to say that if there is time left after the

students have submitted their post they can read and respond to 3 classmates' posts (Observation,

6/12/13).

Dana's classroom was also using KidBlog (2014) during ELA, but the purpose was a bit

different. In Dana's classroom the students read a chapter of *Maniac Magee* (J. Spinelli, 1990).

then logged onto KidBlog (2014) to answer a series of comprehension questions about the pages

read. Dana said in her interview that the students have "*done a lot of online posting on our*

KidBlog (2014) *site; they go on to mainly answer guided reading questions. This is great for me*

because I now have a digital collection of their writing to reference whenever I need to"

(personal communication, 6/3/13).

During Tracy's interview I asked her to show me a common digital literacy she uses and

KidBlog (2014) was the first one she showed me. While I have seen it during my observation of

her classroom she went on to tell me that blogging has helped her students mature as writers.

This authentic writing opportunity has shown her students how to interact appropriately via the

internet and how to maintain a respectful voice. "*They've learned about being respectful to each*

other because we did a lot of lessons on how to leave respectful posts, how you don't write in

capital letters or use a lot of punctuation at the end because that can offend people if they don't know how to take it"(personal communication, 6/3/13).

While observing in Dana's classroom I also noticed another web 2.0 site some of the students were using after KidBlog (2014) called Tween Tribune (2014). Tween Tribune (2014) is a database of articles appropriate for the 'pre-teen' age students. The articles are organized by category and date when the article was written. Students in Dana's class are able to sign in and choose an article of choice to read. After the article is read they can respond to the article sharing feelings, thoughts, opinions, and ideas. Dana says this is another way for her students to interact with real world writing opportunities. If a student signs into the site the written post is then saved to the teacher's 'classroom' similar to KidBlog (2014). Tracy and Dana both commented in their interviews that the students enjoy this site even at home (personal communication, 6/2/13 & personal communication 6/12/13). What is neat about this site is the students are able to read and respond to posts written by students across the United States. This is a similar set up to online city newspaper blogs like the Democrat and Chronicle's (2014) online newspaper.

It is clear that a few teachers in the ABC school value providing authentic writing opportunities for their students while also engaging them real world web 2.0 digital literacies like blogging. *"Adding technology into my literacy block challenges them (students) to communicate with the class in a different format"* (Survey Data, 5/29/13).

Web 2.0 Digital Literacies used to bridge the gap between the home and school

Web 2.0 digital literacies are used to bridge the gap between the home and school environments. In the past students would go home and tell their parents about their school day.

Unless the teacher sent home a newsletter, or made a phone call there may not have been a lot of home to school communication because it was not convenient.

In Tracy's classroom she has made it clear that she uses specific websites because of the opportunity it provides to bridge the home to school gap. KidBlog (2014) is one of the sites she mentioned. During my observation students were posting about 4 things they learned throughout the school year. This weekly post was part of what the students call 'Z News.' This e-newsletter, written by the students, is sent out each week for parents to stay informed. Tracy went on to say that *"KidBlog* (2014) *is a way the students communicate with their parents. I don't send home a weekly/monthly newsletter because the kids are doing the work. The students should be working harder and they are communicating for an authentic audience- their parents"* (personal communication, 6/12/13).

While interviewing Katie she mentioned that many of the sites she uses in the classroom can be accessed at home as well. All of her resources are easily accessible for her students at home because they are right on her website. Katie says, *"The websites I choose are motivational because the students can choose the ones they enjoy and use them at home with their parents. This also helps to get the parents involved in their student's education"* (personal communication 6/3/13).

Christina also mentioned the home to school connection in her first grade classroom. She spoke a lot about the benefits of using RazKids (2014) with her students. One thing that stuck out to me in her interview was her comment *"there are actually about 10 students whom go on at home and use it at home as their free time. I think that is awesome"* (personal communication, 6/3/13).

Tracy, Christina, and Katie choose to use digital literacies to bridge the gap between home and school. These teachers see the value in keeping parents informed about what happens during the school day.

Microsoft Office 2010 Used to Acclimate Students to District Wide Publishing Software

Teachers in the ABC school district have their students use technology to type papers and create PowerPoint presentations, according to the data I have collected.

Table 6: Students use word processors to type papers and use PowerPoint for presentations

How often do you integrate the following technologies into your instruction or materials? Please select <u>one</u> for each question.	**Regularly** At least once per day	**Frequently** At least once per week	**Occasionally** At least once per month	**Seldom** At least once per marking period	**Rarely** at least once per year	**Never** Never use it
Have students type papers in Word or other word processors	6.25% 1 person	25% 4 people	43.75% 7 people	18.75% 3 people	6.25% 1 person	0%
Have students create PowerPoint Presentations	0%	0%	25% 4 people	31.25% 5 people	37.5% 6 people	6.25% 1 person

Five of the 16 teachers have students type weekly using a word processor. Occasionally teachers ask their students to create PowerPoint Presentations. The difference in frequency of these technologies could be due to the age of students. K-3 students may not use PowerPoint because of the many steps it requires to put together a presentation.

From substituting in this school often I am aware that the district has installed Microsoft Office (2010) on all of the computers K-12. Microsoft Office (2010) is readily available for students at each grade level and on any computer district wide. Katie spoke to me how she has her first grade students use Microsoft Office Word (2010) to type a paragraph almost every week. To make the program accessible and easy to use for her little learners she customizes the toolbar ribbon with only a few options for her students to use. She says her *"students have become so independent with typing in a word processor because of the amount of exposure they have had with it. This exposure is going to help them succeed later in school because they have some typing skills and some independence with specific features of word processors, like font, font size, and how to open a new document and even print"* (personal communication, 6/3/13). Both Tracy and Dana also mentioned their students use Microsoft Office Word (2010) to publish writing assignments.

It is also important to note that 11 of the 16 teachers hardly ever have students type in word processors. This could be due to the factor of time. Christina mentioned in her interview that she doesn't use technology as much as she should or would like because of the prep work that is required. *"I think technology is great, it's a great tool for learning. It's also a lot of prep work and if teachers don't have the time they won't use it correctly, or won't use it at all. I think this year I haven't used it correctly which is unfortunate because I haven't had the time and I've been trying to keep up with everything else"* (Christina, personal communication, 6/3/13). The survey asked teachers what their number one factor was when they consider integrating technology and one of the teachers responded, *"the availability of the technology. If the technology is readily available and relatively easy to use it is a good candidate for use in my room"* (survey data, 5/29/13). Another teacher responded with, *"Accessibility of equipment for*

students (will they have what they need for as long as they need it?)" (survey data, 5/29/13).
From substituting in the building, I know that there are only enough laptops and computers for 4
classes to use at the same time.

The data collected show teachers in the ABC school value exposing students early to the
word processing software in the elementary school years so the students can be successful using
it when they reach middle and high school. The data also show that time and availability of
laptops play a role in utilizing the word processing software frequently.

Summary

When looking across the data I can see that teachers in the ABC school in fact make
many decisions when it comes to integrating technology into reading and writing. These choices
lead some teachers to integrate technology often in their classrooms while it leads other teachers
to integrate less frequently or not at all. These data supports the notion that teachers are making
thoughtful decisions with their students in mind as well as what they can handle in terms of
technology.

Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

Introduction

This study looked at what types of choices teachers make when choosing technology to implement into their ELA instruction. A funneling approach was used to collect the data over a period of six weeks. Sixteen teachers were anonymously surveyed followed by four teacher interviews. Lastly, two observations were conducted in classrooms with daily access to a class set of netbooks.

The research question for this study was as follows:

What might influence a teacher's choice of literacy technologies for her or his students? Analysis of survey data, recorded interviews, and observational notes gave insight into how teachers choose literacy technologies for their students. All of the tools used in this study provided for triangulation of data.

This chapter will delve into the conclusions I made based upon the findings of the study. The chapter will also discuss implications not only for student learning but implications for teachers as well. Recommendations for future research will be given along with final thoughts on my research.

Conclusions

After careful documentation and analysis of the data collected during this six-week study, three specific trends rose to the surface. The first trend I noticed connects student engagement with motivation. The second trend that unfolded is that technology helps teachers drive their instruction in the classroom. Finally, the third trend observed was that literacy technologies can provide students with authentic writing opportunities.

Students are more engaged during instruction when able to use technology

One of the more prominent trends of the study revolved around the notion that student interest in technology can be used as a means to help motivate students throughout the school day. My analysis of the data suggested that technology can be used to hold students' attention *longer* because they are interested, excited, and motivated to learn when they are able to interact with technology.

