3.2 Managing Digital Tools and Resources

Candidates effectively manage digital tools and resources within the context of student learning experiences.

Reflection

The Multimedia Design Project WebQuest (WebQuest) was completed to highlight and showcase my ability to use the elements of multimedia design for the creation of an instructional product that includes audio, graphics, video, and additional design elements which demonstrates an effective design. I used the standards from the first-grade science curriculum unit on plants and animals, integrated them with technology standards, and incorporated them into the design of my WebQuest project. I challenged myself to upgrade everyday tasks by presenting them in a digital platform. Incorporating technology-enhanced learning opportunities for the students who inspired me to create this project was very uncomfortable in the beginning, but most rewarding in the end. The WebQuest demonstrates the International Society for Technology in Education's (ISTE) Essential Condition of Curriculum Framework- "Content standards and related digital curriculum resources" (Williamson and Redish, 2009, p.13).

3.2 Managing Digital Tools and Resources outlines the criteria candidates need to effectively manage digital tools and resources within the context of student learning experiences. The artifact I chose, showcases my ability to manage technology tools, and digital resources, within the context of student learning experiences. Not only was the WebQuest appropriate for students with disabilities, but it was authentic and relevant for my students. I designed this project, specifically for a mix-grade group of students in grades, kindergarten, first, and second grades. I chose to anchor the WebQuest's standards to the middle grade (first) so that I could easily enhance the standards making them appropriate for students in second grade, and remediate the standards, making the tasks appropriate for students in kindergarten. I adopted the lesson from the Georgia Department of Education's website. I chose Science because it is a content area that is associated with hands-on activities and tactile learning opportunities. Science aligns well with English Language Arts (ELA) because of the writing involved in responding to each Science task.

References

Retrieved from the Georgia Department of Education Website: www.gadoe.org/

Williams, R. & Tollett, J. (2006). The Non-Designer's Web Book, 3rd ed. Berkley, Ca.: Peachpit Press.

Williamson, J., & Redish, T. (2009). *ISTE's technology facilitation and leadership standards : what every K-12 leader should know and be able to do.* Eugene, Or.: International Society for Technology in Education.

Completing this WebQuest was very intimidating for me because I had only seen WebQuests as finished products. I had no idea what skills were involved to "make it happen". It took every ounce of courage I had to put myself out there to display my vision for what I think a WebQuest should look like. I had to choose standards across three and align them to the project in an authentic way that was relevant to the students. I choose tasks, assessments, videos, visuals/ graphics/ images, and the presentation platform- Weebly. I used the skills that I had recently learned in my ITEC 7445 Multimedia and Web Design in Education class as my primary resource. Although I was still learning about integrating technology into my teaching practices, ITEC 7445 was teaching me about technology-enhanced learning experiences called Authentic Learning Projects, Project Based Learning (PBL) and WebQuests. ITEC 7445 was also teaching me how to design, create, develop, and implement my very own technology-enhanced learning experience. What was genius about this class is that as we learned, evaluated, and practiced individual tasks in isolation, we were charged with using the same skills within the context of creating an actual WebQuest. Williams and Tollett (2006) teach that alignment, proximity, repetition, and contrast are the four basic principles in all print and web design. These are the elements that give products their clean professional look that people enjoy (p. 113). Using the first-grade Science unit and my students as my inspiration, I realized that I too could use digital tools to design, develop, and implement technology-enhanced learning experiences for my students. The one aspect of the WebQuest that I would change is I would integrate Math standards into the tasks and assessments as well. Since this was my first WebQuest, I am very proud of the product that I created. Since creating this artifact, I have shared my WebQuest with a few colleagues. I look forward to creating more technology-enhanced learning experiences.

I recall sharing parts of this WebQuest with my students the following year after creating this product, and they enjoyed using the computer to retrieve their assignments. At the time, the school where I worked had at least three student desktop computers per classroom and we were phasing in laptop carts that teachers could reserve for their class to use. Fifth and fourth grade students had priority for reserving and using the laptops. Subsequently, sharing my WebQuest with other Special Education Teachers have allowed them to increase student engagement when students were able to incorporate the WebQuest during their unit on plants and animals. The assessment was measured in teacher feedback and student participation. My former students thought that it was "fun" and I think that they were proud that their teacher had created a WebQuest just for them.

References

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