Part I

I can easily relate my development as a teacher throughout the LTET Master's program to William Doll's Post-Modern theory of the 4R's for transformative learning. The coursework that I have completed in the LTET program has helped me to transform my teaching practices in order to better serve my students so that they will become creative problem solvers in the future.

My final essay for the Creativity course EDCG 602 (Exhibit I) reflects on my realization that creativity allows one to view the world with multiple meanings. This relates directly to Doll's idea that a rich curriculum, one immersed in creativity, will lead to many different interpretations. The virtual exhibit that I am reflecting on is a digital children's story that tells the tale about how a classroom teacher encourages her students' creativity by having them practice various techniques and strategies to bring out their creativity. In reality, the story portrays my journey throughout the coursework of the class and how I am able to apply it to my job as a classroom teacher.

Another course on Organizational Change and Teamwork (EDCG 618) helped me to see the importance of reflecting on my own interactions and collaborating with others in order to make change successful. My Plan for Practice essay (Exhibit II) explains that in order to successfully meet the needs of all of my students, I must work with a team of people and be willing to spearhead and/or accept change to make this happen. My plan is based on a list of guiding principles that I compiled during my coursework. Technology is one area that is always changing, and often people are reluctant to embrace these changes. I feel that my job as the Technology teacher is to help both teachers and my students accept these changes so that they may become users of technology in the 21st Century.

Doll's reference to Relations or connections to society and seeing the "big picture", has become very apparent to me when completing a UbD unit for my final LTET course, Using Data to Plan Curriculum and Learning (EDCG 660). Designing a unit and completing the UbD template has helped me to critically think about how formative and summative assessments can guide

my teaching so that my students are meeting learning goals, acquiring conceptual understandings and considering essential questions about a particular topic. My unit combines research and technology, along with state and Common Core standards. Exhibit III details Stages 1-3 of the unit plan.

Lastly, my coursework for Media Literacy (EDCG 612) has helped me to see how important it is to help my students become critical consumers and producers of media. This relates directly to Doll's 4th R of Rigor. Children need to be taught how to critically interpret different kinds of media due to the fact that the internet may become our only means for communication, and disseminating and retrieving information in the future. The Final Reflection (Exhibit IV) discusses my final project for the course, which is a Fourth grade unit on Media Literacy.

Part IIb

Today's classrooms are made up of a diverse population due to the "melting pot" mentality that makes up the U.S.'s view on immigration. This brings with it multi-cultures, languages and a variety of religions to the classroom. Also, there are many African-Americans that bring different dialects and backgrounds in addition to children with different sexual orientations. An important strategy that I use for including all of these children and making them welcome is to learn about and understand their culture, religion and home life. This background information can be gathered at the beginning of the year and used in classroom lessons so that the children will learn from each other and become tolerant of others' differences. An important resource for this information is the parents and communities. This creation of the classroom culture, one that welcomes everyone and is based on trust, may take time to form, but is imperative for future learning.

In addition, within this diverse classroom there may be English Language Learners and students with learning disabilities. I have learned through my LTET coursework that I am part of a team of educators and that the collaboration and cooperation amongst my team members is the only way to meet the needs of all of my students. Many strategies and instructional models discovered through my LTET coursework have provided me with the framework to teach a diverse classroom. The majority of student work is project-based. Many are completed with partners or in groups to accommodate ELL students, low readers, students with disabilities or students with insufficient computer skills. There are many UDL (Universal Design for Learning) supports that I have added to my everyday teaching by providing: support for background knowledge, multiple examples, multiple formats for learning and directions, models of skilled performance, practice with support, relevant feedback, choice and adjustable supports and challenges. To enforce the idea that students are in control of their own learning, I post many of these supports, along with scaffolded text to my Technology Class website. Also, there are alternate projects to accommodate plans when appropriate.

Reading about and discussing the How People Learn framework in another course has greatly shaped how I teach technology to children. I am including my final essay on this framework to show how my teaching practice has evolved.