Table 6: Students are motived when using technology

Please evaluate each of the following statements. Please select <u>one</u> for each question.	**Strongly Agree**	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
When using technology students are more motivated	43.75% 7 people	56.25% 9 people	0%	0%

Table 6 shows all of the survey participants agreed that students are more motivated when using technology. During all four teacher interviews the teachers made the general statement that *technology motivates our students.* I also observed students engaged, focused, and on task in both of the classrooms I visited. Each of those teachers whom I observed, spoke about how lucky they are that their students get to use netbooks all day long. They continued to say that when the netbooks are being used there is a higher level of engagement and excitement buzzing throughout the classroom (T. Zimmerman, observation, 6/12/13 & D. Young, observation, 6/3/13).

Students in the 21st century are constantly being immersed in technology with cell phones, laptops, tablets, and video games. The students don't consider it 'technology,' it's just life to them. When given the chance to use technology in the classroom students get *fired up* to use what they already know (Barone & Wright, 2008). While observing Dana and Tracy, I could

see they used the connection students already had to technology to help motivate them in the

classroom. Tracy and Dana, the teachers I observed, were fortunate enough to have access to a

class set of laptop carts. Not only did their students get to use technology, they got to use it daily.

Each of the four teachers I interviewed mentioned motivational features of different

literacy technologies that encourage students to stay focused and on task. For example, RAZ

Kids (2014) allows children to earn coins by reading. Once enough coins are collected they can

play a game on the site. Two of the teachers specifically mentioned how this aspect of RAZ Kids

(2014) plays an integral part to help motivate their struggling readers. I noted that when

observing Tracy and Dana's classroom *all* of the students looked focused and attentive on the

digital literacy they were working on. Both of these classrooms had a number of students reading

below grade level who were considered struggling readers. Dana told me during her interview

that several of the students will not read a book willingly but jump at the opportunity to read on

the computer. The motivational gain from technology is extremely beneficial to the success of

reluctant readers and struggling readers (Foranzi & Leu, 2012; Jerles, 2012; Hett, 2012; Oakley

& Jay, 2008).

Technology can help drive teacher instruction in the classroom

Assessment tools imbedded in technology continuously popped up throughout my data.

To help students achieve, teachers are constantly using data to guide instructional decisions and

meet students' learning needs. Deborah Bongiorno (2011) explains that the process of using

formal and informal assessments is an ongoing process through the school year. Many literacy

technologies have built in assessment tools available for the teacher.

Throughout my data teachers were endlessly mentioning literacy technologies, like RAZ

Kids (2014), that have an assessment tool built in. After listening to each of the teachers I

interviewed mention that the assessment tool offered by RAZ Kids (2014) helped them drive their instruction, it became clear this was one reason why these particular teachers chose to use RAZ Kids (2014) with their students. The built in assessment tool provides the teachers with valuable information on their students to help drive instruction in the classroom. This digital assessment tool, and others, can save teachers time by doing the collecting and organizing of data for them. Based on the conversations I had with the teachers I can infer that it not only saves them time but provides a quick glimpse into what the student is doing while reading independently. While teachers mentioned that there are many literacy technologies with built in assessment tools, RAZ Kids (2014) and Castle Learning (2014) were the only specific technologies named.

Literacy technologies provide students with authentic writing opportunities

Looking across my data I noticed that teachers use technology to give students writing practice. In my interviews and observations it became clear that teachers more specifically use a combination of word processing, blogging, and wiki spaces to give students multiple avenues for digital exposure to writing.

Teachers used Kid Blog (2014) to safely give students exposure to the world of blogging. The National Educational Technology Standards for Students: The Next Generation says that teachers should "provide opportunities for students to communicate information and ideas effectively…using a variety of media and formats" (International Society for Technology in Education, 2007, n.p.) Blogging is a way these teachers were meeting the technology standards for students. Students are learning how to effectively communicate information and ideas to their classmates through blogging. With blogging student work can be read by a number of different people, their classmates included. Blogging encourages students to take another look at their

writing to make sure they have used proper grammar, word choice, and punctuation. Blogging encourages students to do this because their work will be viewed by classmates (Zawilinski, 2009). Teachers' use of blogs in my study aligns with the teachers in Larson's study (2009). In mine and Larson's studies (2009) teachers were using blogs to promote book discussions.

I also noticed my data led to the notion that these authentic writing opportunities support the home and school connection. Teachers are constantly looking for ways to connect school to home. Newsletters, phone calls, and emails are some options teachers choose. My data show students using technology to update their parents or guardians. Students were writing weekly newsletters home sharing news from school activities that week. Teachers in my study also spoke about how technology gives students the opportunity to continue the reading or writing that was started in school. Research shows that digital literacy significantly supports literacy development in the classroom as well as at home because students can continue to access and work on their assignments at home (Larson, 2009; Jerles, 2012; Zawilinski, 2009). This opportunity transforms the learning process from in class teaching to also learning outside of the classroom (Chen, Liu, Shih, Wu, &Yuan, 2011).

Implications for Student Learning

The results of this study indicate several implications for student learning. After analyzing the results of my study I can suggest that students should be given ample opportunities to interact with digital literacies. According to this study students are more motivated, engaged and focused when working with technology. With the increased motivation those students who typically would just 'sit there' are actively engaged in the reading or writing task. Heightened motivation can be due to graphics, visuals, animation, games, sound, and interactive features.

Increased attention, motivation and engagement occur when students are working with technological tools (Ogura, Coco & Bulat, 2008).

Second, students should be given authentic writing opportunities. With technology today students are texting, emailing, tweeting, and blogging. Writing opportunities in school should resemble what students will see in the real world. Teachers should provide structured opportunities that introduce students to these other forms of writing often deemed 'social media.' Students deserve the chance to learn appropriate methods for contributing in these different writing forums. I noticed that a couple of teachers were taking advantage of websites like KidBlog (2014) to introduce authentic writing to their students. The benefits of using digital literacies for writing are students are more engaged in the classroom, it can be a good practice of typing skills, students will continue practicing the steps of the writing process, and it can help prepare them for upper grade levels/college. Plus it saves on paper! Students can be exposed to the idea of communicating with real audiences that extend beyond the classroom through digital literacies (Mills & Levido, 2011).

Another implication for student learning is the opportunity for authentic reading. With technology, students (depending on age level) can read current events that are actually happening and not just articles teachers have copied from year to year. Magazines like Scholastic News (2014) and National Geographic Kids (2014) have online access for students with interactive features that can make the reading come alive. Students can partake in blogging or commenting online about what they are reading as well. With technology students begin to see the deep connection between reading and writing and how they are forever intertwined (Hett, 2012).

Finally, technology offers opportunities for differentiation. With technology, students above grade level, on grade level and below grade level can be pushed with their thinking,

creativity, and writing. Students struggling with reading and writing can use digital literacies to support their needs. With assistive technology students struggling with writing can use speech to text software to take the burden of writing with paper and pencil away. Others can use word processing features, like CoWriter (2014), to support spelling. Assistive technology aims at supporting students academically while assisting them in developing computer literacy skills at developmentally appropriate intensities (Boyd, 2008). Appropriate and carefully chosen assistive technology devices can also reduce the copious challenges encountered by some students (Erickson, Hatch & Clendon, 2010).

Implications for My Teaching

Aside from student implications, this study helped to provide me with strategies to enhance my own teaching. This study has benefited my career goals in that it has enlightened me to the importance of student interaction with digital literacies in the classroom. It has also shown me the importance of teaching students to be digitally literate. One of the biggest implications it had on my teaching was the need for professional development and training. The following sections will explain implications for my own teaching as I have determined through analyzing the results from this study.

Consistent student interaction with digital literacies

As a teacher who is constantly striving to better my methods of instruction, I will ensure that my students have opportunities to engage in reading and writing activities through digital literacies. When students interact with technology their engagement is higher and they are more focused on the activity producing better quality work. My data showed that teachers, whether surveyed, interviewed, or observed, believe that technology is a huge motivator in their classrooms. It motivates not only the students who are meeting grade level expectations but also

motivates those students who are below grade level and/or have disabilities. I observed this statement to be true during my visits to the two classrooms I observed.

As teachers we are constantly being told by professors, administration, and colleagues to connect with our students and use their interests to get them excited for learning. Technology does just that! Students today have grown up with technology immersed in their lives to talk to friends and family, play games, watch movies, read books and so much more (Mills & Levido, 2011). When teachers use technology in school we are continuing to use what students already know, and making connections to their lives outside of school (Lapp, Moss & Rowsell, 2012; Hett, 2012). By keeping technology in mind, while planning daily lessons, I can better ensure student motivation and a higher level of engagement.

