***COLLABORATIVE WRITING: GOOGLE DOCS (20 points)***

**Communicating with Technology**

After reading chapter 5: Communicating with Technology:

1. Write an essay no less than 300 words addressing the following question:  
   **How far should educators go in matching the technology used in instruction and classroom activities to the technology their students use?**
2. Respond to at least one classmate in no less than 100 words
3. **Write your name before your both contributions**

Rachael Cantu

You need to spend only five minutes with a youngster to see how different their world is from yours at their age. Society’s generation of digital natives is fluently versed in technological use and multimedia information. They navigate the waters of social media and technological innovation with sophisticated ease. As their teachers, we must abandon antiquated, teacher-centered means of instruction in favor of technology-infused methods. Chapter five gives some really great examples of technological innovations and their place in the classroom.

Asynchronous discussion boards are a great format for engaging students in open dialogue and communication. A benefit of the discussion board is that it gives students

time to contemplate ideas and formulate responses more thoughtfully. Students can

engage in reasoned dialogue, collaborate with remote and diverse audiences, and learn to express themselves in writing. Discussion board allows general discussion among peers and is highly beneficial in the affective domain. It fosters understanding and tolerance of other people and different points of views. Project-specific DBs offer great advantage in the cognitive domain as they lend to the management of tasks and sharing of ideas in a collaborative project.

VoiceThread is a great collaborative tool that lends itself to creative thinking as students evaluate and reflect on other VoiceThreads and to creativity and organization as they collect information and ideas to be part of a VoiceThread. In reviewing different VoiceThreads, I came across several incredibly creative and engaging projects. An especially beautiful example was a VT where two different classrooms from across the country collaborated to create a project based on individual works of student art that fellow students added on to through musical composition and poetry. It was a fantastic example of idea sharing and collaboration.

Chats are another useful classroom tool when real-time communication is warranted. A great example would be the social media equivalent of pen pals. This use would be a great means for connecting students from across the country and the globe together to learn more about how other students live and study. The downside to synchronous conversations is that they could be potentially difficult to monitor.

Sharing information with presentation technologies, like PowerPoint, can be a slippery slope. Too often PowerPoint and Interactive White Board can become nothing more than glorified chalkboards. However, these tools in the hands of the students can be effective channels for meaningful learning through technology. Interactive White Board can be used creatively for math and science games, making movies, and creating stories. They can be great tools for interaction and collaboration among teachers and students.

As an individual who is personally reluctant to experiment with technology, I am prone to reservations about technology’s growing prevalence in our society; however, I recognize that our children are increasingly more accustomed to receiving their information from multimedia sources. Eventually, they will find any other method irrelevant to their personal experiences. It is critical that we, as teachers, are prepared to meet our students in the media-based world where they reside. What I did not expect from my part, however, was to see how incredibly useful and engaging many of these technologies are. I am excited to implement them in my classroom!

Valerie Hooten

I agree with you Rachael that in this day in age teachers must use some form of technology into the classroom especially with secondary students. I’ve seen 3rd graders in my son’s elementary school using tablets to read books on instead of paper printed books. These kids are technology savvy and we as teachers need to keep up with the pace. I like your idea of using chat to communicate with pen pals. The down side I see though is students using it to communicate with each other in the classrooms about who knows what. I substituted for a CBA class for a month and I had a hard time getting the students to stay on task to work on their CBA work instead of using chat to talk to their friends in the classroom.

Valerie Hooten

I believe it is highly important for teachers to incorporate technology into the classroom when teaching the curriculum. The kids in our society have been raised in this technology consumed world and technology has become a norm to children. I find it only natural to incorporate the technology used by kids into the classroom.

Using voicethread can be a very beneficial tool in the classroom. When we first studied this tool, I thought it could only be used in the secondary level but after looking further into it and some examples found that it is useful for all types of grades. I substituted for a CBA class for grades 10-12 for the month of October and saw firsthand how many students miss of school due to club related or sports related activities. Using the voicethread tool to communicate is an excellent way to help these students keep up in the classroom instead of the teacher having to have make- up days each Friday. The teacher I subbed for had Friday’s as make-up day which in a way I found useless. There were kids in there who were bored to death. Many of them played games on the internet when they thought I was not looking. I don’t think it is a wise decision to use every Friday to help some kids get caught up while other students find it was a waste of their day to attend the class.