The learner-centered environment is probably the most important of the four centered environments because it is where learning begins. Actively engaging the students so that they want to learn is probably the most challenging. Technology assists with getting the students interested about a subject or lesson and serves to keep the students engaged throughout. I have used United Streaming and YouTube in the past to excite my students about an upcoming topic, but through sharing sites such as Diigo, I have discovered many other resources for engaging my students. It is also crucial to gain important background information regarding social values, religion, traditions and culture. According to Bransford (2000), "There is a good deal of evidence that learning is enhanced when teachers pay attention to the knowledge and beliefs that learners bring to a learning task," (p. 11). I will always start off the school year with casually asking questions to determine what kind of experience students have with computers and about what they know. I now realize that I should make this a more official process and that I should attain this information in a manner so that it can be kept for an individual student and referred back to at a later time. This task initially seems daunting with the responsibility of 600 students; however with the use of technology the task can be easily accomplished. Some ideas that I have to do this are: creating a survey in Survey Monkey to be completed by the parents or guardians, asking the students to draw themselves with their families in KidPix or to create a word cloud using wordle.net with things about themselves. I do an "All About Me" project with first grade students, however the students are not technically ready to complete this project until early November and I feel that this may be too late. I could consider moving the project up or simplifying it so that it can be completed earlier. I also do an acrostic project with the second grade students where they use their letters in their first name to describe themselves. Again, I can think about getting this project underway earlier in order to obtain this important information about my students. I also learned from the reading that it is important to gain knowledge about students' misconceptions in order to effectively correct them.

I learned that an important part of a knowledge-centered environment is to create an environment conducive to helping the students understand and make sense of things. Teaching should be organized around rigorous content and high-standards, however the more important task at hand is to help the students make connections so that they can further their learning. This concept proves to be difficult for me as I only have forty minutes with my students each week. My priority in teaching computers is making sure that my students are acquiring the skills needed to meet the MA Recommended Instructional Technology Standards by grade 8. In addition, my students should meet the standards that are set forth by ITSE. To accomplish this in an engaging way, along with dealing with the time constraints, I typically have the students work on projects that tie into other areas of the curriculum. By doing this, I am hoping that I am providing a service to the classroom teachers by helping the students to build on their understanding. I presently have the students use search engines to do research, teach them how to discern whether a website has valid information, and participate in internet safety lessons to support a knowledge-centered environment. In addition, the students complete projects using the Microsoft Office suite of products. Through discussions and sharing I have discovered virtual field trip websites and will add these to my lesson repertoire. Selwyn (2009) quotes in "The digital native – myth and reality" that "Indeed, as Young and Muller (2009, p.7) contend, it is unwise to over-valorise the value of individually-led informal activities at the expense of formal provision; "as learners cannot actually 'construct' their own learning (because, in Foucault's pithy phrase, they cannot know what they do not know) the role of teachers cannot be reduced to that of guide and facilitator rather than as a source of strategies and expertise". (p. 12). This made me realize that I should allow my students to explore with technology more and take charge of their own learning rather than have me give a specific set of instructions that they must follow. Implementing this will take some thought considering the grades that I work with (K-2). Perhaps I could give more choices about a topic, multiple website choices for research, or a variety of media in which they complete their projects. I have realized the importance of collaboration where sense-making is concerned so I will be designing more projects that incorporate GoogleDocs.

An assessment-centered environment should be comprised of both formative and summative assessments. While we have to adhere to the summative forms of assessment due to state and national standards, I feel that the information gained from formative assessments to be far more important. Assessment in many different forms, provide the student with useful feedback so that they can reflect on and revise their work in order to apply it to their future problem solving. I will always reflect on daily lessons in order to modify and/or revisit a topic if needed. A lot of times an activity that I thought would be engaging to the students, turns out to be a bust so I must come up with a different delivery of the same activity or a different activity altogether. I did not realize that formative assessment is also critical for metacognitive reasons. According to The IRIS Center, "… helping learners to develop their metacognitive abilities means helping them to develop the "habits of mind" that will allow them to consistently assess and improve their own learning processes and progress, as opposed to always relying on others to assess them (Bransford, J. D., Vye, N. J., & Bateman, H., 2002)" (p. 4). I will often have students self-assess their projects, along with peer assessing other students' projects. Also, I assess the students in different ways (remember, I am mainly assessing for computer skills) by introducing website hunts, Webquests, and rubrics to account for the student being able to complete that skill. I will try to support summative assessment in more creative ways by using video assessment (Xtranormal), frequent check-ins (i.e. Pop quizzes using WallWisher), and online assessments (Survey Monkey).