All students need to be digitally literate

My study showed me that all students need to not only be able to read and write but they need to be digitally literate as well (Lap, Moss & Roswell, 2012). According to Lap, Moss, and Roswell (2012), being digitally literate means that a student can navigate digital reading material and also be able to communicate digitally (word processor, blogs, emails, etc). With the increasing amount of technology, I need to ensure that my students have opportunities to learn how to navigate websites and learn appropriate forms of digital communication. Appropriately incorporating *new literacies* in my classroom will guarantee that my students are learning the strategies needed to navigate through all new types of literacies they encounter. I need to provide my students with opportunities for authentic writing like blogging, emailing, and tweeting. With these authentic writing opportunities my students will learn how to interact in the global, digital community. In today's 21st century, literacy skills are combinations of digital, global, technological, visual and informational. Each of these literacies requires today's students, to use

skills such as communication, collaboration, creativity, evaluation, and synthesis intertwined throughout each day (Hett, 2012). As a teacher it is my responsibility to create lessons that allow students to develop these necessary skills in a safe and structured environment.

My study also showed that a number of teachers do not use technology consistently because of the time it takes to get laptops situated and ready to go. I think teachers need to make it a priority in their classroom to give students the opportunity for independent practice on the laptops to develop their digital literacy skills. Teachers need to have the mindset that our students' future will involve large amounts of technology. It is our job to teach and expose our students to the evolving world of digital literacy. Mill and Levido (2012) believe that to fully function in today's society we use specific skills and abilities to adapt to the changing technologies that influence our global society.

Need for professional development and training

My research enlightened me to the notion that even though I can teach myself about new Web 2.0 digital literacies I may not be able to successfully implement them in my classroom. Throughout my research I noticed that several teachers whether on the survey or during interviews mentioned the time it takes to learn different literacies available paired with the time it takes to prepare lessons using those literacies. With professional development that time is imbedded into the workshop to delve into the activity and often teachers are given work time to plan out how to implement new learned ideas and activities in the classroom. I need to seek out professional development and training to better understand the digital literacies and how to effectively and smoothly incorporate them into my teaching. Research shows that training is needed for all teachers to effectively deliver digital literacy instruction that is meaningful for students (Media Smarts, 2014; Parks, 2014).

Future Research

The results of this study indicate that digital literacies should be immersed into daily instruction to motivate students and prepare them to be digitally literate. To be fully literate in today's world teachers need to make it a priority to teach students how to read and write using digital literacies (Hobbs, 2011). Because of this result, further research should be conducted in order to determine the best methods for integrating technology into instruction. Additional research would be beneficial to look more closely at the guidelines that are provided for technology. Finally, it would be beneficial to conduct research looking at what makes a digital literacy *appropriate* and *useful* in a classroom including research on assessment tools built into the digital literacy.

What methods should be used to integrate technology into instruction?

Through my interviews and observations I noticed several different approaches taken to implementing digital literacies with instruction. I think it is important to look at what methods are effective and why they are effective. Digital literacies are so new to teachers as well as students it's hard to determine what best practice or best methods is without extensive research conducted.

What do the guidelines say about integrating technology into classrooms?

While I did look at the guidelines that were available they seemed to be lacking. As years go on, and the Common Core Learning Standards continue to transition into the classrooms, I predict more extensive guidelines about the integration of technology in classroom will continue developing. It would be beneficial to look at what those guidelines are saying and also look at

how teachers are meeting those guidelines across grade levels. In my study none of the teachers mentioned the ISTE (2014) guidelines.

What makes a digital literacy and the built in assessment tool appropriate and useful in a classroom?

Throughout my research I continuously noted the phrase 'this digital literacy is great' or 'this is the best digital literacy to use with students.' Research is needed to determine what makes a digital literacy 'great'. The terms great, appropriate, and useful can mean something different to a number of teachers. With the abundance of digital literacies available at teachers' fingertips it would be valuable conduct research on what makes a specific tool useful, appropriate or 'great'.

Limited number of participants

My study was conducted with a relatively small number of teachers. I recommend that this study is repeated with a larger population of teachers. Results could be different if this study was repeated with a larger population of teachers.

Final Thoughts

As I think back to my initial thoughts when starting this study I have confirmed my own beliefs that technology does in fact offer a plethora of options for students as well as many tough decisions for teachers to make. As a teacher I see my students' faces light up when I wheel in the laptop carts. I witness the high levels of engagement and increase in focus due to the excitement and motivation teachers in my study spoke of when their students were able to use technology. This study, along with past research, suggests that technology motivates students, increases their level of engagement and helps them better attend to the task. The study also supported the notion

that technology provides students with authentic writing opportunities. Finally, the study presented the idea that with technology teachers can bridge the gap between home and school.

After reflecting upon the results of the study, there were several implications for student and teacher learning/instruction. Students should be given consistent opportunity to interact with digital literacies in the classroom. Technology gives students authentic writing and reading opportunities as well as offers opportunities to differentiate; giving struggling students a chance to thrive too. Teachers need to provide the resources necessary so students have opportunities to interact with technology often. Educators also need to be striving to develop digitally literate students. Finally, all teachers should be seeking out professional development to develop their own digital literacy skills and learn about what is available for students and how to best implement digital literacies into their instruction. This study helped reinforce the notion that students today need to be developing digital literacy skills to keep up with our ever changing, technologically, advanced society.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Survey Questions

1. How often do you integrate the following technologies into your instruction or materials? Please select <u>one</u> for each question.

Technology	**Regularly** At least once per day	**Frequently** At least once per week	**Occasionally** At least once per month	**Seldom** At least once per marking period	**Rarely** at least once per year	**Never** Never use it
Have students use the computer lab (classroom equipped with multiple computers with internet access for teachers to use with their students)						
Present lessons using an Elmo, or overhead projector						
Use the Smartboard or other electronic white board						
Have students use the internet as part of the lesson						
Use Web 2.0 for instruction						
Use web 2.0 for independent practice						

Have students use digital cameras for projects						
Have students type papers in Word or other word processors						
Have students create PowerPoint Presentations						
Have students take online assessments						

Other technology:

2. Please evaluate each of the following statements. Please select <u>one</u> for each question.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I use technology to differentiate instruction				
I have a good variety of ideas and lessons for integrating technology into my teaching				
I believe that integrating technology into my curriculum is important for student success				
I am aware of the resources available by the district that can help me learn how to integrate technology				
I am familiar with what technology is available to my students and me in my building/district				
I believe electronic media will replace printed text within five years				
When using the internet student create products that show higher				

levels of learning				
When using technology students are more motivated				
When using technology there is more student collaboration				

3. Check where you are at professionally with each.

	Unable I do not do this	**Basic** Very simple knowledge	**Developing** still learning more	**Proficient** Skilled and confident
Plan and integrate technology-based learning activities that promote student engagement in higher-order thinking skills				
Use literacy-specific tools (e.g. software, simulation, web tools)				
Have my students use technology in the development of strategies for solving problems in the real world.				
Use a variety of strategies for implementing the internet into my curriculum				
Plan and teach student-centered learning activities and lessons in which my students apply technology tools and resources				

4. What is the number one factor you consider when integrating technology in your classroom? Please explain?
5. What is the number one factor that prevents you from integrating technology in your classroom? Please explain?
6. Do any of your students use assistive technology? If so, what type of technology and how frequently during the school day?
7. In your opinion, what is the role of digital literacies in school instruction?

Adopted from Kirsten Purcell's Survey

Purcell, K. (2013). How teachers are using technology at home and in their classrooms. Retrieved from http://pewinternet.org/Reports/2013/Teachers-and-technology

Appendix B:

Interview Protocol

Opening: Thank you for sharing your time and insight on choosing and using digital literacies with me. This interview will help me complete my master's research thesis. This interview will last no longer than 30 minutes. Should you choose not to answer a question it will in no way be held against you. You have the choice to opt out of being audio recorded at any point in the interview.

1. Can you show me an example of individual student academic goals and how digital literacy supports that goal? What is the digital literacy(s) used?

2. What ELA areas are best supported by digital literacy (i.e. word study, fluency, writing process)? How are they supported by digital literacy?

3. What is the common language you use when speaking to students about technology?

4. What factors do you consider for your specific makeup of students? Which factors do you think about first? Why?

5. Can you show me a common digital literacy that you use and tell me about its importance/use/benefits?

Closing: Thank you for your time and sharing with me. I have learned so much from our discussion and am eager to include your insights in my research paper.

