Final Paper

 The past several weeks so much valuable information has been given to me whether it was through readings, videos, discussions, or projects that let us explore concepts more in depth. All of the things that I have learned will help me in the classroom to create a more positive atmosphere by doing certain teaching methods different or incorporating different technology into the class.

 Many of the readings helped me as a teacher grasp a better understanding of certain teaching styles and how to become a better teacher. The two readings that opened my eyes into a new way of learning were “*Understanding by Design”, Expanded 2nd Edition* by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe , *and “Using the TPACK Framework: You Can Have Your Hot Tools and Teach with Them, Too”* by By Punya Mishra and Matthew Koehler. In the Wiggins and McTighe readings they talked about student’s misconceptions and understandings and how to go about building on from that. This is something that I can relate to in my own classroom so many students come in with misconceptions or don’t understand the concepts that are being taught. “Students end up forgetting or misunderstanding far more than is necessary, so that reteaching is needed throughout the school experience.” (Wigging and McTighe) This sentence in the reading is so true because almost half the time students forget or are given the wrong information so you are constantly re-teaching the concept over again. Sometimes I see myself going over certain topics that I feel the students should have already been taught or there are misconceptions about that topic. The one part of the reading that I truly could relate to was the discussion about the evidence of understanding. What students know or what they don’t know and how teachers we are going to get this information across to them. When giving a lessons making sure you know what the students should come away with from this lesson, what key topics to I want to incorporate, what evidence will show that they have understood what I have taught. These things are all great examples of how to make sure students understand what you are teaching in the classroom.

Another article that I really opened my eyes as a teacher was the article *TPACK Framework: You Can Have Your Hot Tools and Teach with Them, Too” by By Punya Mishra and Matthew Koehler.*  This article was a very eye opening experience for me and the learning how to use TPACK in my teaching. Breaking the TPACK down and learning each part and how to relate it to yourself as a teacher and how to incorporate it into your classroom was very interesting to me. “The idea of creative repurposing is important because most technologies that teachers use typically have not been designed for educational purposes.” (*Punya Mishra and Matthew Koehler)* This statement is very true a lot of the technology that I use in my school has nothing to do with education if any they are programs that are established to look at student’s progress or simply just a data collection website. If we had educational programs that were meant for teaching a certain subject or meant for an educational purpose it would really benefit the students. When using the TPACK concept and putting into place it would really help me as a teacher better educate my students and myself. In the fall I’m very excited about using this strategy of thinking in the classroom and also to help me become a better teacher by using TPACK.

Something else that I’ve benefitted from this course is the wonderful discussions we had in just a two week time period. Listening to other thoughts on topics we have covered in class and also what they do in their classroom for technology for me has been great. Looking at what other teachers are doing in their classroom for strategies, teaching technology, and covering subject content matter for me has been beneficial. Since I have been back from our face-face session I’ve already talked to my technology person in our district about using [Google for Educators](http://www.google.com/educators/index.html), [Itunes u](http://www.apple.com/education/itunes-u/), and getting grants for technology use in the classroom. Hopefully by showing her some of these new websites and tools for the classroom she will see the benefit that they will have on the teachers and on the students.

