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" U.S. History Curriculum Project Using Blended Learning To Improve Formative Feedback"

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U.S. HISTORY CURRICULUM PROJECT USING BLENDED LEARNING TO IMPROVE
FORMATIVE FEEDBACK

by

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A capstone project submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master
of the Arts of Teaching

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I was given the opportunity to complete a curriculum project as part of the culmination of my Masters of Arts in Education degree. During that project I posed, explored, and answered the question *how can a blended learning station rotation model be used to provide opportunities for teacher-sourced formative feedback at the high school level?*

The project I created was a three week curriculum unit for a high school U.S. History class that was exploring the expansion of civil rights in post World War II United States for traditionally marginalized groups. The curriculum created a blended learning unit relying on 1:1 device enrollment that utilized station rotation. The unit introduced the key concepts of civil rights and created student awareness of necessary technological skills for the station rotation. This initial “digital skills assessment” attempted to identify which students needed additional instruction with the online tools necessary to complete the project and give students an opportunity to practice and receive support with those skills. Then students were given a variety of topic options, a variety of research opportunities, and a variety of formative assessments to show their new understandings of the topics they chose and researched. The topic options were all “Traditionally Marginalized Groups” or groups that were not allowed full access to their constitutionally guaranteed civil rights either legally or informally in U.S. culture after World War II. Finally a formative assessment asked students to speak for 30-90 seconds on one of the three topics they chose to research and post their thoughts using an online video-sharing website called www.flipgrid.com.

Much of the unit was set up for students to navigate independently and in small groups. This structure was an attempt to create consistent opportunities for the classroom teacher to meet with each student individually during class to give feedback on their process, their products, and answer questions. It was determined through research that formative feedback

can have a powerful and positive effect on student achievement and the curriculum unit attempted to give teachers a tool to utilize proper feedback throughout the unit.

Because the blended learning unit relied on a 1:1 device environment, the entire unit exists within a Classroom Management Software. There are a variety of these types of tools available and this particular project utilized the free Google Classroom and Google Drive tools to create and support this project. It is important to note that the formative assessments titled “Learning Activities” utilized a variety of online tools and websites. Students had the opportunity to create flashcards using the website www.quizlet.com and to research specific topics and Civil Rights leaders using a district subscription to brainpop.com. Many of the Learning Activities relied on the Google Suite of tools for students including Google Draw and Google Docs for writing an opening paragraph to an argumentative essay.

The entire project and all of the necessary links, sources, research guides, rubrics and assessments are available in the Google Drive folder created for this project here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1KbeUT0gsLbbwVda6ZQaywUIOPDyCO_dw?usp=sharing

Ultimately the project aimed to empower teachers to change their role from content delivery specialists to mentors and coaches of their students’ learning by creating more freedom within each class period.