Appendix C: Observation Protocol

Grade Level _____

Observation Date _____

Technology Being Used	Teacher Language
Described Activities **(What is happening in the classroom)**	**My Thoughts** **(Connections to literature, my reactions, trends, patterns, etc)**

Appendix D: EMAIL SENT TO SURVEY PARTICIPANTS

March 20, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I am currently a graduate student at The College at Brockport, State University of New York, completing a master's thesis for the Department of Education and Human Development. As part of the requirements for the thesis, I am conducting a research study in which I will explore elementary teachers' process of implementing digital literacies. More specifically I am interested in the choices teachers make when determining what technology to incorporate in English Language Arts.

In order to participate in this study, your informed consent is required. If you want to participate in the study, and agree with the statements below, your completion of the survey on SurveyMonkey.com signifies your consent. You may change your mind at any time and leave the study without penalty, even after the study has begun.

This project has been approved by the SUNY College at Brockport's Institutional Review Board. Approval of this project only signifies that the procedures adequately protect the rights and welfare of the participants. Please note that absolute confidentiality cannot be guaranteed due to the limited protections of Internet access.

I understand that:

1. My participation is voluntary and I have the right to refuse to answer any questions.
2. My confidentiality is protected. My name will not be linked to the survey. There will be no way to connect me to my electronic submission. If any publication results from this research, I would not be identified by name.
3. There will be no anticipated personal benefits because of my participation in this project. There is a minor risk in the time that it takes to complete the survey.
4. My participation involves reading an electronic survey of 6 questions and answering those questions. It is estimated that it will take 10 minutes to complete the survey.
5. Approximately 30 people will take part in this study. The results will be reported in aggregate form only. The research is being conducted to complete a research component for a Master's Thesis for the Department of Education and Human Development.
6. Data will be kept on a password protected computer and will be erased when the research has been completed.

I am 18 years of age or older. I have read and understand the above statements. All my questions about my participation in this study have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the study realizing I may withdraw without penalty at any time during the survey process. Submitting the survey indicates my consent to participate.

If you have any questions you may contact:

Student Researcher:

Nicole Inzana

585-944-5347

ninzana22@gmail.com

Faculty Advisor:

Sue Robb

(585) 395-5935

srobb@brockport.edu

Appendix E: LETTER TO TEACHERS REGARDING INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION

March 20, 2013

Dear Colleagues,

I am currently a graduate student at The College at Brockport, State University of New York, completing a master's thesis for the Department of Education and Human Development. As part of the requirements for the thesis, I am conducting a research study in which I will explore elementary teachers' process of implementing digital literacies. More specifically I am interested in the choices teachers make when determining what technology to incorporate in English Language Arts.

The best way to understand the process teachers undergo when choosing digital literacies is to partake in meaningful conversation with teachers. The purpose of my study is gain better insight to help me use digital literacies in the most appropriate ways for students. As an aspiring classroom teacher, I am asking for your participation. If you decide to participate in my study, it would involve a one-on-one interview. The interview would last no more than 30 minutes. I will conduct the interview in your classroom or somewhere else in the school should you choose. The interview will be audio recorded with your consent.

 I would also like to observe a couple consenting teachers during ELA instruction who consistently use digital literacies. During these observations I will be looking for specific types of technology being used, how the teacher introduces it, how students interact with the specified technology, and what purpose the technology serves. You may participate in an interview and decline an opportunity for an observation.

I hope that you will consider being a part of my thesis research. I look forward to learning how teachers incorporate digital literacies into ELA instructional time. If you are interested in being a participant, please read the enclosed forms. A consent form is required before I begin the interview and observation process. Please return all forms in the enclosed envelope to the main office by _____.

If you have questions regarding my research study please do not hesitate to contact me. You may also contact my thesis advisor if need be. I appreciate your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Nicole Inzana   Dr. Sue Robb
Graduate Student   Thesis Advisor
The College at Brockport, SUNY   (585) 395-5935
(585) 944-5347   srobb@brockport.edu
Ninzana22@gmail.com

Appendix F: CONSENT FOR INTERVIEW AND OBSERVATION

The purpose of this research study is to understand the decisions teachers undergo when choosing digital literacies to use in the classroom. The researcher, Nicole Inzana, is a graduate student at The College at Brockport, SUNY in the Education and Human Development Department. This study is a requirement for completing a graduate thesis. The researcher will conduct interviews with six teachers to discuss the choices they make when choosing digital literacies for the classroom.

If you agree to participate in this research study, you will take part in an interview and be asked about your experiences with digital literacies, what you use in your classroom and what factors caused you to choose those digital literacies. Also, you may be selected to be observed during a period of ELA instruction. Only two teachers will be selected as participants. This will allow the researcher to see how you use digital literacies in your classroom. You have the choice to participate in the interview and not the observation.

To participate in this study the researcher needs your informed consent. If you are willing to participate in the study, and agree with the following statements, please check your consent choice and sign your name in the space provided.

As a participant in this research study I understand that:
1. My participation is voluntary and I have the right to refuse to answer any questions.
2. My name will not be recorded. Facial and vocal recognition may occur with recording.
3. My participation involves completing an information sheet that will only be read by the researcher and used for contextual information regarding the participants. No identifying information will be used.
4. My participation involves answering 10 open ended questions about how I use digital literacies in my classroom and the factors I consider when choosing those digital literacies. The questions will be provided to me before the interview so I can gather any resources I would like to share with the researcher.
5. The interview will last no more than 30 minutes.
6. The interview will be audio recorded. I have the choice to opt out of being audio recorded.
7. The audio recording will be listened to and transcribed only by the researcher to collect data and then it will be destroyed. The results will be used to complete a master's thesis by the researcher. I may be selected for a classroom observation and I understand that I may refuse to be observed or recorded.
8. The observation will take place in my classroom during ELA instruction.
9. The researcher will use field notes to record observations and will be destroyed after research has been accepted.
10. Data on my students will not be collected.
11. The researcher will take pictures of only the technology itself; not of any students using the technology.
12. All data and electronic data, including audio recordings will be kept in a locked filling cabinet that only the researcher has a key to and destroyed after research has been accepted.

I am 18 years of age or older. I have read and understand the above statements. All my questions about my participation in this study have been answered to my satisfaction. I agree to participate in the study, with the understanding that I may withdraw, without penalty, at any time during the interview process.

I agree to participate in the interview and understand I will be audio recorded.

Signature of Participant _____Date:_____

I agree to participate in the interview but do not agree to audio recorded.

Signature of Participant _____Date:_____

I agree to participate in an observation if I am selected.

Signature of Participant _____Date:_____

I give permission to be photographed using technology during the observation.

Signature of Participant _____Date:_____

I do not wish to participate in an observation.

Signature of Participant _____Date:_____

If you have any questions or concerns please contact the researcher or thesis advisor using the contact information below.

Nicole Inzana   Dr. Sue Robb
Graduate Student   Thesis Advisor
The College at Brockport, SUNY   (585) 395-5935
(585) 944-5347   srobb@brockport.edu
Ninzana22@gmail.com

APPENDIX G: OBSERVATION NOTES

DANA

Grade Level -4

Observation Date -6/12/2013 ELA-reading block

Observations
I was told, during this observation, the students have been instructed on these technologies at the start of their 5th grade year -being the end of the school year so they are familiar with how to use them.
More than half of the class (about 15) are sitting at their seats onto of yoga balls. These help with concentration and focus for many of the students in the classroom

I notice the student desks' are situated so that the SmartBoard is the central location of the room.

