

Are you an “activator” of knowledge? What does your impact look like? John Hattie

This Month’s Learning Focus: The Value of Self-Reflection

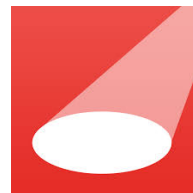
As this year is winding down, one of the most impactful things educators can do is to reflect on the school year. Reflecting on one’s teaching practice has been originally credited to John Dewey, an American Philosopher (1910). Dewey (1933) believed that in order to be reflective, one must actively consider their actions and consequences. He recognized that this ‘thinking teacher’ must possess three key attributes to be reflective: ‘open-mindedness’ to new ideas/thoughts; ‘wholeheartedness’ to seek out fresh approaches and fully engage with them; and ‘responsibility’ to be aware of the consequences of one’s own actions. So, in his view, reflections to help develop these attributes are essential to becoming a successful teacher. According to Hindman and Stronge (2009), reflection is about critically examining yourself as a teacher and is indicative of an effective teacher. Depending on the individual teacher, “the practice may involve: analyzing a prior experience (the idea that hindsight may be 20/20), defining or questioning an issue, seeking an explanation to how students are learning (i.e., problem-solving), changing course as an event unfolds such that the outcome is altered, or responding to a higher set of expectations set internally.”

Reflecting on one’s practice can be an uncomfortable process, and it takes time. Teachers consistently struggle with fitting in everything within the school day as it is, and making that time for reflection can seem like just “one more thing” that is added to the plate, however important it may be. It is a critical component of professional growth process, though, and just as important as asking our students to reflect on their learning. Taking a look at oneself, identifying areas of strength and weakness, and then creating a plan to improve upon those areas of weakness can be very daunting. There continues to be substantial research, however, supporting that teacher reflection improves teacher practice, which improves student performance (Constantino & De Lorenzo, 2001; Danielson & McGreal, 2000; Glickman, 2002; Lambert, 2003).

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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. Marilyn Stefan, Beasley ES



Can you just give a short background of yourself, what you teach and when you first started using the 21st Century Learning Practices?

I have been teaching in WCSD for 25 years. I have taught 1st, 2nd and 3rd grade with the majority of my teaching career at Bud Beasley ES in 3rd grade. I graduated from UNR with both a Bachelor’s and Master’s Degrees. I continue to be a lifelong learner, and in the last three years I began my course of study in the 21st Century Competencies.

How has using the 21st Century Learning Practices transformed your instruction?

My role as a 3rd grade teacher has completely transformed as I have implemented 21st Century Practices into my teaching. While technology has been a small part and perhaps where I shifted initially, it has become so much more than that. Technology has allowed me to see and hear students communicating in a different way and that has led me to understand and believe there is so much more that kids can do by and for themselves. I have truly been able to differentiate my instruction for all levels of my students by offering hands-on activities, collaborative assignments, and pacing and choice of activities to accommodate fast finishers and slow learners. I’ve also really focused on fast, effective teacher and peer feedback which has allowed me to establish live data results for immediate needs of students.

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- ◆ [CUE of NEVADA events](#) - Our own Terra Graves will be the Keynote Speaker at the **Fall Conference!**
- ◆ [Nevada Project Wet](#) for Educators on the Truckee River, June 23, 2018
- ◆ 10 Mindframes of Visible Learning by John Hattie - Book Study in June
- ◆ Epic Classroom by Trevor Muir Book Study in June

Now, I listen more to my students and how they would like to learn. Then, I'm able to provide standards based instruction in the ways that students want to learn. We analyze together what worked and what didn't, try again or create a new idea. We do this together which is completely new to me!

I've noticed that I have more time during the school day to visit and meet with all levels of students, where before, I seemed to have minimal time to meet with my low students and I depended on my high students to "take care of themselves" in a way. 21st Century Practices are more equitable because everyone seems to have a voice, no matter their level of learning. An essential component of my transformation has been the 21st Century Education Practitioner, Explorer and Leader courses along with CAMP21 modules and support from my fellow 21st Century Educators.

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

My students seem to be more motivated and invested in activities than ever before because they have a choice in what their final product will look like. My students also LOVE using FlipGrid, a program that allows them to share their thinking in a quick video explanation. This program gives even the shyest student a voice and the most talkative student a chance to say more when they need or want to. Students can work collaboratively, writing a quick script and making sure that everyone in the group gets a chance to speak in the video. Students look out for each other and make sure everyone is part of the community of learners.

