Getting Through the Testing Season… "May the Odds Be Ever in Your Favor"! *The Hunger Games*

This Month's Learning Focus: Student Voice and Choice

Student voice and choice is not just the latest "fad" in education. It is a great way to increase engagement and create a more student-centered learning experience. Providing student voice and choice in the classroom is more than offering a choice between a PowerPoint or poster presentation. There are many ways to provide students with voice and choice in their learning and by differentiating the content, process, and/or product, students are able to take ownership of their learning experience. Students can also have voice and choice in **who** they work with and **where** they work (flexible seating).

Product: Differentiating the product of learning is probably the most widely used option for student voice and choice. Students might choose to create a PowerPoint or make a video presentation to show what they've learned. Teachers can give students choices and they pick from those choices, or a teacher might ask students to propose their own choices. "The key to product options is having clear academic criteria that students understand. When products are cleanly aligned to learning targets, student voice and choice flourish, while ensuring that significant content is addressed" *(McCarthy, 2015)*.
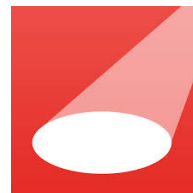
Content: "Content is comprised of the knowledge, concepts, and skills that students need to learn based on the curriculum. Differentiating content includes using various delivery formats such as video, readings, lectures, or audio." Differentiating the content allows all students to have equal access to the curriculum and eliminates barriers such as second-languages and disabilities. Teachers can provide choice in how students access the content based on their learning preferences or choice can be provided in the actual content, based on student interest. *(McCarthy, 2015)*

Process: "When teachers differentiate process, they teach the same concept or skill to each student; however, the manner in which each student makes sense of the topic or skill can vary.

Practitioner in the Spotlight

Webster's Dictionary defines a Practitioner as someone who is **"actively engaged in an art, discipline or profession"**. A **21st Century Practitioner** is someone who is "actively engaged in the art of the 21st Century Learning Practices" by infusing them in his/her instruction. This feature of the newsletter shines a spotlight on 21st Century Practitioners in our district who are doing amazing things in their classrooms utilizing the 21st Century Learning Practices and working towards making our students college and career ready.

Ms. Amy Hybarger, Shaw Middle School

Can you just give a short background of yourself, what you teach and when you first started using the 21st Century Learning Practices?
My name is Amy Hybarger. I have been a teacher-librarian for the past 9 years and before that I taught English/ Language Arts, Math and Reading. I have a Master's in Curriculum and Instruction with an emphasis as a reading specialist. As a teacher-librarian, I collaborate with all different content areas and develop lessons that focus on information literacy standards and content-area standards while embedding the 21st Century skills. About 4 years ago, I was selected to be my building representative for the 21st Century Leaders Network, and I instantly saw the merit to the 21st Century Competencies.

How has using the 21st Century Learning Practices transformed your instruction?
For me as the teacher-librarian, the 21st Century framework provides common language that I can use with teachers when designing lessons. The 21st Century language is shared and used in collaboration with students and then also used by students. There are a lot of different frameworks for 21st Century skills, but I appreciate one that is tailored to our district so that administrators, parents, staff, teachers and students are all on the same page.

EVENTS

- [CUE of NEVADA events](#) - Our own Terra Graves will be the <u>Keynote Speaker</u> at the Fall Conference!

- [AACT's 5th Annual "Salute to Signatures & CTE"](#) Event - May 3, 2018 at 5:30-7:00pm

- [NGSS Boot Camp 2018](#) - Taking STEM Outside May 4-6, 2018

WCSD 21ST CENTURY LEARNING

Practitioner in the Spotlight continued from Page 1

How has implementing the 21st Century Learning Practices transformed your students' learning and their achievement?

Our students need to be college and career ready; I feel that the best ways to prepare them is by creating experiences that allow students to dive into information that is engaging and relevant. The job market is going to look vastly different for our young children and utilizing the 21st Century Competencies is one of the best ways that we can prepare our students for that job market. Students will solve problems, create and design, collaborate and construct knowledge and need to have good communication skills in their careers - they need practice at it!

In thinking about planning with, and implementing, the 21st Century Learning Practices, what advice would you give to someone who is new to 21st Century Learning?

The advice I would give someone that is new to 21st Century Learning is from the Disney movie *Meet the Robinson's*, "From failure we learn, from success not so much." Learning is messy and we need to allow teachers and students to try new things and get messy in the process.

Please describe the activities you are doing related to 21st Century Learning to demonstrate the students' learning.

I want students to be exposed to many different activities that cover different standards as well as different competencies. The theme for NV Reading Week this year is *Reading is a Voyage* so in collaboration with the English department, we had students take a "voyage" to different destinations where they learned about the different methods of reading to read (e-books, audiobooks, print books, online tools) as well as different strategies for finding books that fit their interests (blogs, pod-casts, websites, author audio clips, book-trailers, student book-talks).

Collaboration! Use of Tech FOR Learning!