- Technology used: netbooks, class wiki site, kid blog, co-writer, digital camera, headphones
- Teacher language used: go to 'my wiki" follow the link to google earth, uses specific names of technology, "check your spelling before you submit," use the drop down menu,
- Teacher mentioned that by the end of the year 99% of her students are independent with the tasks at hand, they are very efficient using technology *I noticed that some of the students were typing without looking at the keys-a couple could probably type faster and more accurate than me!*
- Mixed ability groups working on grammar packet, groups collaborating together using the netbooks when needed (check spelling, synonyms, etc) *collaboration in social setting*
- As students work through grammar packet and center activities (*similar to 5th grade classes- teachers collaborate??)* the teacher is pulling small groups for reading instruction
    - Reading <u>Riding Freedom</u> together, teacher facilitates a discussion about events from previous chapter, vocabulary they will encounter now, and any predictions using evidence from the book to base predictions off of. Teacher began reading next chapter aloud-students finished reading there at the table while the teacher went around and listened to all the students read.
    - When finished students were instructed to go on google earth and there was a link that led students on the path the boy in the book travels, at various stops there were 'pins' on the google earth map where major events in the book happened at these 'pins' there were also questions that the group of students needed to talk about and answer together along with some vocabulary.
    - Each of the 3 groups she met with seemed very engaged and eager to go on google maps and work with their peers
- Center activities
    - Kidblog- "What have you learned this year?" posting to parents about their year in 4th grade-kids were able to log right in and get started, they needed to write a multi paragraph post about what they have learned this year in 4th grade
    - One student chose to include a picture on his kidblog response and uploaded a picture from a digital camera-did so without asking for help
    - Kiddos call this 'Z News'-it goes out each week to parents to keep them informed
    - *Authentic writing, yes. Multiple paragraphs on a blog which is intended for social*

networking? Maybe not-students don't really respond to each other, do the parents respond? That would be cool! And a good use of authentic writing- their parents writing back

- Students independently reading from 'book bin'. Each student has their own filled with books at their independent reading level, headphones, and some have iPod minis with books uploaded on them.
- 2 Ipads for student use-being used for RAZ kids
- 3 color nooks- one student is listening to his book read aloud, another is working on his kidblog entry, and the 3rd is independently reading
-

TRACY

Grade Level -5

Observation Date -6/3/2013 ELA-reading block

***My thoughts are in *italics*

Observations

I was told, during this observation, the students have all been with this teacher for 2 years and have instructed on these technologies the previous year and were given a refresher at the start of their 5th grade year -being the end of their 5th grade school year they are familiar with how to use them. The students have been going to other classroom to help teachers and students learn the programs they are familiar with.

- Teacher prompted students to have netbooks, Ipads ready for ELA, also today they will have Kidblog questions to answer after the reading. Started with reading next chapter in Maniac Magee- pre reading activity with vocab (used electronic dictionaries, internet, Microsoft office word processing-synonyms look up) , teacher read aloud a couple of pages, students finished reading silently
- Student using Ipad to listen to audio version of book Maniac Magee- *Did the teacher have to record herself reading aloud, is this book too difficult for the student? If yes, does he really follow along and understand what he is listening to?*
- Laptops
- Netbooks
- Ipad
- Kidblog website being used to answer comprehension questions about the book Maniac Magee
- Students sign up for teacher conference once post questions are completed-others doing center work using technology, while teacher meets individually with students-teacher reads their response and gives them a score out of 2 if they met the task or not. Some students were sent back to add more evidence to their answer, Others were told they could go and respond to 2 of their peers comments –*writing for authentic purpose? Learning social networking in a safe, controlled environment?*
- Various centers taking place involving all subject areas- Students using a "planner" to check off centers-*Keep them accountable for weekly work?*
    - ✓ Students collaborating on writing using netbooks
        - ✓ One student using Ipad to dictate writing into a word processor (dragon dictation)-*Is he told to go back reread and edit his work after he dictates into his Ipad?*
        - ✓ Razkids- SPED Students- *after* they meet with the special education teacher, use headphones to listen and read a story *are the students practicing a reading strategy they learned with the SPED teacher? Either that day or a previous day? Are they reading at their instructional or independent level?*

Why are those students the only ones using RazKids at this time, and others are using another website? The students working with the special education teacher are reading a novel with her in a small, structured group setting. When they come back into the classroom they use RazKids to practice their independent reading skills. Most of those students do not enjoy reading much but when you would never

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know that right now because they love using the technology!

- ✓ Use of spelling city-SPED students *Meeting spelling/grammar goals of IEP? Practicing word families previous taught?*
- ✓ BIG IQ- spelling for the non SPED students- *differentiated spelling sites?*
- ✓ Castle Learning- quizzes review information already taught across all subject areas. They have 2 tries to get it right. The questions/answers are all in different orders for each student –*drawback; if the answer students input are not exactly the answer the teacher puts in the answer is wrong.*
  Using headphones students watch and listen to Peer Pressure video through Brain pop jr. *Many aspects of ELA are worked on here-listening, comprehension, vocabulary*
- ✓ Tween Tribune-online newspaper for kids- their instructions on the 'planner' were choose one article to read, they can then write a response to it and also read other students' responses from across the USA –they can respond to those responses as well- *writing for authentic purposes? Motivation? Social networking?*
- ✓ All of the sites are of easy access to the students through the teacher's portaportal (similar to a wiki page only with categorized links for each of the subjects) *I notice the students are working very independently even those the teacher pointed as 'unmotivated', it was quiet as I peered around the classroom*
- SPED teacher rotating through her students having them bring netbooks with them for instruction-leaves classroom *Learned that this teacher answers the post questions together with the students, then they do their own word work, sometimes reading lessons depending on the day*
- Dragon Dictation-student with dyslexia, speak clearly slowly loudly, "able to really see writing skills" (before sentences were almost uncomprehendable)

APPENDIX H: TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEWS

Tracy-Grade 4

1. Can you show me an example of individual student academic goals and how digital
   literacy supports that goal? What is the digital literacy(s) used?

   My students several times this year set learning targets for themselves and at the beginning

   of the school year I gave them a piece of writing from 3rd grade that was in their PLA folder

   and I copied off some post they made from our online collaborative classroom and then they

   analyzed those 2 pieces and looked for standards like using complete sentences,

   punctuation, I started with the simple standards that they could grasp easily because they

   were learning how to set targets for themselves.

   And what types of digital literacy helped them/supported them make those goals for

   themselves?

   They have done a lot of online posting on our kid-blog site our wiki site. They would go and

   answer guided reading questions independently, our collaborative classroom site those were

   our 3 main ways they were typing to show evidence of their work- they were using learn

   zillion-they were watching flipped videos-where they are watching a short 3-5 min

   instructional video on something that I would normally teach whole group but they are

   learning at their own individual pace and they can replay it if they don't understand

   something, they take notes from that and it gives me more opportunity to meet with kids in

   guided groups.

2. What ELA areas are best supported by digital literacy (i.e. word study, fluency, writing process)? How are they supported by digital literacy?

   Definitely writing and reading there are a lot of e-reading sites that the kids used this year raz kids, umm there are a couple others I can't remember the names that are through our library system-Follette - raz kids they have used the most. Definitely ELA is a great opportunity for them to be reading and writing online and interactively that way. As well my students skyped this year with another class in Michigan and they were in study groups they independently read greek mythology stories that was on our wiki site and they had graphic organizers to complete and they had a series of 3 skype sessions with 2 kids from our class and 2 from the other and they would discuss what they read.

   How did you and the other teacher go about organizing this for your students?

   IT started because our class mystery skyped with 3 other classes one in Iowa, Michigan and new jersey, and the teacher from Michigan and I really hit it off we just discussed, talked about more ways our kids could work together so we looked at the common core and the next thing that was coming up for both of us was fables and fairy tales.

3. What is the common language you use when speaking to students about technology?

   Post, wiki, response, copy and paste, ISTE standards has a list of technology terms kids in 4th grade should know. It such a part of our common day language and activity that I apologize I would need to reflect more on this. Any of the general terminology like saving, e reading

4. What factors do you consider for your specific makeup of students? Which factors do you think about first? Why?

For this specific makeup of students- for the students in this class. First off we've been using netbooks ratio 1:1 technology to student but we've also been using 5 ipads that were in our classroom this year- looking at my reading record data there was a group of students who had trouble putting more details into their retellings when they were answering their questions so I did some more guided reading lessons with them on the Ipad using Popplet which is like a semantic map where everything they needed talk about was in the middle and they could extend those and add more details and they could take a snap shot of it and post it on the wiki site it was just another way to get them to expand their thoughts. A couple students in our class were supposed to-if we didn't have this tech in our class we were going to use a fusion have you used it?
No I haven't *so they are able to save their documents on it but they have to connect to a regular desktop to save their work onto the desktop before they can print it off or work with it so they are able to save their documents on it but they have to connect to a regular desktop to save their work onto the desktop before they can print it off or work with it, so they used that a little bit this school year. Just reminding a certain group of students about the spell check features that are in wiki, kid blog, and then there is co-writer installed on all the computers in the district but they can right click over a word and it will have a drop down menu with correct spellings. CoWriter helps my stuggling students with spelling. It is a software loaded onto the computer and, when turned on, anytime a student is typing it is predicting what word the student is trying to type. My struggling students are able to complete tasks in a more*

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timely fashion because they are not sitting there trying to figure out the spelling of a word A lot of the sites that we use already have hat feature built in but they forget it's there.