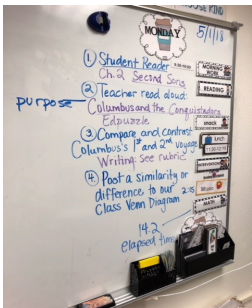
My third graders also seem to be taking more risks, are more focused, and many are displaying self management behaviors and taking leadership roles. Students often come to school telling me about something they tried or learned at home that applies to what we are learning. That tells me that learning is not only associated with school but carries over in real life. More often than not, the kids tell me, "that was so fun." Then, we have a discussion about what aspects made an activity fun and then students are in charge of reminding me or figuring out where to incorporate the same or similar activity in future content lessons.

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?

My advice to teachers just beginning to implement 21st Century Practices is to take it slow and try one practice at a time. It may be uncomfortable to tweak or change, but over time, your teaching will transform and unfold into something quite exciting. Practice makes progress, not perfection, and students will take risks if they see you taking risks, failing, reflecting, and trying again. I talk with my students about my own learning process and give examples when I can. 21st Century is not all about technology and going paperless. My students talk and collaborate now more than ever. I try to create a balance of activities. Now, the noise in my classroom is not from disruptive students, it's from students learning and helping each other build relationships and communication skills that will ultimately help them in and out of school.

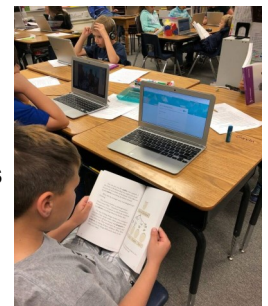
Please describe the activities you are doing related to 21st Century Learning to demonstrate the students' learning.

My students have been doing a compare and contrast writing assignment about Columbus's first two voyages. Students listened to a read aloud from the Core Knowledge book then completed a reading in their student reader about Columbus. Afterwards, students visited with other students to brainstorm similarities and differences between Columbus' first two voyages. Then, each student was given a digital Venn Diagram to take notes on during the group discussion/brainstorm session. When students felt they had enough information, they wrote a rough draft using sentence starters for compare and contrast paragraphs to help them. When the draft was complete, they met with a peer to get some editing feedback and then went forward with a final draft where each student had to find two images that would represent the information within their paragraph. The final copy was sent to me electronically within Google Classroom so that I could print it in color. While students waited for their final printed copy, they each completed a direct draw of one of Columbus' ships. The writings and art were displayed in the hallway as a finished product. In the classroom, we had a live, collaborative Venn Diagram where students wrote on a sentence strip and added one of their similarities or differences to the class Venn Diagram. The purpose of this class Venn Diagram was to share ideas with others who were not in their original brainstorm group and to have a collaboration of classroom ideas.



What I noticed was that students wanted to make sure their ideas were original and not duplicated on the class Venn Diagram. I heard a few students brainstorming new ideas for the class Venn Diagram, so it seems the learning was extended even more. The classroom Venn Diagram also served as a helper for those students who were stuck and couldn't think of similarities and differences or who needed more support. They could go up and read the ideas on the Venn Diagram in hopes of stimulating their own answers.

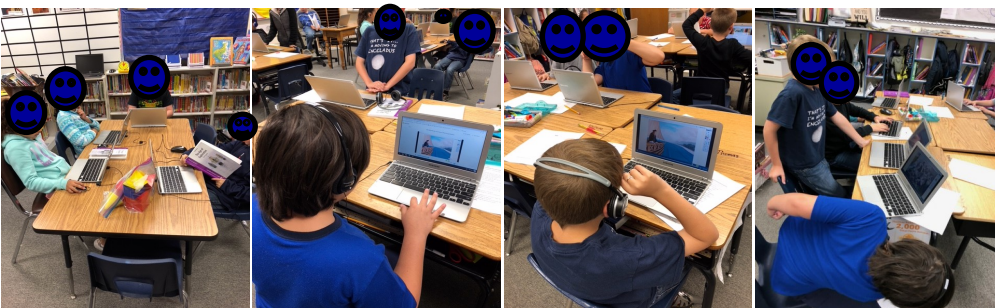
Here is what 3 groups of students had to say about what they liked most about digital learning: 1) "We think it's a lot better. There's more collaboration. You can be more organized we are more engaged. It has more entertainment, you might say. We can do all



these commands and stuff digitally!"

(2) "We like the forms and questions - you get to now if you're right or wrong immediately and it lowers the suspense. You know if you have to take it again!"