Student Voice and Choice continued from Page 1

Therefore, teachers should vary the activities students use to master the concepts or skills. They can decide how best to do this by taking into account their students' readiness levels, interests, or learning profiles. Teachers can break the students into groups or pairs to work on different activities or might assign individual tasks." As evident, these are activities in which the students are "interacting with" or "processing" the content. "Processing helps students assess what they do and don't understand". Choices may include discussions with a partner or group, reflecting on the material in some way, an interactive note-taker or graphic organizer, etc. (*https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/di/cresource/q2/p06/*).

The Who: Providing students with choices of *who* they are going to work with can be a great motivator. This *choice*, however, may need to be guided somewhat. If we help our students reflect on the following questions: Who do you need to help? Who can help you? What are my strengths? and What are my areas of growth? they will be more successful in "making intentional decisions in the learning partners they choose and give them a powerful range of incentives" (Miller, 2016).

The Where: Allowing students to choose *where* they are going to work can be another great motivator for students. Many teachers are offering students a variety of choices in the classroom as to *where* they sit and what they sit on, called **flexible seating or spaces**. In some classrooms you'll see several different options such as tall tables for standing or sitting on bar stools, short tables for sitting on the floor or on short chairs, some students might be in a quiet corner working, while others may even have exercise balls as seats. Providing options for every type of learner allows for more creativity and can even help to eliminate some classroom management issues.

Articles for Reference
Voice and Choice: It's More Than Just "What" by Andrew Miller (2016) from *Edutopia*
3 Ways to Plan for Diverse Learners: What Teachers Do by John McCarthy (2015) from *Edutopia*
The Iris Center from Vanderbilt Peabody College "What is Differentiated Instruction" Module

Student-Facing 21st Century Learning Competencies are here!!!

Recommended Use

1. Show students the 21st Century Competencies guide and let them know that this is what YOU use when designing your learning activities, lesson plans, and units for them.

2. The student's version is formatted a little differently than the teacher's guide.

   A. Each competency includes wording from the competency which comes before it, so once you get to the top, this is the highest level for that dimension. The wording that is added onto the previous level is green.

   B. The images we selected are "things that go up" to emphasize the concept that moving up is the goal.

   C. Each grade band has a theme:

   i. Pre-K is "The Building Blocks of the 21st Century Competencies" because this is where students are first learning about them. The goal is the top block.

   ii. K-2 is "21st Century Competencies in Bloom" because their understanding is growing. The goal is the bloom.

   iii. 3-5 is "Blasting Off with the 21st Century Competencies" because their experience with the competencies is getting stronger (and this age group tends to love rockets). The goal is the top of the rocket.

   iv. 6-8 is "Reaching New Heights in 21st Century Learning" with the ladders. The goal is the top of the ladder.

   v. 9-12 is "The Sky is the Limit with the 21st Century Competencies" with the skyscrapers. The goal is the top of the building.

3. We recommend making these POSTER size and hanging them up in your classroom.

*The WCSD Print Shop will make them for you (a 24" x 36" poster in color on white paper costs $3.50, so for all 6 dimensions, that would be $21 for the set.)

As always, please let us know if you have suggestions on how to improve these resources to better suit your classroom needs.

Enjoy! 3

WANTED: 21st Century Exemplar Classrooms! We are looking for 21st Century Exemplar Classrooms within Washoe County School District to exhibit the positive student impacts achieved through 21st Century Learning Practices. Click here to submit an **application** to highlight your work and how it enhances students' learning. If chosen as an Exemplar Classroom teacher, your practice will be showcased for your peers, leaders within the district, and professional learning communities beyond Washoe County Schools.

Helpful Tips

♦ 135 Practical Ed Tech Tips for Teachers

♦ 16 Handy iPad Tips for Teachers

♦ 3 Fun Presentation Tools for End-of-the-Year Projects

♦ Google For Teachers: 100+ Tricks

♦ Top 20 Tech Tips For Teachers

♦ The Best Google Tips For Teachers From Google

Want to see what 21st Century Learning looks like in our District? Click here for videos.

Are **YOU** doing amazing things in your classroom with 21st Century Learning Practices? Would you be willing to share these great things with others? We would love to come in and video your students showcasing the 21st Century Learning Practices! **These also make great artifacts for evaluations!** Please email Shari Dunn at skdunn@washoeschools.net to schedule.

Have great examples you can share? Submit them to our **Student Exemplar Padlet**! There are already examples to see!

Teeny Tiny PD

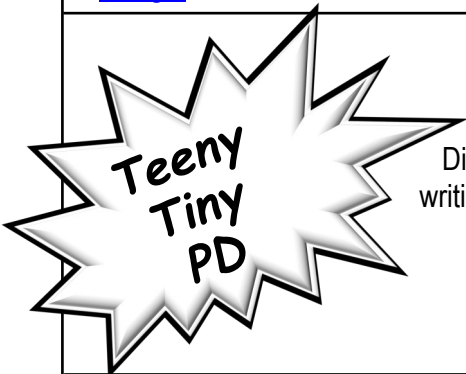This month's **Teeny Tiny PD** is brought to you by **Mark Skoff!**
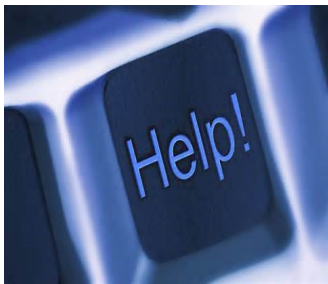
<< Microsoft Word's Readability Tool >>

Did you know that you and your students can determine the grade level and readability of writing or text with one easy setting? Learn how to access this tool in Microsoft Word, how it's used and what it means. Instructions are for both PC and Mac users.