A community-centered learning environment is the huge vessel in which the other centered environments should reside. In other words, it's the glue that holds everything together. According to Bransford (2000), "When principals and teachers work together to define a common vision for their entire school, learning can improve (e.g., Barth, 1988, 1991; Peterson et al., 1995)." (p. 152). I believe this to be true and I rely on my principal and teachers at the Warren School to support this, sometimes this does not always happen due to unforeseen circumstances or just time. The very basic task of building community within the classroom and school can be mostly accomplished without the use of technology, I agree with Riel (2000) in this respect that "Their participation, not the technology, is what is changing

schooling." Once this is established the community can extend outwardly to cities and towns, the country and the world. The idea behind this is that a teacher cannot always be an expert in everything, so by bringing in outside experts, the students' learning is enhanced. Technology does provide a way for this to be accomplished if the experts are unable to appear in person. Collaboration is a big part of a community-centered environment. There is a never ending list of technology tools that can be used for students to communicate and learn from others. This is one area where I feel that I fall short. Again, I struggle with how to implement this considering the age group and numbers that I work with. I plan to creatively devise a plan and maybe work with some classroom teachers to have the students blog, Skype, and email with others. I am presently implementing a GoogleDocs project for my second grade students where they create an online holiday recipe book to be shared with others.

In conclusion, I have learned that each centered environment is important for providing the student with the best learning opportunities. They should interconnect with each other to support active learning. The role of technology should be embraced as a part of these environments. It is the teachers' role to maintain these environments as a "work in progress" by constantly exploring new technology and adapting it to new lessons.

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Part IIIb

Throughout my coursework in the LTET Master's program I have learned about the systems approach to problem solving and have seen how this method of systems thinking can help transform education by shifting the perspective of education from one teacher teaching many students to a system where there are many resources available to one student, where the teacher is just one of those resources. The author of a journal article describing how systems thinking applies to education best states the end result as, "This shift can accurately be characterized as moving from an emphasis on instruction to an emphasis on learning" (Betts, 1992, para 31). Systems thinking can be viewed as a tool for understanding educational issues and asking good questions about the "whole", rather than as a tool for analyzing and evaluating the individual components.

The technology department in my school district is a great example of how problems within this smaller organization can affect the school district as a whole. If a major piece of the system does not run smoothly or fails, the consequences for the whole system may be devastating. Some of the components of the Technology Department are: technical support people, network administrators, technology teachers, network, servers, software, hardware, computers, technology plan (lack of), internet, and training. Some examples of cause and effect relationships might be:

1. Insufficient student SW/student is unable to meet the required standards. For example, we do not have a typing program to be used to meet the keyboarding standard. Students use several websites to learn and practice this, but there are no assessment capabilities and tracking on the websites. One of the common core standards in fifth grade is that the student is able to type a two page paper in one sitting.
2. Broken computers or computers not set up properly/students have to share computers allowing for less time to learn and practice or programs take longer or hang up, frustrating the student.
3. Too many server or network issues/more time taken away from technology teachers solving issues. This is also a high frustration problem with students, teachers and administration.

4. Lack of training for teachers on technology/more time spent by Technology teachers to train teachers. (There is no time built into our daily schedules to undertake the training and/or problem resolution).
5. Two technical support people cannot meet the needs of the entire district/student learning is suffering and high frustration by all.

A system's thinking approach would help all parties involved (from the Superintendent down to the classroom teacher) collectively see where the system is failing. In turn, the organization can attempt to keep up with the changes in environment, form better patterns of behavior, and change to more of a self-organization process by looking for information to help us change and participating in the decision making. The Five Whys activity, as described by Rick Ross in *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook* (Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross & Smith, 1994, pp. 108 – 112), would assist greatly with this. Another primary goal might be to look for "strange attractors". "Strange attractors" can influence processes and structures of an educational system undergoing transformation. As stated by Reigeluth (2004) in his paper entitled, *Chaos Theory and the Sciences of Complexity: Foundations for Transforming Education,* "To become an effective strange attractor for the transformation of a school system, the core ideas and values (or beliefs) must become fairly widespread cultural norms among the stakeholders most involved with making the changes. Once that status is reached, very little planning needs to be done for the transformation to take place. Appropriate behaviors and structures will emerge spontaneously through a process called self-organization" (pp. 8 – 9). A number of the components (tech support people and network admin) do not have the educational background required to make decisions, so they should be working closely with those components that have the educational background. Some long term cause and effect relationships are:

