Genevieve Di Giulio Action Research Template: 3/19/13

***Driving Question***

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| What new techniques and strategies related to 21st century skills, could I implement to increase student engagement in my 8th grade Language Arts classes? How does blogging?  |

**Step 1:** Identifying and Limiting the Topic

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| I’m most interested in increasing student engagement and integrating more technology into my curriculum. I see these as interrelated, as students are always more interested when I integrate even little bits of technology. Although “techniques and strategies” is very vague and broad, my intent is to first implement a few specific techniques (that I’ll previously choose) related to integrating quality technology use to achieve greater student engagement.  |

**Step 2**: Gathering Information

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| This step includes connecting with other teachers and professionals in the field to hone the driving question, but also spend time reflecting on the validity and importance of the topic. I actively work with our instructional and ELL coaches, as well as meet weekly with my 8th grade partner and assistant principal. They are all superb resources for ideas and suggestions as related to my topic. Although our Holt text and ancillary teacher-materials are filled with suggestions for strategies, I haven’t really found them intriguing and they definitely lack use of technology (beyond students doing research).  |

**Step 3:** Reviewing the Related Literature

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| I’ve recently finished the “Innovators” series with RSDSS, a link to one of the presenter’s workshops is in parentheses:(<http://digitallyspeaking.pbworks.com/w/page/61777460/Using%20Technology%20to%20Create%20a%20Highly%20Engaged%20Classroom#Activity1WhoARETodaysLearners>) and can look over my notes and the book, The Highly Engaged Classroom (Marzano, Pickering, Heflebower). Also, the website, [www.edutopia.org](http://www.edutopia.org) has blogs related to technology integration (<http://www.edutopia.org/blogs/beat/technology-integration>).  |

**Step 4**: Develop a Research Plan

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| While developing the research plan, it’s important to keep the variable to be observed and measured clear. I’m picturing the data including both qualitative and quantitative data. Some examples of data I’ll glean will come from surveys, observations, interviews and time-on-task. I envision looking at entry-level assessments and summative assessments to gauge how effective the engagement strategy was. I currently teach 3 classes of 8th grade language arts and my initial thought is to use all 108 students. However, if this is too large a group, perhaps a suggestion of a smaller number would help. Initial hypotheses may include that there is a significant increase in engagement when technology is integrated into the classroom. Do I need to state a particular number? If students are more engaged, then they learn more. A hypothesis could include the percentage of students reaching a proficient or above score on their summative assessments. Do I include a percentage in my hypothesis? I could also include statistics/hypotheses on the reduction in correcting behavior in the classroom.  |

**Step 5**: Implementing the Plan and Collecting Data

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| I’ll definitely use field notes to collect data. I can use columned notes where I focus on time-on-task and number of corrections on behavior. I can interview the students through surveys or questionnaires in regards to their personal interest level after utilizing the new technique. Further, I can look at their assessment data to determine the number of proficient and advanced students.  |

**Step 6**: Analyzing the Data

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| To analyze data it’s important to look at “themes, categories, or patterns” that emerge. Further, it’s imperative that when I review and analyze the data, it specifically reflects my research question. As the data comes in, I can use it to guide further research.  |

**Step 7**: Developing an Action Plan

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| The next step is, based on the outcome of the research, to develop a more highly engaging and effective classroom. This outcome will guide me in discarding less effective strategies and enhancing those that I’d implemented that yielded better results (i.e. more engagement and better assessment results). Of course, it’s also important to note that this is a cyclical process, whereby I integrate more technology and engagement tools to aid in improving my classroom instruction and student-comprehension.  |

**Step 8:** Sharing and Communicating the Results

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| Initially, I’d be comfortable sharing my results with my 8th grade team and later, the school staff. I am open to presenting to a larger audience; however, I would want to feel very secure in my data analysis, findings and will definitely be happy to share a positive outcome.  |

**Step 9** Reflecting on the Process

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| Similar to step 7, this step assures the teacher that constant examination of teaching practices is imperative to maintaining the highest quality opportunity for learning. Students’ needs change by classroom, within the classroom, year-to-year, and have definitely changed since I started teaching 14 years ago. I am motivated to implement varied strategies and forms of instruction to meet the needs of my students and this action research project is the first step toward making global changes, not small ones.  |