(3) "We like collaboration because we can discuss with each other so we aren't copying but we are discussing the answers and then writing in our own words."





The Value of Reflection continued from Page 1

So how exactly does one go about the self-reflection process? One of the simplest things you can do is set a reminder in your calendar each day to reflect. For instance, if you usually leave school at 4:00pm, create a reminder for 3:45pm each day to reflect. Reflection doesn't have to be a lengthy process; it just needs to be meaningful to you. One way to implement self-reflection is to start by asking yourself some questions, one in particular, really stands out: "What was my impact" today with my students? In [Ten Mindframes for Visible Learning](#), John Hattie asks the questions: "Are you an evaluator of your impact?" and "Are you an activator of knowledge?" These questions require much deeper thinking than simply, "How was my day today?" "Reflecting determinedly to improve something requires effort and sustained, focused thinking centered on a particular issue or concern you might have about your development as a teacher" ([McGregor, n.d.](#)). "Expert teachers adjust their thinking to accommodate the level of reflection a situation calls for" ([Danielson, 2009](#)). Other questions you can ask yourself are: "What worked in this lesson? How do I know?"; "What do I believe about how my students learn? How does this belief influence my instruction?"; and "What data do I need to make an informed decision about this problem?" Other ways to process your reflection are: write a letter to yourself about how things went and what you would do to improve; keep a reflective journal; utilize a program to do a video recording of your thoughts or record your teaching and watch it later reflecting on how it went; or ask your students or another peer to provide you with feedback. See resources below for more examples.

As important it is for teachers to self-reflect, it is equally important to teach our students to develop a reflective practice for their own learning process. Are we teaching our students to be evaluators of their impact in both academic and social situations? When we assess our students, are we simply giving them a grade or are we providing them feedback that will move their learning forward? Formative assessments should be used as a tool to improve your practice and ultimately improve student learning. Dylan William ([2012](#)) speaks about 5 strategies that are imperative to successful formative assessments: "Clarifying, sharing, and understanding learning intentions and criteria for success; Engineering effective classroom discussions, activities, and learning tasks that elicit evidence of learning; Providing feedback that moves learning forward; Activating learners as instructional resources for one another; and Activating learners as owners of their own learning". These are essential 21st Century Learning Practices as well. Alrubail ([2015](#)) discusses the importance of teaching students to reflect and become critical thinkers: "It's important for students to know "how" to learn and how to continue to be learners. Memorizing content will not help students become critical thinkers. Critical thinking stems from pausing, reflecting, and knowing "how" and "why" learning should be happening at that moment." If we teach our students to be reflective of their own actions in and out of the classroom, they will be more successful in the real-world.

[Want more Resources for Self-Reflection for Teachers and Students?](#)

[Teaching Strategies: The Value of Self-Reflection](#); [Dr. John Hattie: Assessment Should Measure a Teacher's Impact](#); [Reflections on Practice and Growth](#); [Fostering Reflection](#); [Reflecting on Teaching](#); [What can reflective practice mean for you...and why should you engage in it?](#); [Dylan William & The 5 Formative Assessment Strategies to Improve Student Learning](#); [Scaffolding Student Reflections](#); [15 Ways to Spark Student Reflection in your Classroom](#); [7 Reflection Tips for Assessment, Empowerment and Self-Awareness](#)

Welcome to Operation K-5 Computer Science!

Are you a K-5 teacher who is super excited about Computer Science? This opportunity is for you!

WCSD's 21st Century Learning Department is seeking **30 motivated and innovative elementary school teachers** to be part of the new **K-5 Computer Science Cadre**. Participating teachers will each receive a robust technology package that includes iPads, [Makey Makeys](#), [Spheros](#), [Cleverbots](#), and [Lego WeDo sets](#).

We will also provide you with professional development and support to help you integrate computational thinking skills and computer science into your K-5 classroom. For more details and to apply for this amazing opportunity, [CLICK ON THIS LINK](#). (**Application deadline is June 8th, 2018**)

*We strongly encourage Leaders Network K-5 teachers to apply! If you are not a K-5 teacher, please feel free to forward this to an elementary school teacher that you feel would be a strong candidate.

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

Check out the *Teeny Tiny PD* on page 4!

Last month we brought you the Student-Facing documents by grade band...

We've now designed [One-Pagers](#) that include all Dimension for each grade-band!