1. Students fall behind with 21st Century Skills/education has failed by not facilitating life-long learning.
2. Teachers cannot effectively do their job and burn out or quit/fewer and fewer good teachers are out there, therefore education and the community suffers.

Implementing the system's thinking model for instituting organizational change would be the first major step to solving the issues mentioned above. In addition, a technology team needs to be formed that includes the Superintendent, principal of each school in the district, all technology positions from technical positions to technology teachers, a representative for classroom teachers including special education, a representative for support staff and a representative for the community. This team makeup is important not only to resolve the present technological issues but to support the new design for educational transformation which relies heavily on technology for providing various modes of learning, communication, access to information and the means to empower the students to effect change on society. The technology team would need to come up with a Technology Plan that will support the district's educational transformation and solve many of the technology issues. Included in the plan would be the leasing of hardware in order to save money and resolve maintenance issues that take up valuable resources. The savings could then be put towards acquiring reliable software to meet the goals of the district. The plan would also address technology training for all members of the school district so that they may be able to meet their individual, student and professional goals. When the plan was in place, a core Technology Team would continue to meet on a monthly basis to ensure that the Technology Plan is being implemented and that technology goals are being met. These changes cannot happen without the systems approach to problem solving.

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Exhibit I

My intent when creating my art exhibit was to show how the concepts and techniques learned in the course could be used by an educator to help bring out the creativity in their students. My display is a creative product in itself and shows how a student can use their creative talents and technology to create a digital story about their learning to be shared with others. The main flow of the digital story follows the 3-step Simplex Model (Basadur) of Problem Finding, Problem Solving and Solution Implementation. Solutions often lead to more problems to solve and the process circles back around to the Problem Finding stage. Prior to engaging in the Problem Finding stage, my job as a technology teacher, or any teacher for that matter, is to provide the students with the knowledge, opportunities and skills (Doman Relevant Skills) so that they may effectively produce a creative product in that area. The many ideas, concepts and techniques discussed in this course can easily be applied to help move through the various stages of the Simplex Model.

In the article, *The Social Psychology of Creativity,* Amabile talks about three important areas that influence creativity; domain relevant skills, creativity relevant skills and task motivation. Focus on the first area, domain relevant skills, is the foundation for a person's creativity by being familiar with the domain, being knowledgeable about facts, opinions and principles in the domain, and becoming proficient in the technical skills of the domain. This immersion in a particular domain tends to reveal a talent in the domain and a deep commitment to the domain. This is something that educators do as part of our job, so it is important that we continue to provide our students with the best possible toolset to enhance their creativity. Participating in some of the activities discussed in the readings such as visualization and "I

Wonder" would also give students the necessary skills to begin their creative work. Another important area that educators routinely focus on is task motivation. According to article, "a higher level of intrinsic task motivation may make set breaking and cognitive risk taking more probable and more habitual, thereby increasing the permanent repertoire of creativity skills" (Amabile, 1983, p. 369). Teachers are constantly motivating their students with praise and encouragement, rewards, engaging activities, choice and allowing them to voice their opinions.

Once the students are equipped with the appropriate toolset, the process of problem finding can begin. Where do ideas come from? Wallas' theory of the creative process (Preparation/Incubation/Illumination/Verification) lends some concepts to assist with the problem finding task such as: "making the strange familiar", reflection and unconscious thinking, and AHA! Discovery during nature walks, creating "bug lists" and brainstorming techniques are just some of the ways that students may begin to find problems. Also critiquing and reflecting on existing problem solutions may lead to new problems to solve. Brainstorming is an important activity for students to participate in as a deliberate method to find problems. Repeat participation in this activity helps them to adopt existing techniques and to help them learn by doing. Although brainstorming is a standard practice with educators, I was unaware of the many different types of brainstorming. Information regarding the various strategies for brainstorming has inspired me to try them out in my classroom. I was also reminded about the importance of reviewing the ground rules for brainstorming with my students so that they would be more forthcoming with their responses as they would not worry about criticism or ridicule.