5. Can you show me a common digital literacy that you use and tell me about its importance/use/benefits?

Kid blog (I saw them use in the classroom) it's the way the students communicate with their parents I don't send home a weekly/monthly newsletter the kids are doing the work not me and they should be doing it. They should be working harder and they are communicating for an authentic audience their parents and even their peers because if there's time for an anchor activity during writers workshop they can go on and read their peers posts and leave respectful comments. They've learned about being respectful to each other because we did a lot of lessons on how to leave respectful posts how you don't write in capital letters or use a lot of punctuation at the end because that can offend people if they don't know how to take it. Starting out with a student's name is always a respectful way to, saying "Mary comma". I think kids respond a lot more whether they are responding to our wiki site or our collaborize classroom site or kidblog I think they write a lot more I even count their posts or their comments to each other as writing. And when they are responding to each other or posting about what they are thinking everyone has a voice even those shy kids have a voice they blossom start talking and talking like they are talking to their best friend where if we didn't have that they wouldn't raise their hand and the teacher would have to use strategies to try to get them to share and even still you

probably wouldn't get the same information out of them. Another way this benefits is that there was a digital log of their writing pieces this year so those were all kept on the wiki site and they all know how to create links so they all have their own page so their writing is all right there and all on one page so they can email it to me or send it to their parents. There were a lot of sites we used this school like learn zillion- it has short videos for the kids and will assess them afterwards there is also another piece to it for the math, the ela doesn't have an online assessment piece that I also used that will ask a couple questions. There is a process to these videos and they are all common core aligned in math reading spelling and grammar and it'll teach itll give common mistakes students make to clear up any confusion it will review then the kids practice. And the teacher can create playlists and the kids can just play it – it wouldn't all be in one day though. Wordle and tagizto they are a word splash type of activity. They would take a word off the word wall and type it into wordle or tagzito and need to think of all other words related to that word and type those in as well. And they could type a word more than once because the more they type the word the bigger it will show up and they can make that word splash look different ways they can change the colors, direction the words go, with tagzito the words can take a shape- like if you clicked on Abraham Lincoln the words could make the shape of him his siloette so they can really tie that visual image to make sure it relates to what they were creating. There are sites like story bird and kerpoof that are online writing creative writing sites. They have premade pictures or they can insert characters and then the pages turn so they can stimulate a real book and they can print that off publish it. Im sure there are some more I should speak of haha – umm raz kids s an e-

reading leveled site, so its matched with their reading levels and then they have to read, listen and answer comprehension questions about a book, there are 10 books at each reading level to go through and then they can go to the next level but not until they pass all of the quizzes. The teacher also gets information about whether its inferring questions or cause and effect questions that their missing so the teacher can gather data that way to drive instruction and its motivational because the kids collect coins based on reading and listening and answering questions.

Benefits of using technology?

Its motivational a lot of these sites they can still use at home they aren't on the desktop they are website based (web 2.0) they can still use them at home for homework castle learning is one and the assessments are graded for me the teacher, for the student they can often times get immediate feedback, so they know what the correct answer should have been whether they got a question correct or not. because the kids have been publishing writing on our classroom wiki site they could continue it at home too and some kids have done extra writing pieces because they can access it at home. They can insert pictures. For our lowest kids I think its helpful for them to have that spellcheck, for those low kids its not realistic for them to be looking up 20 words out of the dictionary to fix up their writing. And that communication piece is huge they are communicating with each other, they have an audience, whether it was thru skype or written comments to each other. Peer editing.

What are some disadvantages?

Sometimes the computers don't load quick enough, so it's a lot of training the kids that if you see that little spiraling circle because something isn't loading right or taking too long to read out of your book basket. The students need to be taught how to problem solve, they need to be taught if your not connected to the internet did you check that little switch on the side of your computer or some computers have a button to press. Teaching them that if something doesn't work put a post it note on it explaining what doesn't work put it on my desk and go get another computer. So theres that solving problem management piece., this year I haven't had to share the tecfhnology too much-this cart was supposed to be for the whole entire building but very few teachers have signed out the cart except me so that's why its been here its been just me-pretty much. And next year grade levels will be sharing a cart I think from what I'm told. So we just need to work out as a team how the kids are going to share 20 something computers. I still that's healthy I don't think they should only be using computers for their learning experience, I think they should still be reading books from their book basket they still should be buddy reading with their peers and doing some academic work like using the word wall and just other activities that are rich for them to learn vocabulary.

Christina (6/3/13)

1. Can you show me an example of individual student academic goals and how digital literacy supports that goal? What is the digital literacy(s) used?

   Computers- computer use they use RAZ Kids every day or they try to usually they don't- I love raz kids however if they don't get thru it then it's hard for them to move on so throughout the year you have to go on a make sure they are reading at the right level. I have girl right now she's reading at a I and on the computer she's at a C, so I feel like it's not accurate and they are only going on there to play the games and earn coins. Which isn't right either some kids aren't but. Can you switch them, the levels? *You can but you have to wait a certain amount of time, she should definitely be moved and I would but I don't have the password umm book flix is awesome you can go on and read a nonfiction fiction is on there too so they can get best of both worlds that's awesome, they do learning A-Z so I can project it onto the smartboard and that's really how I do it*

2. What ELA areas are best supported by digital literacy (i.e. word study, fluency, writing process)? How are they supported by digital literacy?

   (Had trouble thinking of ideas for this question) what is that site I use for fluency? I have my low kids go on whats it called? Idk but its for fluency and they can read it aloud and it records but it has to have their voice hooked up to it so I only do it rarely because it takes too much time but it calculates it and then afterwards it plays it for them and they can fill in the letter of what word it is. It's a program you have to purchase the software for.

3. What is the common language you use when speaking to students about technology?

I use the name of the technology with them, and that can get confusing for them, they think the word mouse is funny so every time I say mouse they laugh so I don't use that a lot. I say click a lot which probably isn't correct. I say left click or right click umm typing on the keyboard. I don't really use it too much which is awful unless it's by themselves on raz kids or extra math.

4. What factors do you consider for your specific makeup of students? Which factors do you think about first? Why?

I think about using it with my high kids mainly because it's more independent that way. If I use it with my low kids they get lost and they get frustrated and they don't do well so unless you are sitting there next to them they won't get very far at all. Even if they go on type to learn or kid pix or something it's not productive unless you're sitting there with them and there's really no success for them. So when I think about using digital literacy or anything like that computer program I think of my higher kids which isn't very fair haha

5. Can you show me a common digital literacy that you use and tell me about its importance/use/benefits?

I would say raz kids because because I use it a lot and there's actually about 10 kids who go home and use it at home as their free time so I think that's awesome. They can log in themselves and it logs them in to their level, they can choose a book they listen to it, read it and answer some questions about it once they pass that quiz they can choose another book, it's a series of probably 10-15 books with quizzes and once they complete them all they can go to next level so it keeps track of their progress as they are reading. They also get to earn coins to play games

which are very helpful for some motivation. The the coins earned to play games is very

motivational for those students who are struggling with reading. It gives them something to look

forward to as a reward for their reading. None of my kids use assistive technology- I think

technology is great, it's a great tool for learning, it's a lot of prep work and if teachers don't have

the time they won't use it correctly which I think this year I haven't used it correctly which is

unfortunate because I haven't had the time and I've been trying to keep up with everything else

ummm…but I do think that once you settle in your own classroom you'll get a better idea of how

to use it and when to use it and what's appropriate for it feel like if you try to do a good job

without the prep work your just throwing your kids into something that they are not going to

understand. Just to say that you did it and that's not the purpose of it. There's a lot of prep

work, I think it could be an awesome tool I think that it should be used more often.

6. What about your smartboard and elmo? How do you use those?

I use it every day just depending on what I'm using it for or what program I'm using, usually

I make up smartboard games that can fill just so they can come up and it can be a little more

interactive, umm even with rolling the dice for what, when, where, why, type things-beg.

Middle end. So I use it just about every day the kids are familiar with it. I use the elmo almost

every day I use it a lot especially if were doing comprehension piece I'll put it up there on the

board we can read thru it together and then I can read the questions to them but I can see

what they are doing by themselves so at least if they can hear they can answer themselves-

which for most normally they can so I do use my elmo a lot too.

Dana (6/12/13)

1. Can you show me an example of individual student academic goals and how digital

   literacy supports that goal? What is the digital literacy(s) used?

   Obviously to use the F&P benmarks and move the students through the levels to the end

   of the year. Raz kids is a program that we use that helps them practice skills they can do

   running records and send them to me. They can read at their instructional level and it

   shows their growth as they move on. In addition it shows ways to present their material.