Over the next five years I see myself as an educator growing more into technology and using technology in my lesson to educate the students in my classroom. In order for this to happen there are some key topics that need to be implemented in my teaching in order for this to take place. First, making sure that TPACK is being used in my classroom in order to get content across. Making sure the TPACK is being followed and used in the right way for me and for my students as well. When using TPACK in the classroom it’s important to make sure that as a teacher I’m getting the message across to my students and if there is something that they don’t comprehend making sure it’s addressed. By using TPACK it will help me address these issues. Second, incorporating student’s understandings of misconceptions and making sure that they understand what the content. This is something now that I see all the time in the classroom students not being taught the concept or there are misconceptions about the concept that they still don’t grasp. In order to make sure students understand the concepts that are being addressed make sure you are presenting it in a manner where they grasp it. For example: Is the lesson I’m teaching have a purpose? What will the students get from the lesson? What will I assess to make sure that they comprehend the information that was presented to them? After the lesson what follow up will I do to make sure their minds have been changed about the misconception? By asking these questions they will help cover the concepts that students are trying to understand and help you as a teacher to make that they understood the lesson you were teaching. Third, make sure that all students’ needs are being met no matter what level of learning they are at. To make this happen it is important that there are resources in my room that will assist with students who are diverse learners. One website that is very good to help with students who are diverse learners is [Bookshare](http://www.bookshare.org/). Bookshare is a website that helps students with physical and visual disabilities. It is an online library students can download the book and listen to the story and follow along with the text at their own pace. They also have control of the book and may shut it off or reread a portion again. Another great website that gives different programs and software you can use in the classroom is at <http://www.abilityhub.com/>. This website also gives you great information on how to meet the needs of diverse learners through different software and technology you can use in the classroom. In the next couple of years I would really like to make sure I’ve implemented more technology and software to help students with diverse needs. Fourth, having technology implemented into all of my core subjects that I teach in the classroom. Currently in my room I use a lot of technology, but mainly for reading, writing, and math. My goal would be to incorporate technology in all of my core subject areas. Math is one area where I don’t use as many websites and software that I should use therefore this is an area where I want to expand into looking at things to incorporate into my math lessons that meet the standards. Some software that would benefit meeting our standards in math would be [Glencoe](http://www.educational-freeware.com/online/virtual-manipulatives.aspx) online which is a virtual math manipulative software game, [Math-Kal](http://www.mathkalusa.com/) is a math software that helps you with the concept you are trying to learn, [IPAD Math apps](http://touchreviews.net/math-ref-best-education-app-iphone-ipad/) that are also compatible with Ipod Touch these games help students with basic math facts, to story problem strategies. In Science and Social Studies looking at websites, videos, and different textbooks to help students understand the content they are learning about. When looking at these two subject areas I’ve started already building different websites to use in the classroom and have stored them in my [Delicious](http://delicious.com/singinghope/Science) account. As time goes on I plan on building more websites, videos, and articles into my Delicious account. In reading and writing this is an area now where I do use the most technology and my goal over time is to make mini technology literacy centers. The vision for this would be to have different areas in the room set up with laptops, IPAD’s, touch screen monitors and Ipods to help students engage more in reading and writing. This is a vision that will happen over time and not something that will happen within a year. Getting a lot of this technology into the classroom that I don’t have will be the struggle, but applying for grants and showing my school board the benefits of having these different types of technology in the classroom and the benefits it will have on the students. Finally, making use of the latest technology that is available. This is something that will be very hard to keep track of, but using [Google Reader](http://www.google.com/reader/view/?hl=en&tab=wy#overview-page), [Classroom 2.0](http://www.classroom20.com/), and [Education World](http://www.educationworld.com/a_tech/archives/) these websites will keep me posted on the most current pieces of technology to use in the classroom. By implementing all of these five topics in my teaching over time it will help me become a better teacher and will also benefit my students.

In conclusion, this class has made me grow already as a teacher and a learner. By having whole group discussions, readings on certain articles, projects in small groups, and individual projects have shown me how to make a change in my teaching style in the classroom. Looking at some things that I do know in the classroom I can say in the fall that will change because of learning the TPACK method. Learning just little things to me can benefit you in the classroom and also benefit your students. In the article “Students Motivation to Learn” by Linda Lumsden she talks about how to drive students to become more motivated and how you as a teacher can encourage students to become motivated. This article also relates to me and this course. In the beginning I had to be motivated in some of the readings and projects that I was involved in. Once getting motivated to learn more about these concepts it made me grow as a learner and become more motivated in making my students more engaged in my lessons. It was a positive eye opening experience for me seeing where I was at the beginning of this course to where I am now as a learner and a teacher.