Brainstorming is also a great way to come up with solutions to various problems. Just the act of writing something down for me gets my creative juices flowing and it helps me to visually

see the ideas posted on the refrigerator or wall for constant viewing. Attribute Listing (Crawford) is another form of brainstorming where you list the main attributes of something and then proceed to improve of the attributes by modifying, transferring or substituting some of the attributes. Morphological Synthesis can then be used to create a matrix of combined attributes or ideas. Using SCAMPER (Substitute/Combine/Adapt/3 M's/Put to other uses/Eliminate/Reverse or Rearrange) is a great way for students to creatively solve problems. Trying some of the steps out allows the students to "make the familiar strange" and to have fun while doing it. Finally, the teacher should discuss the topic of Analogical Thinking or borrowing from others as a creative way to solve problems.

The evidence regarding whether creativity is enhanced is somewhat limited, but according to Guilford educators can help their students realize their potential. A teacher can provide many situational factors in their classrooms to support this. Self-management is an important concept for a student to improve on their thinking process and to realize their strengths and weaknesses. According to DeBono, lateral thinking or to "move sideways to find other approaches and alternatives" (Davis, 2004, p. 207) is an important skill for students to have. It is important for an educator to teach their students the art of reflection and to give them many opportunities to practice it. Mastering reflection gives the students an important tool for improving themselves, challenging their future learning and constructively critiquing the work of others. There are many activities to help with the reflection process. PMI (pluses/minuses/interesting) by DeBono is one of the more clever activities that I took away from the reading. I have also heard of teachers creating their own acronyms and procedures for project reflection. The process of reflection will most likely lead to new problems to solve.

In conclusion, I believe that I have enhanced my creativity simply by designing and producing my digital story. I am taking away from this course many useful concepts and techniques that I will use to help my students become creative problem solvers in the future. I will keep trying to incorporate different brainstorming activities and creative techniques into all of my daily lessons and practice reflection to improve on them. I will continue to explore different methods to motivate my students and allow more choice and exploration so that my students will be exposed to a variety of creative products and become more observant. It was interesting to hear and learn about other perspectives of creativity from my classmates through their virtual museum works. Many of the ideas and projects presented can easily be used in my field of work. Finally, I believe that I have achieved my goal of learning how to help my students become creative people which supports the idea of Moyer and Wallace(1995) which states "…that the role of education is not to foster compliance, but to develop the self-actualization that springs from individuality and creative growth" (Davis, 2004, p. 2).

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Exhibit II

One of the biggest realizations that I have come away with from this course is that there is much to do in a public school system to work as teams to better meet the needs of all students. In addition, many organizational changes need to take place in order to accomplish this. After taking this course, I feel that I am better prepared to work on a team with others and that I could contribute greatly as far as planning for, facilitating, and accepting change.

According to one of my first guiding principles, "Teams must be formed to meet rigorous performance challenges in order to succeed!" (01289925). I do not feel that I am part of a team in my present position in the Grafton Public School district and I also do not see any evidence of other teams being formed. In order to make sure that I am helping my students to be creative problem solvers in the future, I need to be part of a team which includes: the classroom teachers who students I see, special education and behavioral personnel, and administration. Linking classroom learning with technology skills is important to extending a student's learning and helping them to make connections with real-world events. Opportunities to collaborate with special education and behavioral personnel will help me to better manage my classroom and to ensure that I am meeting the needs of students at all levels of learning. Lastly, my ideal team would include administration so that feedback could be a two-way dialogue so that I could share my ideas for change and reflect on my performance.