   AS we finish our reading groups like with trade books and stuff they can use fakebook to

   make books/presentations and go animate so they can use- well fakebook is more like

   character perspective where thye have to look into and dig deep into a character and find

   connections between characters in the book. And then go animate weve used for book

   summaries and this helps them, in addition to the comprehension questions that I ask it

   helps them put together a book summary by adding slides into their presentation to

   summarize each chapter. Communicating on kid blog within the class promotes book

   talks those are some digital literacies that we use.

2. What ELA areas are best supported by digital literacy (i.e. word study, fluency, writing

   process)? How are they supported by digital literacy?

   In fifth grade I feel like we use more of the writing process because we can use programs

   like blabberize and voki that help them put together a presentation. So in here with my

   wide range of ability levels they are able to put together a presentation publishing

   writing or a reading piece that they can present to the whole class and that's respectful.

   Ik think that stamina is another part of digital literacy. I think that with raz kids as they

   move thru the levels the books get longer and longer and they can work on reading for

longer periods of time. But I feel like in fifth grade publishing writing is an area that I use digital literacy the most.

3. What is the common language you use when speaking to students about technology?

I think at this point because ive had the kids for 2 years thye are very good at knowing which program pairs well with which task. So I have some of my 5th graders meet with other teachers that want to use technology and the teacher says heres the activity for a reading or writing group and at this point my kids are savvy enough to say you should use go animate for this project because you can use characters and setting and umm which was a goal for me for them to be able to do. So I think always calling the program what it is and umm knowing just being clear what the technology is for so its not creating more work but enhancing the work. So being able to figure out when I give them a task and some choices of what they can use technology they can use to kind of weed out the technology that will work best. And they always hear me refer to my portaportal because that's where all the links are to everything. So if they're not exactly sure what to use for that task at least they are familiar with that routine and can go look at the options. It's infused everywhere in our classroom so I think they are just used too.

4. What factors do you consider for your specific makeup of students? Which factors do you think about first? Why?

I think the readiness level is huge my reading levels in my class range from middle of second grade to beginning of 7th grade. So its such a large range being able to pick out programs that are the same that I can differentiate and use for all the students. To

create the respectful environment since we are all together all the time during our projects and activities. Teaching them obviously how to navigate on their netbooks is just something that's an advantage of having them for 2 years. Thats not something that I had to worry about as much this year. But its really their making sure that the task I am asking them to do umm some of them I have to consider if the task im asking coordinates with co-writer. Because if it's a speaking program like if your typing into go animate or voki and the students don't even come close to spelling its not going to say what they want it to say. So looking at that compatibility within programs so that their project is some thing that's respect and something to be proud of in the end because when everythings posted its nice to see that despite the readiness level all their projects are very well done and we can o understand what their characters are sayin.

5. What are the benefits of technology?

I think that it pushes the kids further into what I can typically do in a reading group because its an extension so after they leave me in areading group and intensive going thru the skills and weverthing they need its way they can collaborate with the class or use something like kid blog it's a way thye can use a creativity to produce a product like when we read the great gilly Hopkins with go animate they had to show me that they could summarize and then show me they could navigate a program which theyd beable to use in so many situations in the future like when they are in 6th, 7th grade and so on,. Umm

6. What are the disadvantages?

Disadvantage is when were not one to one technology like right now im lucky that every child has a device so I can show a program and we can play with it see how its used and everyone can create a product. I think that with digital literacies we can rotate thru centers we can take turns but if we don't have enough devices your kind of your at a huge disadvantage because in order to get everyone on raz kids in order to get everyone to do an extension if you only have even only 6 computers your limited into how far you can go and how much they can learn from it. and granted from home they can get on these as well.

7. Can you show me a common digital literacy that you use and tell me about its importance/use/benefits?

My favorite is go animate to publish writing and use it for such a wide variety of activities. Kids have made interviews on go animate they have made interview s ot interview a character like <u>Hatchet</u>, they have made birthday cards for teachers, they have done book summaries kind of talking all about it. Animodo I like to they can do a book trailer which is awesome because they are so familiar with movie commercials, in animodo they have to really capture the feeling of the book after they've read it and kind of sell it. So it kind of ups the ante instead of just here's a book report do it. It makes them figure out it has them consider so much more in terms of the character perspective, setting, summary, and the impact of setting, then they can tie all those things together and produce something in the different programs. Which I think is powerful because it's something they will be able to carry thru with them.

Katie (6/12/13)

1. Can you show me an example of individual student academic goals and how digital literacy supports that goal? What is the digital literacy(s) used?

   I think one of the big goals we had this year had to do with publishing writing and using technology to publish writing. I think my students have definitely met that goal by through using sites like vokki and blabberize umm just publishing some writing on word and umm just having knowledge on how to navigate through those sites or those online publishing tools.

2. What ELA areas are best supported by digital literacy (i.e. word study, fluency, writing process)? How are they supported by digital literacy?

   I think that back to publishing writing, publishing your writing is best supported by digital literacies. But I have created a lot of phonics activities that use the computer whether it's a smartboard activity, or a website or a song online, there are a lot of tthings that we use that are on the web. They use their laptops for raz kids they use it for fluent reading practice.

3. What is the common language you use when speaking to students about technology?

   Umm I don't know I think print? Haha I think my kids are pretty good at following the steps to get onto my website. THye hear me saw portaportal a lot. That's my games or activities are located . that's a word Im constantly saying and they know how to get onto my portaporal through the school website. Is there anything you say to help them collaborate with each other or work with each other when using technology? Not so

much when I think about using laptops or technology in school its very much individual the kids are working more independently than they would be if they were working on a project and sitting around talking about it. I think that's one of the areas that I want to get better at is making sure the kids are using technology that is going to help them collaborate and communicate a little bit more a lot of the projects that they do they do independently and then we share them by viewing them online but the actual process of creating the project is done independently. Or with one buddy.

4. What factors do you consider for your specific makeup of students? Which factors do you think about first? Why?

Obviously I consider their levels. Do I think they can handle the activity or program we are going to use. I definitely consider I think back to that common language, definitely vocabulary words I need to make sure the kids understand depending on what the program is that we are using. Showing them how ot cut, showing them how to paste, how to move the mouse around in such a way that allows them to create whatever it may be. Those are some factors that I consider. Is it a website or is it a program that they have been exposed to in the computer lab. If it's something that our technology teacher has taught them then I can move them faster through. I think the first factor that comes to mind is is it an activity that they can do independently on their own. It's a little different, it's not like I consider boys vs girls its universal across all students.

5. Can you show me a common digital literacy that you use and tell me about its importance/use/benefits?

Teacher was caught up with another teacher and we were unable to finish the interview.

APPENDIX I: SURVEY RESULTS

3. How often do you integrate the following technologies into your instruction or materials? Please select <u>one</u> for each question.

How often do you integrate the following technologies into your instruction or materials? Please select <u>one</u> for each question.	**Regularly** At least once per day	**Frequently** At least once per week	**Occasionally** At least once per month	**Seldom** At least once per marking period	**Rarely** at least once per year	**Never** Never use it
Have students use the computer lab (classroom equipped with multiple computers with internet access for teachers to use with their students)	12.5% 2 people	50% 8 people	18.75% 3 people	0%	6.25% 1 person	12.5% 2 people
Present lessons using an Elmo, or overhead projector	37.5% 6 people	12.5% 2 people	6.25% 1 person	6.25% 1 person	6.25% 1 person	31.25% 5 people
Use the Smartboard or other electronic white board	68.75% 11 people	18.75% 3 people	0%	0%	12.5% 2 people	0%
Have students use the internet as part of the lesson	75% 12 people	25% 4 people	0%	0%	0%	0%
Use Web 2.0 for instruction	18.75% 3 people	0%	6.25% 1 person	12.5% 2 people	6.25% 1 person	56.25% 9 people
Use web 2.0 for independent writing practice	12.5% 2 people	6.25% 1 person	6.25% 1 person	12.5% 2 people	6.25% 1 person	56.25% 9 people
Have students use digital cameras for projects	0%	6.25% 1 person	25% 4 people	6.25% 1 person	37.5% 6 people	25% 4 people
Have students type papers in Word or	6.25% 1 person	25% 4 people	43.75% 7 people	18.75% 3 people	6.25% 1	0%

					person	
other word processors						
Have students create PowerPoint Presentations	0%	0%	25% 4 people	31.25% 5 people	37.5% 6 people	6.25% 1 person
Have students take online assessments	18.75% 3 people	12.5% 2 people	25% 4 people	6.25% 1 person	12.5% 2 people	25% 4 people

Other technology:
Listen to Reading: iPod or other digital devices, webcam for Skype sessions, polycom

There are several web-based literacy sources for students. Things like Brain Pop, YouTube, Scholastic, and more are great sites for online ELA learning.