Video: Microsoft's Readability Tool * **Link to Transcript** of Video

More Resources: Readability Formulas and **Test Your Document's Readability**

What the Tech? and other Tools

IT'S HERE!! Have a **question** related to **technology**? The 21st Century Learning Department and I.T. have collaborated to create a Question and Answer Forum for your technology related questions. You can browse a wide variety of categories and search for answers to your questions.

Click here for: **What the Tech**? What the Tech? is a SharePoint site so be sure to click on **"Follow"** so it's easy for you to find when you need it! Categories range from basic tech questions to more advanced questions about Microsoft Teams, OneNote, Google or Infinite Campus.

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18 Challenges for Teachers in 2018 - from *Kasey Bell & Shake Up Learning*. 18 Challenges that will challenge educators to try something new in their classroom in 2018--new ideas, new apps, new features, and some fun extras along the way.

10 Sites for Keyboarding and Typing from *Tech & Learning* - Keyboarding or Typing is one the first and most vital skills for students to learn for technology literacy. This skill is the building block for using a computer and one that starts as early Kindergarten if not sooner.

6 Structures to Make Creation Happen in Your Classroom - from *Tech & Learning* - Students get more learning out of creation than they would out of almost anything else. We know that! Creation projects are just like everything else though: the success and learning depend on the structure!

Adobe Spark Activities for Elementary Students from *Classtechtips.com* - Adobe Spark creation tools are now available for children under 13!

10 Very Good Web Tools to Engage Students in Hands-On Activities in Class from *EducatorsTechnology* - will help you integrate the ethos of this learning-by-doing methodology in your instruction. You can use them in your class to engage your students in hands-on activities while having fun and developing collaborative and team work skills.

Cool Tools

WCSD 21ST CENTURY LEARNING

Please encourage colleagues at your site to take the Practitioner Badge course!

UPCOMING COURSES

21st Century Practitioner Badge Courses

21st Century Educator Practitioner Fall 2018 Badge Course
Oct. 9 - Nov. 19, 2018; Brown Center; 4:15 - 6:15pm
Facilitators: Misha Miller-Hornbuckle & Terra Graves
Link to Register

Watch for more sections opening in MyPGS.

21st Century Leader Badge Courses

Prerequisite: Must have successfully completed Practitioner Badge

21st Century Educator Leader Badge Course Fall 2018 - Dates, Times and Location - TBD
Watch MyPGS for registration details.

My idea is....

Have a great tool, article, or website you'd like to share? Have any suggestions for topics you'd like to see included in future newsletters?
We'd love to hear your voice!
Email us and we'll check it out!

This monthly newsletter brought to you by The 21st Century Learning Division

Contact us through our website, www.wcsd21.com with Questions, Concerns, or Suggestions

Mail Stop: 21CLD/I.T., Admin Building C

Editor: Dr. Jessica Stepaniak

Check out our webpage frequently for new updates and resources.

WCSD 21ST CENTURY LEARNING

EdTech Courses

Explorer Badge - CAMP 21 Online Course
Did you know... You can take Camp 21 more than once to earn credit. There are many options to choose from, so you'll be able to pick something new to learn about and explore! Class is worth 1.0 credit.
Facilitators: Terra Graves & Misha Miller-Hornbuckle
Check MyPGS for Upcoming Dates to Register

Other Free Webinars, Videos & Articles

Amplifying Student Voice with Technology – Recorded **Webinar** by Dr. Chawanna Chambers.

Gamified Learning to Improve English with Knudge.me - Check out this great app that is helping students learn to improve their English from *ClassTechTips.com.*

Student-Centered Planning - Planning instruction around students' readiness, interests, and learning preferences empowers them to drive their own learning from *Edutopia.*

Frickin' Packets article and podcast from *Cult of Pedagogy.* Great info about ways to engage your students without "packets"!

The EdTech Eleven: This Month's Must-Know Tools article from *Common Sense Media*

How to Make an Escape Room For the Upper Elementary Classroom from *Upper Elementary Snapshots*

Ideas on Making Science Accessible to ALL Students article from *EdSurge*

Being 'The Guide on the Side' is not Enough. Become The COO article from *Tech & Learning*– Great message!

What's new in Microsoft? from *Microsoft.com*

9 Free Apps and Online Resources for Dyslexic Students from Dyslexia the Gift Blog

Free *Webinars* from *edWeb.net.* Click **here** for a list of free Webinars offered **monthly** on a wide variety of topics.