The next steps for me would be to have effective conversations with others. Practicing how to be a skillful listener will encourage others to want to collaborate with me on every day and difficult challenges. Classroom teachers might be more willing to work with me if they feel like they will also get something out of the conversation. I would also discuss my ideas for change with administration. My first item on the agenda for a discussion with my Superintendent is to convince him that I could contribute greatly to the school community by working full time. In the end, I would do all that I could to help create a good working community by following another one of my guiding principles – 1. Form good relationships. 2. Give or look for feedback and reflect on it. 3. Build cooperative partnerships. 4. Be flexible. 5. Provide or look for many opportunities (diversity). (01289925)

"Changes that we make in our community encourage changes made to the world" (01289925). This guiding principle inspires me to take some action as far as changing the way I teach my students so that they may be inspired to challenge themselves and their learning to effect change that will make the world a better place. Implementing my innovation of the classroom management software would be a good first change to attempt. ClassDojo, as discussed in my innovation presentation, would accomplish the task of better dealing with behavior issues in my class, allow for better communication with parents, and would help to give "positive praise" to my students. This last point would assist greatly with empowering my students to make future changes. I can easily start using this innovation in my classroom as I am already signed up and have the necessary hardware to accommodate the program. I would then invite my fellow teachers and administration to come observe the program in action. Another change that I am in the midst of participating in is my tech colleagues and I are creating an

action plan for changes to be made so that the technology department can better prepare the students to be 21st century thinkers and learners. The action plan includes such items as: technology infrastructure, hardware and software requirements, procedures and lesson plans. We are tackling the plan with the systems approach to problem solving and following Peter Senge's three important pieces of advice which are: 1. Prepare to be wrong! 2. Work to collectively see the problems. 3. Be patient, this process can take time. (01289925)

Finally, the readings, concepts, coursework and class discussions have solidified just how important creativity is in the change process and my job as an educator. Creativity and someone's personal vision are closely linked. Organizations must tap into their employee's personal visions and understand them so that they may be included when redesigning an organization. Understanding someone's personal vision circles back to conversations and feedback, good collaboration, cooperative partnerships and diversity. All must be present to make a change successful. My personal vision as a technology teacher is to provide my students with the technology skills and knowledge to creatively solve future problems. To accomplish this, I must be creative as well.

618 Guiding Principles

Teams must be formed to meet rigorous performance challenges in order to succeed!

Leadership is important to a team - or is it?

So you want to be a skillful listener?

1. Don't talk.

2. Put yourself in the speaker's shoes.

3. Act interested in the topic.

4. Pay attention to the non-verbal cues of the speaker.

5. Don't interrupt!

6. Read between the lines...

7. Give words of encouragement if you agree.

8. Rephrase the words of the speaker.

9. Don't talk.

Anyone can be a good team leader.....

Keys to success:

1. Recognize that you need help.

2. ATTITUDE.

3. Balance guidance and giving up control.

4. Positive feedback.

5. Create opportunities for others.

6. Roll up your sleeves and help with the work!

7. NEVER blame anyone or make excuses.

Chaos is everywhere, but can be harnessed and used to your advantage.

Balancing inquiry and advocacy is a difficult thing to learn, but once mastered can help a group move to an efficient understanding by combining multiple perspectives.

"Politicking" is the most destructive form of conversation become it involves no real argument. Don't fall into that trap!

Using the systems approach to problem solving can reveal the webs of interdependence and complex interactions in an organization. Three pieces of advice from Peter Senge:

1. Prepare to be wrong!

2. Work to triangulate or collectively see the problems.

3. Be patient, this process can take time.

How do you create a good working community?

- form good relationships

- give or look for feedback and reflect on it

- build cooperative partnerships

- be flexible

- Provide or look for many opportunities (diversity) -

If one thing fails than you have many avenues to fall back on

"Many of us naturally and instinctively born with quantum skills to be leaders. Quantum seeing, thinking, feeling, knowing, acting, trusting, are all characteristics that could be termed as your "Sixth Sense"" (borrowed from Traci LaChapelle DB 3/12).

Norms of society do not always allow one to use his "Sixth Sense". A creative leader will break out of this mold and use his quantum skills!

Creativity - a new way to approach an organizational change?

An organization should know and understand its employee's personal visions and link them to their organization redesign.