See the 21st Century Learning Department's webpage for [Student-Facing 21st Century Competencies](#) for more information and on how to print these in poster-size.

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.



- ◆ [A Quick Guide to OneNote](#)
- ◆ [50 Awesome Apps that Integrate with Google Classroom](#)
- ◆ [8 Apps and Tools for Classroom SEL](#)
- ◆ [Gamify your Google Classroom with these 10 fun Bookwidgets learning games](#)
- ◆ [Google Classroom Goodies](#)
- ◆ [17 Ways to use FlipGrid in your Classroom](#)

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!



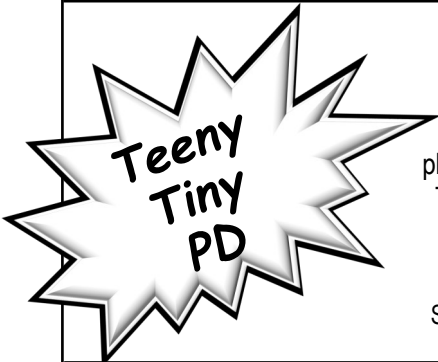
This month's **Teeny Tiny PD** is brought to you by **Terra Graves!**

<< **Using the Student Facing Competencies** >>

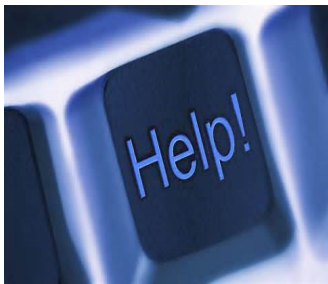
Do you use the 21st Century Competencies guide (aka "The Elevator Guide) in your lesson planning? Do you wish there was an easy way to share these with your students? Now you can! This 2-minute video will help you find the 21st Century Competencies for Students along with suggestions for how you can use them in your classroom.

Video: [Using the Student Facing Competencies](#) * **Link to [Transcript](#) of Video**

See the 21st Century Learning Department's webpage for [Student-Facing 21st Century Competencies](#) for more information and on how to print these in poster-size.



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.

[Force Copy - The G-Suite Tip Every Educator Needs to Know](#) - from **Tech & Learning**. Sometimes when you make a copy for others, things can go wrong!

[A Teacher's Guide to Surviving Fortnite](#) from **Tech & Learning** - Are your students obsessed with Fortnite? Embrace it. There are many meaningful ways Fortnite can be used in the classroom without even installing the game.

[How to Create a Matching Question in Google Form](#) - from **Tech & Learning** - Great for informal assessments

[15 Ideas to Ensure That Project Based Learning is Grounded in Content And Standards](#) from **Tech & Learning** - Great resource for implementing PBL in your classroom and upping your 21st Century Learning Practices!

[Lessons for 21st Century Learners](#) from **Edutopia** - Three ideas for fostering collaboration, critical thinking, communication, and creativity with easy-to-use apps and tools.

[Integrating "How-To" Videos to Empower Student Learning](#) from **The Teaching Channel** - Replacing the question, "How do I do that?" with moves that empower students to find answers for themselves, has freed me to support my class in meaningful ways without dedicating valuable time to process.





The 21st Century Educator
May 2018



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



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](#)

Sign up for the Waitlist - This will prompt 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.



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.



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

[Spotlight on Formative Assessment: Providing Feedback that Moves Learning Forward](#) - Article from Maine DOE

[Tips for Creating MakerSpaces For Teens](#) - Check out this article - teenagers may be more engaged in makerspaces when given more autonomy over learning from *School Library Journal*.

[The New Librarian: How I use tech to build relationships](#) - Read how a librarian has used the library to connect students to new ideas, new tech tools and each other from *eSchoolNews*. *Traner MS' Creative Commons is a great example in our district.*

[10 End of Year Blogging Activities](#) - 10 ideas you can weave into your end of the year activities from *The EduBlogger*

[Common Sense Media's Top Picks for Resources](#) - updated regularly

[9 Web Tools for Creating Digital Magazines](#) - from *Teacher Reboot Camp*

[Student-Centered Learning Part 1](#) - article from *The Twitter History Teacher*. Check out the additional resources on this site.

[How to Transform your Teaching with These 50 Questions](#) article from *Globaldigitalcitizen.com* - Great resource!

[Rock Band OK Go creates online resource to help educators teach science](#) video shown on *NBC Nightly News*

[Achieving Media Balance in a Tech-Immersed World](#) - webinar from Common Sense Media

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