BUSINESS NAME

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Technology Tips

Collins Writing in the Content Areas

Can we actually use this outside of English?

As I walked over into the "A" wing today, I was thinking that people weren't as aware of the sorts of things that I could offer them in terms of being able to use technology in the classroom. Of course, that could simply be the fact that it's taken me this long to really have things together (as much as possible anyway) so I actually could go over to "the other building" and introduce myself around a bit with folks who might have their planning time while I was there.

As it happened, there was indeed just such a person. Walking into the room, I briefly introduced myself and began our conversation about the use of technology in the classroom . While we spoke, I noticed several different fields where I could be of help (not only in that content area). The first of which being in the use of Collins Writing..

Folks, I understand that there's always some genuine concern over the fact that we've all seen a thousand different methods for improving the writing skills of students we have care of. And...I've also heard a thousand times, "I'm not an English teacher. Why should I have to correct writing?". The fact is, you're not "correcting writing". You are correcting the content of a student's communication. That communication is of a necessity, as it is required by the Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks, in written form. But, you know all that.

What I can help you with is making it easier to relate the policy (Collins Writing is in our School Improvement Plan, so we ***have*** to use it) with the reality of its implementation in your classroom. What this means is, I can give you ideas where you can use technology to implement Collins Writing into your class.

Over this entire issue of the

"Technology Tips" newsletter, I'm going to be throwing some suggestions out there for you to use, modify, or even outright ignore if you get an inspiration from it. So… feel free to use this as a reference point to make Collins assignments become part of the "bag of tricks" you use in class.

Project Based Learning & Collins Writing

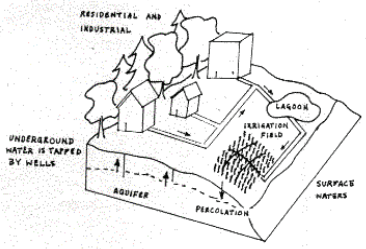
How it could work in a Science classroom...

In setting up a unit based on energy resources and how they actually sustain human life (yes I'm paraphrasing the standard students have to meet), you would first ask an overarching question like, "What are the natural resources the City of Springfield uses to maintain its schools?"

In finding out the information by using a TrackStar web search you put together (to limit the "wandering" students might be doing out there in Cyberville), students will be initially working on the Type 1 segment of the lesson . They will enter the information they find in a journal (you can use one of those nifty blue exam booklets for the students to keep the info in). Then, just to see what they've done thus far, you could give them a short quiz (no more than 10 questions of the multiple choice, true/false variety). That would be a Type 2 exercise.

From this point, we would want to refine our global, or overarching, question. It would be a good idea to actually let the students form their own questions (based on the information they've gathered so far in their journals) and answer them . This is a type 3 scenario. The FCA's could be based on your expectations for their understanding at this point (you can actually use the data from the type 2 quiz to give you an idea of what they really "know").

An example of a project that might culminate from the work done so far would be a PowerPoint presentation showing where does the water the SPS uses daily come from, how much is used , for what purposes, and where does the wastewater go?



Land Application of Wastewater
Nutrient-rich water irrigates a field or golf course. The biologically treated water recharges the aquifer.

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Please plan for the use of the laptop carts as far in advance as possible.**
- **The use of any technology can be somewhat frustrating at times, but by: leaving things as we found them, making notes on things that don't work, and being considerate of the others that will also be using the equipment, many of the little nagging issues can be solved.**
- **Please see me about creating your web page for the Commerce site. I have a template for you and even a training video you can use.**
- **Just a reminder, there are going to be workshops for folks who want to enhance their skills with some of the MS Office programs. They include 3 levels of training in: Word, PowerPoint, and Excel. Coming soon are; MS Access, FrontPage and other HTML editors. Keep your eyes open for the posting!!!**

Project Based Learning & Collins Writing
How it could work in a Math classroom...

In the Math frameworks I found the standard I was looking fir in Data Analysis, Statistics, and Probability. Now please take for granted, I am not a math oriented kind of guy. But, seeing the standard as it's written:

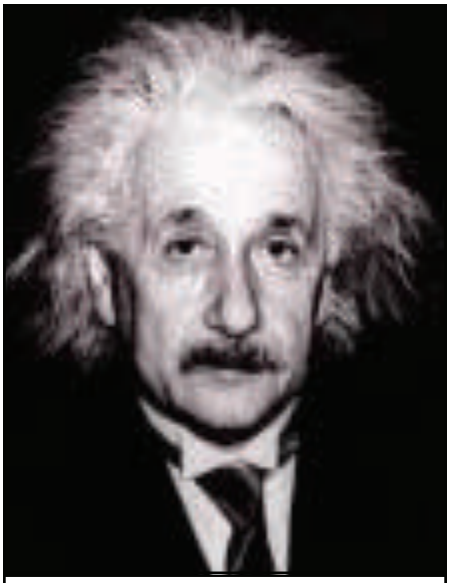
"Select, create, and interpret an appropriate graphical representation (e.g., scatter-plot, table, stem-and-leaf plots, box-and-whisker plots, circle graph, line graph, and line plot) for a set of data and use appropriate statistics (e.g., mean, median, range, and mode) to communicate information about the data. Use these notions to compare different sets of data."