Tips for forming a successful Professional Learning Network:

1. Good collaboration.

2. Belong to an online community.

3. Join a group that meets.

4. Become a "beacon of light".

5. Ask questions.

6. Be an active participant.

7. Always give credit where credit is due.

8. Keep professional and personal social network separate.

9. Always look for new membership.

"Think globally, act locally"

It is always best to plan with the future in mind and to see the "big" picture. You then do what you can to work on a smaller piece of that "big" picture which will in turn help to solve the problem of the whole.

Changes that we make in our community encourage changes made to the world.

Exhibit III

<table>
<tr><th colspan="3">Stage 1 –Desired Results</th></tr>
<tr><td rowspan="8">Established Goals
What content standards and program goals with this unit address? 1) Goals are labeled and 2) written in “kid friendly” language

Grade 5 Learning Standard for Social Science – 5.2
Student will learn about the Maya, Aztec and Inca groups and be able to point out where they lived on a map. They will also be able to talk about their government, religion and use of slaves.

Common Core – CSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.2
Student will summarize information gathered about Maya, Inca or Aztec from a variety of websites with different points of view.

MA Recommended Instructional Technology Standards – 1.6 Multimedia and Software Applications G3-5: 1.63
Student will create slides in PowerPoint with research information.

MA Recommended Instructional Technology Standards – Student will be able to critique a website to determine if it has reliable information.

Common Core – CSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.5.2
Student will summarize and present research information visually and orally.</td><td colspan="2">Transfer</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Students will be able to independently use their learning to …

…present information in an organized manner and answer questions using the internet.
The complex task is to
• determine if a website is reliable or not AND
• research and share this information on the Maya, Inca and Aztec civilizations with others.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Meaning</td></tr>
<tr><td>NEEDED CONCEPTUAL UNDERSTANDINGS
Students will understand that…

Students will compare and contrast the Maya, Inca and Aztec groups with how we live today. They will make connections with how the world is made up of all different types of people but are somehow inter-connected.

Students will explain how to determine if a website has reliable information or not.</td><td>ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS
Students will keep considering…

Do different media sources have different points of view?
Are some websites not reliable for information?

Did these ancient civilizations help to shape our religion, government or use of slaves?

Do different media sources have different points of view?

Are there other tools that can be used to present information?</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Aquisition</td></tr>
<tr><td>KNOWLEDGE (Operational facts)
Students will know and be able to ….

Students will know what information is useful for research. Students will discover that some websites have biased information.</td><td>OBJECTIVES/SKILLS
Students will be skilled at…

Students will be able to explain how to check if a website has reliable information or not.

Students will be skilled at determining what sources (primary or secondary) are reliable when doing electronic</td></tr>
</table>

	Students will know and be able to discuss religion, government and use of slaves for the Mayas, Incas and Aztecs.	research. Students will be proficient with the PowerPoint program and be able to create slides and setup a slideshow.

Stage 2 – Evidence	
EVALUATIVE CRITERIA *What criteria will be used in each assessment to evaluate attainment of the desired results?* • **Historically accurate** • **Clear explanation** • **Good detail** • **Well organized** • **Engaging to the audience**	**PERFORMANCE TASK(S)** *Students will show that they really understand by . . .* Creating and presenting a slideshow with their research information about either the Maya, Inca or Aztec. The presentation should represent three key points: political structure, religious beliefs and use of slaves. Some students will create a joint modified presentation that includes pictures about the Maya, Inca and Aztec.

Regardless of the format of the assessment, what qualities are most important? • **Well spoken** • **Accurately teaches others**	**OTHER EVIDENCE:** (e.g. observations, work samples, dialogues) *Students will show they have achieved Stage 1 goals by . . .* • Diagrams or notes of research on the Maya, Inca, Aztec • Informal observations while working on the various stages of the project • Reliable source exercise • Completed rubric for creating and presenting PowerPoint slideshow **Student Self-Assessment Opportunities:** • Checklists for research unit. • Peer assessment of practice presentation • Reflection survey administered at the end of the unit.