Raz-Kids

Fusion/Forte: assistive technology device for 2 special needs students. Both students are struggling writers and unmotivated. I usually have to scribe for them which hinders my ability to really see what their writing skills actually are. The device helps them by taking the pressure of handwriting and pencil/paper writing out of the picture. The students are now getting more writing instruction that is appropriate for them because I can really see where their writing skills are lacking.

Raz kids

Sound Out Simon Read Aloud -SOLO CoWriter

show me, movable write, socrative, castle learning,

RAZ kids, Wordle

Ipad

books on cd/ipod for my struggling readers to listen to books to. Our class is required to do book studies as a class with specific books chosen by the district. Many of my students are unable to successfully read and comprehend the books. This tool helps them

4. Please evaluate each of the following statements. Please select <u>one</u> for each question.

Please evaluate each of the following statements. Please select one for each question.	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I use technology to differentiate instruction	43.75% 7 people	56.25% 9 people	0%	0%
I have a good variety of ideas and lessons for integrating technology into my teaching	50% 8 people	50% 8 people	0%	0%
I believe that integrating technology into my curriculum is important for student success	68.75% 11 people	31.25% 5 people	0%	0%
I am aware of the resources available by the district that can help me learn how to integrate technology	56.25% 9 people	43.75% 7 people	0%	0%
I am familiar with what technology is available to my students and me in my building/district	56.25% 9 people	43.75% 7 people	0%	0%
I believe electronic media will replace printed text within five years	12.5% 2 people	18.75% 3 people	56.25% 9 people	12.5% 2 people
When using the internet student create products that show higher levels of learning	12.5% 2 people	81.25% 13 people	6.25% 1 person	0%
When using technology students are more motivated	43.75% 7 people	56.25% 9 people	0%	0%
When using technology there is more student collaboration	12.5% 2 people	75% 12 people	12.5% 2 people	0%

8. Describe where you are at professionally with each.

Describe where you are at professionally with each.	Unable I do not do this	Basic Very simple knowledge	Developing still learning more	Proficient Skilled and confident
Plan and integrate technology-based learning activities that promote student engagement in higher-order thinking skills	0%	6.25% 1 person	50% 8 people	43.75% 7 people
Use literacy-specific tools (e.g. software, simulation, web tools)	0%	12.5% 2 people	43.75% 7 people	43.75% 7 people
Have my students use technology in the development of strategies for solving problems in the real world.	0%	12.5% 2 people	62.5% 10 people	25% 4 people

Use a variety of strategies for implementing the internet into my curriculum	0%	12.5% 2 people	43.75% 7 people	43.75% 7 people
Plan and teach student-centered learning activities and lessons in which my students apply technology tools and resources	0%	6.25% 1 person	50% 8 people	43.75% 7 people

9. What is the number one factor you consider when integrating technology in your classroom? Please explain?

6/10/2013 3:57 PM
Technology gives students another way to learn and explore information within the given lesson

6/5/2013 10:08 PM
Availability and will technology be reliable

6/5/2013 8:43 PM
Do my students know how to use this? And do they have access to this at home? It takes time to make sure kids know how to use technology and use it correctly and completely- so we always need to take it step by step for it to be useful.

6/5/2013 9:51 PM
Is it safe and useful- if I don't believe my students will learn something from the technology then I will not use it.

6/5/2013 5:18 PM
For me, I consider the technology available within the school or district and try to "mix it up" regarding how I am presenting something. For my students, I think about how easy the device is to use.

6/4/2013 9:42 AM
student engagement

6/3/2013 10:33 AM
Time effective and appropriate. All students can benefit from one form of technology or another.

6/3/2013 4:24 PM
Will it enhance the learning or distract from it

5/29/2013 5:47 PM
The ability of my students to use the technology.

5/29/2013 5:04 PM

How will technology help the students learn better?

5/29/2013 2:28 PM
curriculum connections

5/29/2013 1:42 PM
Accessibility. If a technology is readily available and relatively easy to use it is a good candidate for use in my room. After that curriculum and student interest/ability are at the top of my list.

5/29/2013 11:47 AM
my own knowledge of the programs and what I feel confident enought ot teach them

5/29/2013 10:48 AM
Professional Development in order to learn the programs so that the integration ENHANCES instruction/learning

5/29/2013 10:00 AM
Accessibility of equipment for students (will they have what they need for as long as they need it)

5/29/2013 7:13 AM
Time

10. What is the number one factor that prevents you from integrating technology in your classroom? Please explain?

6/10/2013 3:57 PM
Time

6/5/2013 10:08 PM
When it comes to laptops. it is TIME. It takes time to get out all of our laptops, get logged on, make sure everyone is on the same page etc. So we end up using the Smart Board most of the time.

6/5/2013 8:43 PM
If I have not fully used and explored the technology myself. If I am not confident in it, I don't feel comfortable letting my students use it.

6/5/2013 9:51 PM
There aren't really any factors that prevent me from integrating tech into my classroom.

6/5/2013 5:18 PM
Distractions

6/4/2013 9:42 AM
Accessibility within the school or district.

6/3/2013 10:33 AM
Availiability of resources

6/3/2013 4:24 PM
Time to plan the lesson, research and prepare the use of technology

5/29/2013 5:47 PM
Lack of resources

5/29/2013 5:04 PM
Music Ace no longer available in the computer lab

5/29/2013 1:42 PM
Number of machines available.

5/29/2013 11:47 AM
availabilty of resources

5/29/2013 10:48 AM
Since I have 1:1 student: device ratio, it is not a problem at all

5/29/2013 10:00 AM
not enough equipment for each student

11. Do any of your students use assistive technology? If so, what type of technology and how frequently during the school day?

9/5/2013 9:42 AM
Boardmaker was used in the beginning of the year, but this student has not needed it as frequently.

9/4/2013 10:33 AM
Computers

6/10/2013 3:57 PM
Yes: Fusion, Forte, limited exposure to Dagon, co-writer

6/5/2013 10:08 PM
Not this year, but have in the past

5/29/2013 5:04 PM
Yes - daily Sound Out Simon Read Aloud -SOLO CoWriter

5/29/2013 1:42 PM
Yes. Movable write, dragon dictation. Used as needed for writing

5/29/2013 10:48 AM
Read Aloud is used for 4-5 students in my class when reading complex texts as well as CoWriter for projects

12. In your opinion, what is the role of digital literacies in school instruction? Should be incorporated into the curriculum

6/10/2013 3:57 PM
Many elementary teachers seem to use it as a center during their ELA block, example Razzkids and castlelearning.

6/5/2013 10:08 PM
We must utilized technology in all areas of teaching.

6/5/2013 8:43 PM
It helps enhance students interest and it becomes more relevant to the world they are growing up in. It is not always easy to get students interested in paper back books when they all have iPhones.

6/5/2013 9:51 PM
I believe it should be used to help develop skills, not teach them. The teacher should still be doing traditional instruction and technology should be used to help build and develop those skills.

6/5/2013 5:18 PM
I think that they serve as a way to differentiate, engage students, and represent visual learners; however, they should be used in moderation. Print literacies should be used and implemented more than digital. It is vital to stay informed and educated on new technologies, but because students/children are glued to monitors all day, sometimes a classic book, magazine, or newspaper is better than staring at a Nook or iPad. :)

6/4/2013 9:42 AM
Can play a critical role- want to make sure it doesn't take over

6/3/2013 10:33 AM
Literacy can be achieved without digital sources however technology can be more engaging and motovating. It also allows students to access unique tools that they normally would not have access to.

6/3/2013 4:24 PM

It is slowly growing in importance but in order to growth with our students and their abilities we need more resources and trainings to make us successful.

5/29/2013 5:47 PM
I believe they should play a large role but not be the exclusive type of literacy.

5/29/2013 2:28 PM
to enhance/ support the curriculum

5/29/2013 1:42 PM
Digital literacies truly integrate literature and technology into a package that is interesting and relevant to today's youth. The role is simple....keep students interest high so they can learn to read and understand.

5/29/2013 11:47 AM
I think there is a time and a place for it but there needs to be a balance of this.

5/29/2013 10:48 AM
Adding technology into my literacy block motivates student learning, and challenges them to apply their learning through collaboration (FaKebook, Go Animate, Voki...) as well as communicate with the class (kid blog, epals). Pairing the "right" web 2.0 tool to my gilded reading groups allows for creativity, as it also provides ALL students in my co-integrated class to have a presentation to be proud of.

5/29/2013 10:00 AM
should be sprinkled in daily but students should still be able to read a physical book and physically write on paper when needed for various tasks