With blackboard so popular in college universities, I think high schools should look into incorporating them as well. I realize public schools have enacted edline but in high school I think they could easily tackle blackboard and students could have more online discussions with each other. It would also save a lot of paper if high school students could turn in their work via blackboard instead of handing in a printed paper assignment.

I definitely liked in the book how it mentioned ePALS. My content area is business education 7-12 and I can see how this can benefit my students. In the real world of business you must be able to get along with those all over the world and know how to communicate with others from a different country. This could be very helpful for students to gain more knowledge about how some other countries live and conduct business versus the United States.

PowerPoint is a tool that all kids should definitely learn as it’s not only used in college but in the business world as well. I think this should be taught as early as in the fourth grade because I’ve noticed my son in the 4th grade is already having to make presentations in front of his class. I thing I noticed while subbing is that students are having to make power point presentations for not only CBA but English, Science, and Social Studies. However, I would like to see students learn more about creating presentations with Google Docs as it has become increasingly popular but many teachers are not familiar with it.

Shelly Royce

I agree with Valerie. I think more schools should incorporate Blackboard for lessons to help students to miss a day of school or are homebound students. I'm seeing more today of kids getting homebound that I really do not see why they are. Blackboard will also help teachers and students keep up with homework assignments. Teachers can see that they can plan everything out by week and not have to keep up with lesson plans as much. It will also help on substitute teachers as well, because they will be able to tell the students what lesson or week they are going to be on of what the teacher left. Students will not have to argue with the substitute teacher of what lesson they are on either. The students will have their daily work for them all laid out on Blackboard. Black board does help with having so many papers and can cut down on having so many papers to grade unless it is a writing assignment. Also, there will be fewer papers handed in to the teacher. The teacher and student will not have to worry about an assignment being lost.

PowerPoint is good for any grade and subject to use for presentations. Students will be creative for their projects. The early teachers introduce PowerPoint to students will also help students learn more about technology programs. Google Docs will be good as well for teachers to learn. I know many teachers that have never heard of or used these programs. I think once they begin using them, they will enjoy using them and see that it can be better for their students and for their lessons.

Shelly Royce

Educators should use as much technology to help students in the classroom as possible. Technology is becoming excessively used by educators and students daily. Many parents are letting their children at a very young age become in contact with different technology devices, cellular phones, iPods, iPads, and computers are just a few. Technology has become reliability for many of us. Teachers need to encourage and allow students to use many different technology programs during class time. When students have the access to technology programs and are able to create, they are using their cognitive skills and learning more than just reading from a textbook. When students are able to create, they get to explore many different topics and develop a better understanding of the topic.

Asynchronous discussion boards are a great technology program for students to learn about and use. The discussion boards allow students to communicate with peers and use a thought out process of what to say rather than giving an answer quickly. Asynchronous discussion boards are great for many ELL learners and L2 learners. The discussion boards can help the ELL learners and L2 learners communicate with their peers and communicate in their second language. Students are able to be more creative and give their own opinion about a topic as well. All students will benefit from asynchronous discussion boards by becoming better communicators.

VoiceThread is a great technology program as well for students. VoiceThread is a technology program for students to create presentations using pictures and discussions about the topics they chose. Students can use VoiceThread for sharing and collaborating ideas of different topics with peers or someone in a different country. Students can doodle on the picture to point out specific details about a picture. Students will be able to use this technology to communicate with peers, teachers, family, or all around the world.

Synchronous instant messaging and chatting allows students to communicate lively. Synchronous instant messaging and chatting helps students send and receive messages or chat quickly. Students can communicate in a group or individually. Synchronous instant messaging and chatting is great for small group or large group projects. Students can communicate and receive a quick message from their group.

PowerPoint permits students to create, design, and present presentations. Students can use different effects, color change to slides, transition of slides, and fonts to create a presentation. Students can make an outline or short overview about their topic to help their peers or anyone have an idea of what they are presenting. Student can also add pictures and videos to their presentation. However, PowerPoint being helpful and useful for giving presentations, PowerPoint can be a drawback on students as well. Students can create too many slides, effects, big font, and pictures. Students need to be cautious and not overuse these items. They need to keep it short and to the point.

Interactive WhiteBoards can be used as projectors, videos, chalkboards, arrange objects and items, and Internet uses. Teachers are able to integrate Interactive WhiteBoards in their lesson plan to help students learn and comprehend better by showing the students documents, videos, or objects. Students can learn by hands-on learning by working out problems on the board in many different subjects, math, science, English, reading, and history.

