Reflection on Technology Group Project

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to demonstrate the reflection of participating group members in their overall evaluation of their group project. Each member took the opportunity to write their thoughts regarding their learning experiences and their accomplishments, as well as what they could have done differently. Moreover, they wrote about what might have been frustrating and challenging in the course of their activities. The paper is constructed in such a way as to display each member’s personal perspectives.
From Karen Bufford:

I believe our project went really well overall. The topic we chose ended up being a perfect topic for our group to do. We worked together very well in completing every project this semester. Our group met together several Sunday afternoons to work on the week’s assignment. We worked together to complete every assignment instead of assigning different projects to different members of the group. I think this is how every group project should be designed. Every group member knew what was going on with our project because we were there working on it together. We were able to get each other’s feedback and we were able to discuss, in person, our ideas for the project.

I also believe that our presentation of our final project went really well. Our group worked on putting the finishing touches on the project the weekend before it was due. We discussed what each member of the group was going to present and talk about. When we presented our project, I felt like we were well prepared for the presentation. We had a few technology issues during the presentation, but I still feel like it went very well. Even though we had a few technology problems, I believe our group pulled together and handled it very well. The rest of the class seemed to enjoy our presentation and gave our group many compliments. Once everything finally came together and we presented our final project, I would not change anything.

From Kelli Miller:

The thought process for our project began when a fourth grade student stated that, in his class, all they did was fill-in the blanks on a worksheet. He said that he really wished they could
learn more about the topics discussed in class. When it was assessment time, all he had to do was memorize a worksheet.

As a group of future educators, we were excited to take a relevant Georgia Performance Standard and turn it into a complete unit that was educational and engaging. It was important to the group for the lesson to teach a full range of information about the chosen standard. The first part of the lesson consisted of a concept map, which was the blueprint in designing a format for our unit. Our group accessed the Creately website to design the map and found the task to be relatively simple once we were able to navigate the tools provided. The main problem we faced with the map was linking it to the relevant websites. Eventually the links were there, but we could not open them in the view stage, only the edit.

The concept map along with the rest of the unit was presented to the EDUC 250 class and the issue of opening the links still remained. The class was provided with a color copy of the map and a complete handout with the linked material. The students provided positive feedback about the map and the attached handouts. We knew in advance the links were not operational, so therefore we improvised. Just as this was important in our college level class, is it becomes even more important to be flexible and ready to improvise in a classroom of young children.

From Debra Vinson:

The characteristic I liked best about our project and presentation was everyone’s ability to communicate well. I felt the project and presentation had “youthful” information and would positively attend to fourth grade students’ interest. In my opinion, the topic chosen was an exceptional choice. Being part Native American myself, the information even helped me to be more cognizant and informed, and to appreciate the blessing of living in this day and time.
The information collected in our group was a learning process for me and in addition, would be a great lesson plan for fourth grade students in my opinion. This project was especially beneficial for me as an individual, to help guide me in creating a lesson plan that is not only educational, but interesting to students and adults as well. I truly benefitted from this group experience and presentation, and hope that I will be able to create such a learning experience in the near future in my teaching career for students.

There were some dislikes I felt in the project and presentation. I thought things could have gone a little smoother in our presentation, although I thought we did very good job. I also would add that the timing preparing for all the projects felt hurried. Otherwise, the best thing I liked about this project was the members of my group!

From Kimberly Lowman:

Learning new skills can be exciting and nerve-wracking at the same time. In the process of this project, there were times I experienced both. Our group consisted of four women of varying skill levels, but all of modest ability. As a result, the tasks were challenging, and each presented with a different set of criteria. Each of the tasks was a part of the total project.

Our first task was to construct a concept map using a website specifically for that purpose. As a group, we had decided to build a lesson around the Georgia Performance Standard (SS4H1) for 4th grade social studies regarding Native Americans and their culture. The concept map would help guide our planning for the lesson and later act as part of the delivery for the instruction. It was a task no one in the group had worked on before, so it was a learning experience for us all.
Our second activity was to develop a slide show or Power Point presentation. It was an assignment for which we all had some prior knowledge. However, we would be required to incorporate components that we were not familiar; such workings included adding a narration and setting it up to run automatically. We were able to accomplish this; unfortunately, during our finally presentation, the narration did not fully work. I had to improvise and narrate the missing portion.

The third assignment involved producing a short movie clip. It was at this point that our group began to feel somewhat discouraged. It seemed to us at the time that we were not receiving sufficient instruction for the requested assignment. I now understand that the instructional method was intended to prompt us to construct our own learning, which – in time – we were able to do. The movie clip was completed, although maybe not the best in the class. However, we did learn and now we know about a type of usable technology we had known nothing about. Even if we as teachers do not use this type of technology, we will still know something about it to be able to guide our students if they desire to learn about it.

Our final technology tasks were to learn about and construct both a Smart board activity and a webpage. Both of these will be useful in the classroom, since so many schools now use Smart boards with regularity and utilize classroom webpages. We built two activities with Smart board, though we probably could have designed more. We also designed a webpage feature all the technology we had learned in the course of the class. Not having personally used either technology before, they were as new to me as the movie clip task. Yet, we still were able to design the activities which we included in our presentation.
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Over all, as a group, we worked well together. We met together several times, and delegated work appropriately. Work was completed and compiled in a timely fashion. As for the presentation, I felt it met the requirements of the project assignment. It would have been better if we had had all the glitches worked out. But all in all, we learned a great deal.