Stage 3 – Learning Plan		
Codes*	**Summary of Key Learning Events and Instruction**	**Progress Monitoring**
M,T S K,S M,T,EQ,S A,U A,U,EQ T,S T,S	1. The key to completing successful research is to know how to discern whether an online resource is reliable or not. Students will complete a group activity on reliable electronic sources and the results will be shared and discussed in whole group. 2. Pre assess – KWL on Maya, Inca, Aztec. Introduce research project including learning goals for the unit. Review some of the reliable resources that may be used for the research and discuss the requirement of putting the information into their own words and citing the resources. Work with select students on alternate project. 3. Model how to organize their research using word processing or a diagram. Show a sample of a completed diagram. 4. Demonstrate how to create an organized slideshow using PowerPoint and review the rubric that will be used to assess the presentation. Introduce the teacher website with suggested resources, hot-to videos, rubrics, checklists and scaffolded documents and resources. 5. Students will practice their presentation with a peer. The peer will assess the presentation using a rubric. 6. Students will present slideshows and the teacher will assess their presentation	1. Poor results with activity and/or discussion may lead to another lesson on reliable sources. 2. Determine need for differentiation. 2. Identify the need to re-teach lesson on plagiarism and included resources when doing research. Support needs of all students. 4. Decide whether a mini lesson needs to be taught on slideshow creation. 5. Peer assessment. 6., 7., and 8. Summative assessment.

M M,EQ	using the rubric. 7. Students will complete the survey individually at the end of the unit. 8. Class will re-group to discuss survey results and reflect on the unit.	
*Codes: A=Acquisition, EQ=Essential Question, K=Knowledge, M=Meaning Making, S=Skill, ST=Standard, T=Transfer, U=Understanding		

Exhibit IV

I chose to plan and design my media literacy unit around the article, *Young Children and Critical Media Literacy* by Jeff Share. Share cites that "the potential of critical analysis increases when questioning is conducted through productive activities that encourage students to examine, create and disseminate their own alternative images, sounds, and thoughts (Share & Thornan, 2007)" (Share, 20xx, p. 127). The idea of the article, critically questioning the message, stuck with me as important thing to focus on with my students. I tried to incorporate the five basic elements for "conceptual understandings" into my lessons.

Lesson 1 gives an introduction to critical media literacy and helps the students to recognize that it is a social process. The brainstorming at the beginning of the lesson becomes the foundation on which the students help to construct the content and direction of the lessons to follow. The brainstorming is revisited at the end of the lesson and adjusted accordingly. In Lesson 2 the students learn about the Tools of Persuasion and analyze text by viewing and discussing two print ads using VoiceThread so that they may start to become critical users of media. They are also encouraged to listen to other students' comments. The reflection and discussion at the end of this lesson should help the students to understand their role as the audience, issues that may arise or concerns that they have, and how a big company uses media to sell their product. Lesson 3 focuses on how media influences people in other ways. The lesson is kicked off with the question – What is cool? After the discussion and activities, the students are asked to create their own cereal that would be a positive influence for children by listing out positive attributes that could be incorporated into their product. Lessons 4 and 5

continue the media production activity by having the students market their new product using some of the tools of persuasion that they learned about. The students are given a choice about how they want to create their message. Finally, Lesson 6 allows the students to reflect on their work and critique the work of others.

I was unable to fully implement my unit this year due to time constraints. I did ask my fourth grade students to participate in the VoiceThread activity to see if the ads that I chose to analyze were appropriate and helped my students to come to some conclusions about media messages. I am vague about conclusions, because I am hoping for different conclusions that will lead to the discussion that "everyone decodes the message differently". I came across many technical issues (I love my job) such as setting up emails for my students, functionality provided with basic (free) VoiceThread, and server speed. I am continuing to work on these issues and hope to be able to implement my unit next year. I am guessing that once implemented, the interactions and experience will differ greatly from my typical technology lessons that I presently teach. I am excited at the prospect of this and looking forward to seeing how this type of lesson helps my students to think critically. Moving forward, I am brainstorming ways that I can introduce media literacy to my younger students and planning how I can incorporate lessons that will progressively lead up to the Fourth grade unit. I also feel better equipped after taking this course to assist the classroom teachers in my school with including media literacy and critical pedagogy into their own lessons.

REFERENCE

Hammer, R. & Kellner, D. (2009). *Media/cultural studies: Critical approaches*. New York, Bern, Berlin, Bruxelles, Frankfurt am Main, Oxford, Wien.