Videoconferencing allows students to communicate through a webcam. Videoconferencing can help students communicate with people all around the world. Students are able to learn about different topics and subjects without leaving the classroom. They can ask questions and take a video tour about a topic or subject. Students can communicate with a person in his or her profession and learn about their topic or subject in depth. Videoconferencing is also used to teach classes, for example, Spanish, in some schools. Videoconferencing helps schools with the cost of field trips.

Podcasting allows students to create and develop audio or video documents. Students are able to film anything and create a video with the documents they film. Students can also add audio to the document as well. Podcasting helps students work in small groups or whole groups. Students can create a film for all work on separate pieces and publish on the Internet for everyone to see. Podcasting will help students be cautious and critique their work before publishing. It will help them be better writers when students know everyone will have access to their work.

Educators will benefit from the above technology programs by helping students in the future for technology information they can use. Technology is a daily growing process. Students and adults have to use many technology programs and devices for their professions. The more information students know about technology, easier it will be for them to learn by and get a job.

**JULIE LAWSON**

**As an educator one should focus on not only the outcome, but the journey of educating a student when the thought and application of technology arises. The extent of the technology should stop only when the meaningful learning experience is compromised. Meaningful learning should be on the forefront of the educators mind. The current and future student is a new creature on the education frontier. Educators have a choice to embrace the technology or be left behind. The advancement of technology has made the world a smaller place.**

**Thinking of the world as a smaller place, the thought of asynchronous communication comes to the forefront. The term may sound alarming, but yet once understood as transmission of data without the use of an external clock signal; one is able to comprehend the meaning. Asynchronous tools that an educator can use are slide share, prezi, google presentations, and interactive white boards. These technologies when embraced can facilitate a meaningful learning experience. An educator should be affluent in using the technologies. When the educator is able to transmit the knowledge in a medium that captures the students’ attention, they will want to learn.**

**Since the students are skilled in the latest technologies educators must be willing to go the extra mile. This mile may be a tough journey, but will be worth it in the end. It’s true, no matter what educators do the students will leave them behind. Even though left behind, educators must provide students with the knowledge they need to improve the world. Budget constraints and geographic location is just a couple of bumps on the path. By utilizing asynchronous communication tools, whether or not a student can commute to a better school with the latest technology will not be a hindrance. However, students in rural areas will have a much harder time utilizing these tools. It is naïve of an educator to believe that all students have access to the internet or even a home PC.**

**The technology is available and no mountain is too high for an educator to climb. The students are willing to learn if educators can find a way to communicate. The guidance is needed and will always be needed. Technology will not replace the technologically affluent educator, but the technologically illiterate educator will become extinct. Meaningful learning and technology are compatible if educators utilize the tools available.**

**JULIE LAWSON - Response to Peers**

**I agree with Rachael and Shelly. Once you sit with a child you quickly see how far behind you are. Also, it is evident how their perception is so different from your own. As educators we must embrace technology! Hard to think that the antiquated means of teaching which I so embraced in my early school years are teacher centered. It focused on what he or she could teach. This had a downside because sometimes you encounter the dreaded not so great teacher. The collaborative tools available can help fill the gaps in the education process. Educators must not have fear that we will be replaced. However, while embracing the technology and walking this slippery slope, we must not lose our students that are not technologically affluent, nor bore the ones that are on the cutting edge. Shelly mentioned that this is a process of growth. As venturing into education, it is life long journey and there is only progress…not perfection.**

**Rachael Cantu- Response to Julie**

**I am experiencing first-hand the proverbial mountain that educators must climb to gain equal footing with our technologically savvy youth. I am also seeing, however, that it is totally worth it. I completely agree with Julie’s point about technology simultaneously acting as a force that shrinks the global community while at the same time connecting it. In this way, technology is not something to be feared but embraced. Julie is absolutely right that as educators, we must use technology as a means of guiding our students down their paths to the attainment of knowledge.**

**Youlonda Chappell-Response**

**I agree with you all, technology is the “It” in today’s society (youth), but in my area (preschool) and where I’m employed our classrooms don’t have computers or anything of that nature. I’m not computer savvy and now I wish I were because as stated in a previous post learning technology is a process and it’s not learned overnight, but you have those educators that don’t have that the time needed to help us that weren’t born with computers in our laps, and that makes it hard as well as stressful, I’m glad that my preschoolers are being exposed to technology at home.**