I get an idea about using the same sort of initial format as we saw with the Science project on page 1.

For instance, as it says above, there are "appropriate statistics" to communicate information about different sets of data. In a Type 1 assignment, finding the "appropriate statistics" would be the goal. Recording the information in an Excel spreadsheet would be one way of showing comprehension of the concept.

In a Type 2 assignment, there could be an assessment of the student understanding with a short quiz on plugging the appropriate statistics into the graphic representation.

Since the standard speaks of interpretation and communication, it would seem reasonable to assume that some explanation of why an answer is correct might be in order here. This could be the Type 3 assignment. The FCA's would be based on predetermined information that they'd already had examined and assessed . It could be a brief explanation of how the student came up with his/her answer and why they did the problem the way they did.



If A equals success, then the formula is _ A = _ X + _ Y + _ Z. _ X is work. _ Y is play. _ Z is keep your mouth shut. --

Type 3 assignments could look like just about anything really. While using PowerPoint would be an excellent choice to create a project on, I might use MS Publisher to create the sort of pamphlet that would have been seen right around the time of the novel and historical period

Project Based Learning & Collins Writing
How it could work in a Social Studies classroom

For some of the Social Studies folks, you might want to consider doing some work across the content areas and see if you could partner up with an ELA teacher that might be in the same general period of, let's say history as you are.

A fine example of this would be one classroom where they were studying WW I might want to team up with someone who's teaching All Quiet On The Western Front or Hemingway's For Whom The Bell Tolls (Yes, I'm aware that neither is a "required reading". However, for the purposes of the discussion…).

In the SocStu class, as a Type 1 assignment, students could use Time Liner or Inspiration to create a "real" world timeline of events and relate them to the book that's being studied.

"Anyone who has never made a mistake has never tried anything new."

Albert Einstein

The Type 2 assignment might involve plugging their information into a template created as a sort of "fill in the blanks" quiz.

Project Based Learning & Collins Writing
How it could work in a Foreign Language classroom

There are lots of things that we can do in the Foreign Language classes that can be assimilated into Collins and Project Based Learning. The first thing that comes to mind is the cultural aspect of learning … French.

As a Type 1 assignment, students could research 5 aspects of French cuisine and how they have become part of American daily life/culture. Since I'm fairly well acquainted with food (those of you who know me can chuckle here), an example might be in our use of the roux as part of our cooking. Taking the French term and then giving the Americanized definition with a picture to illustrate would be an excellent way to kick things off for a Type 1 exercise

Type 2 exercises might be a quick true/false quiz using pictures of certain foods and asking for the technique most likely to have been used to create them (e.g. sauté).

A Type 3 project might be to create the menu for a traditional French meal with several courses. The menu itself can be written in French with descriptions of the dishes as they would be in a restaurant. Doing this on MS Word would be easy enough, but I think I'd want to use MS Publisher for the job because it has some really nifty backgrounds and features to doing this sort of thing a bit more thoroughly. FCA's could cover things like; translation, traditional foods/styles of cooking and mechanics (grammar)

The High School of Commerce Web Pages!!!

Hello everyone. This is yet another article on the HSC web pages concerning the use and creation of web pages for staff and clubs. What I'm going to do is give you a breakdown of what to do to get the process going.

Signing up

There are a few things we need to get in order to set up your folder such that you're the only one (excepting Peter Zurlino and myself) that's able to edit or update your pages. They are;

- Your name
- Your username
- Your SPS account password

Fold up the paper you write it on and put it in an envelope then give it to me. I'll make certain it gets to Peter.

Creating a page(s)...

I have CD's available with a template on them specifically for you to use. It'll get you started and, once you feel comfortable, get you moving toward using the web as a part of your everyday routines. Additionally, I'm available to help you with figuring out how to do all the stuff you'll realize is possible once you get over the whole "Oh my Gawd!!! I don't know this Html stuff!!!"

Getting it together...

One of the things I like to make perfectly clear to people is the fact that, just like when you're about to start cooking a meal, make sure you have all your stuff together. Put your images in that folder, the documents in that folder, and the other media in that folder before you even lift your fingers to type in something on the keyboard or point and click your way to a cool and, hopefully, useful page.

It's really all just a matter of planning. If you know what you ***have*** to say, know what you ***want*** to say, then knowing ***how*** to do it is as easy as either asking me or just being the naturally creative people you are.