**Youlonda Chappell**

**Youlonda Chappell**

**My understanding of this chapter may not be what it was supposed to be, but who knows. This chapter speaks about different ways that technology has been incorporated into classrooms; whether it’s used for parent/teacher conferences, teacher/teacher interaction, cooperate use or student interaction with each other. Technology has become the “IT’ in todays’ society for some people, personally I prefer the pencil/paper approach.**

**Educators should welcome the idea of implementing new ways to enhance the ability to match the technology used in instruction and classroom activities to the technology that the students use daily; no matter how much it stretches them. In the chapter some classrooms had the opportunity to speak to people that had firsthand experience with the subject being taught through the use of Interactive videoconferencing. That itself should make any educator want to know how to add more ways of using technology to their classroom.**

**Some types of technology spoken about in this chapter can aid in helping the educator plan better lesson plans and curriculum. I use the internet to find ideas and activities for lessons I want to teach. Although technology is not available in my preschool classroom for the children to use, I have no doubt that they would know how to use I if it were, because I’m sure their parents have taught them how to play games on their cell phones or has taught them how to use the home computer. I have not had the opportunity of working in public school, so I have not experienced the any of the uses that are spoken of in the chapter, other than what has been done or attempted in this class. I could have used videoconferencing for some of the parent/teacher conferences, which would have made it easier in the parents. Technology can be fun to use if the educator is willing to go the extra mile to teach new things no matter how long it may take the students to learn it.**

**Amanda Jones**

**When I hear the word technology I think of cellphones, computers, iPod’s and things along that line. The last thing that comes to mind is technology in schools. However, this is becoming a very important tool that teachers use in their classrooms. Chapter five covers many methods of technology that could help the teacher in the classroom and I feel that if I was a teacher today I would jump at the chance to learn more about it and put that information into farthing my students education.**

**At this time in my life I am a preschool teacher. There is little technology used, but there is some. We have a computer program that allows my preschoolers practice colors and to just explore with guidance from the teacher. So technology can be used at all ages.**

**For older students I feel that the chapter covers great tools to use. The discussion boards and voice threads are great tools that can help to keep the students interested and involved in the lesson. I feel that this provides a great example of meaningful learning. Maintaining interest in new things as well as getting students to think in a creative way and get involved is a tool that you should definitely have in the classroom.**

**The asynchronous discussion boards allow students to open their own discussion over different topics. This helps with organization and to show individual interests. This is a great way to help the students to learn how to express themselves through writing. This is also a great way to support second language learning. It can allow students to communicate with native speakers from other countries through interesting topics or among themselves through a relevant topic.**

**Voice thread I feel is one of the most amazing tools that I have been introduced to. When we first looked into voicethread we viewed a video where the teacher asked students to solve a math problem. Each student used the doodle tool to show their work as well as explain what they were doing as they did it. When I saw this I starting thinking of ways I could possibly do one day in my own classroom. As a teacher this would be great hands on lesson/assessment for the students to complete. It not only keeps the students active and interested in the lesson but allows you the teacher to see how the student is doing with such tasks. This also allows the students the chance to comment or ask questions about a lesson. The students could record their comments or point out things that they might not be sure of. This will allow the teacher the chance to help that student.**

**As teachers you want to make sure that you stay up with all the new skills and developments that will help you to become a better educator. Working with technology and keeping updated on information that you can provide for your students is one way to become a great educator. You want to encourage learning and creativity in your students and in today’s society technology plays a huge role in that and you need to make sure that you can provide the best education for your students that you can.**

**Amanda Jones**

**I think that Valerie makes a good point when talking about blackboards. When I first attended school I had no idea what blackboard was, but I quickly discovered how helpful it was. I love how assignments are posted for you, reminders, announcements and much more. It helped me stay organized and on track most of my college career. I feel that his would be a great tool for high schools to start incorporating into their education systems. I recently found out that my old high school was rebuilt and that now it is very technology based. The school has provided computers for the student to use during the four years there. They are allowed to record lectures, submit homework, as well as participate during class. I asked my younger cousin if they had anything like blackboard to where they had discussions and assignments and to where they can keep up with their grades; and he said that most of it is done through emails and on the school web links. I feel that since this school just started this technology they should also incorporate blackboard. I feel that it would really help to keep the students organized and start to build independence in the students.**