One example of this is, your expectations. Now, I would say the easiest way to do this would be to create a place for it on your page and simply type it in. Of course, if your expectations are very specific and detailed, you might want to simply create a Word document and then link to it so you r students could link to it and then they'd have the complete version of what you expect from them both in class and out. Simple right? Don't worry, I can always help.

And so gentle reader...

It's pretty amazing that we're done with an entire semester already. Why, it feels like we started school just a couple months ago…

For the most part, I think that things have been very good around here. The High School of Commerce is, as Mr. Fernandes said at our first staff meeting, "a place where I actually want to come to work". Is there more to do?

Of course. But, just because there's more (much more really) to do, that doesn't mean the school is any less attractive to me. In terms of the potential I see for us to take a vanguard role in the district, we're really not that far off. With what you say?

I think while we can do far better with regard to utilizing the potential of the Internet, we are closer to having our site be exactly what students, staff and families need than many schools in the area. How? The "Links" page on our site is loaded with resources for everything from Administration to lunch menus. We have the basic information concerning stations to tune to (or pages to surf to) when there's bad weather. We have the PVTA bus schedule . There are academic links for each of the content areas. There are links for school sports teams. Not to mention school clubs and all the other aspects of life at Commerce.

> *"Nothing you can't spell will ever work"*
>
> Will Rogers

Many of the members of the Administration have got their pages up and running because they realize that there's a lot to be said for being able to communicate with people in lots of different ways. The Internet is just one way, but it is a very powerful tool these days.

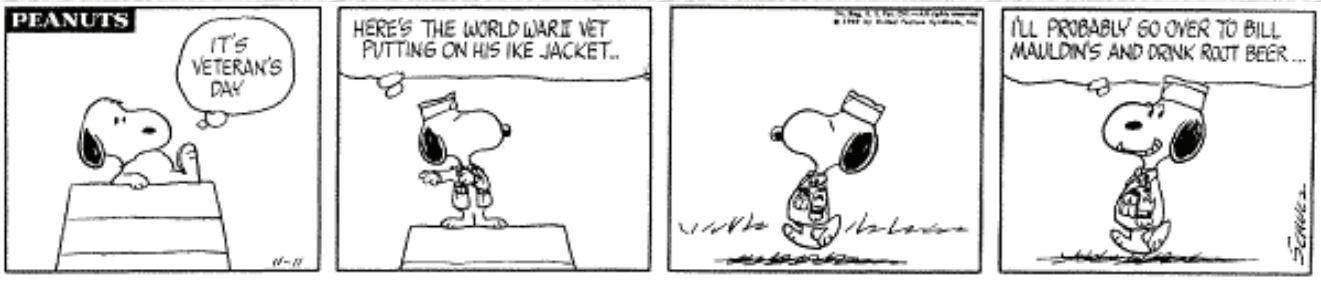
There are other ways that we are close to being at the vanguard as well. On-line courses, readings in digital formats, and so many other things that some would say are negatives. I say we're getting there.

Ed Musiak

The High School of Commerce Web Pages

Teacher Comics

Just click the link above and go to our site!!!



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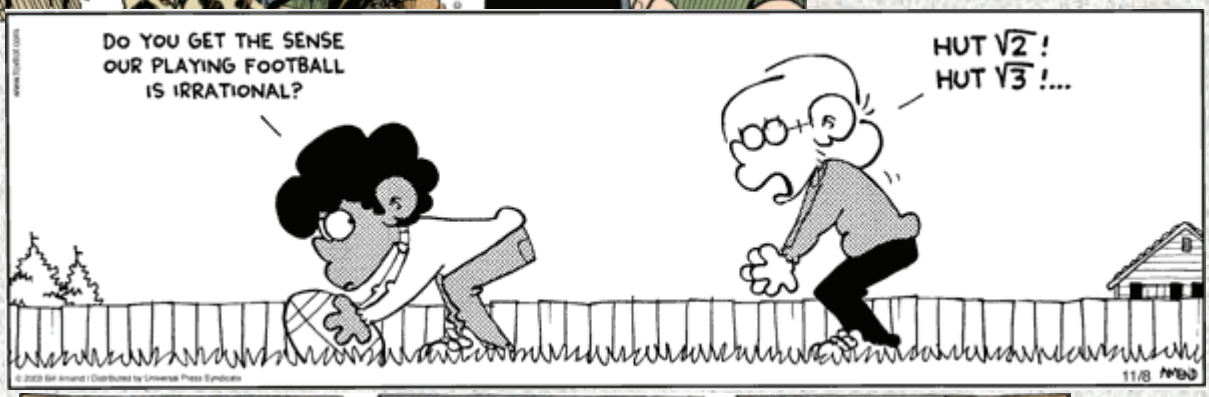
For the Math Teachers.



For the English Teachers

Does this look familiar???