

Average Score: 48.5 pts

Peer Review Rubric

Peer Reviewed by: Eboni Mitchell

Score=48

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Emerging	Beginning
Focus	20 pts The essay presents a clear cohesive story that is also imaginative and creative.	15 pts The essay presents a clear, cohesive story.	10 pts The essay attempts to tell a coherent story but lacks some focus and clarity.	5 pts The essay lacks a clear story or direction.
Organization	20 pts The introduction is inviting, and presents an overview of the paper. Information is relevant and presented in a logical order. The conclusion is strong.	15 pts The introduction states the main topic and provides an overview of the essay. A conclusion is included.	10 pts The introduction touches on the main topic. A conclusion is attempted.	5 pts There is no clear introduction, structure or conclusion.
Grammar, Spelling and APA	5 pts The writer makes no obvious errors	4 pts The writer makes a few errors but they do not interfere with understanding.	3 pts The writer makes several mistakes.	2 pts The writer makes numerous errors that interfere with understanding.
Word Choice	5 pts The writer uses vivid words and phrases. The placement of words seems accurate, natural and not forced.	4 pts The writer uses vivid words and phrases. The choice and placement of words is not always accurate and/or seems	3 pts The writer uses words and phrases that communicate ideas clearly but lack variety.	2 pts The writer uses a limited vocabulary.

		overdone at times.		
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- Write out at least two things that you think are particularly strong about this draft.
 - The sub titles help to understand the topic for each section.
 - I like how you provide details about blended learning and insert a website with more information for your readers.
- Identify two or three aspects of the draft that are currently weak, problematic, or ineffective.
 - Under the section “pacing” it talks more about resources used in blended learning
 - I like how you provide lots of great examples and resources, maybe include additional links, websites and videos for your reader to use and view.
- Make two or three directive statements recommending the most important changes that the writer should make in the next draft.
 - Decide if you want the “pacing” section to be more about resources to use for blended learning or about how blended learning allows for pacing control.
 - Just add a few links of resources because it makes it easy for people to search for the informational help you have provided them with.

Peer Review Rubric

Reviewed by Christopher D. Aebig

49/50 pts

	Exemplary	Accomplished	Emerging	Beginning
Focus 20/20	20 pts The essay presents a clear cohesive story that is also imaginative and creative.	15 pts The essay presents a clear, cohesive story.	10 pts The essay attempts to tell a coherent story but lacks some focus and clarity.	5 pts The essay lacks a clear story or direction.
Organization 20/20	20 pts The introduction is inviting, and presents an overview of the paper. Information is	15 pts The introduction states the main topic and provides an overview of the essay. A	10 pts The introduction touches on the main topic. A conclusion is attempted.	5 pts There is no clear introduction, structure or conclusion.

	relevant and presented in a logical order. The conclusion is strong.	conclusion is included.		
Grammar, Spelling and APA 4/5	5 pts The writer makes no obvious errors	4 pts The writer makes a few errors but they do not interfere with understanding.	3 pts The writer makes several mistakes.	2 pts The writer makes numerous errors that interfere with understanding.
Word Choice 5/5	5 pts The writer uses vivid words and phrases. The placement of words seems accurate, natural and not forced.	4 pts The writer uses vivid words and phrases. The choice and placement of words is not always accurate and/or seems overdone at times.	3 pts The writer uses words and phrases that communicate ideas clearly but lack variety.	2 pts The writer uses a limited vocabulary.

1. Write out at least two things that you think are particularly strong about this draft.
 - a. The title tells the reader where these blended learning techniques will be used.
 - b. The content titled "Pacing" is well written, describes the evolution of the concept to date and provides many opportunities to learn more. It made me want to learn more about those I have not yet tried!
2. Identify two or three aspects of the draft that are currently weak, problematic, or ineffective.
 - a. Perhaps add a personal experience to the "giving control to the students" could solidify that paragraph.
 - b. Maybe specifically address differing types of learners in the conclusion.
3. Make two or three directive statements recommending the most important changes that the writer should make in the next draft.
 - a. In the conclusion, add how blended learning has changed your classroom, the benefits, and mention how it has evolved in just two years.
 - b. A student testimony (especially a struggle story that leads to success) could capture the hearts of the readers.

Publication Rough Draft

Submission Options: National Council for the Social Studies, Edutopia

Implementing Blended Learning in a Social Studies Class

Over the past decade, blended learning has gained attention for its potential to transform student learning. A large amount of research exists that demonstrates the positive effects of personalized instruction, competency-based education, project-based learning, culturally relevant pedagogy, and positive, one-on-one teacher support. The challenge has been in the practical application of all these elements in a traditional classroom. Blended learning holds promise for educators looking to implement these strategies in order to increase student engagement, motivation, and achievement.

Wanting to create a more engaging classroom with authentic learning opportunities, we have embarked on a journey to implement blended learning in our social studies classrooms.

There are several different models of blended learning. A good overview of all the models is provided at [Blended Learning Universe](#). You should consider what is best for your students. Think about how your students work and what their learning needs are. What are you doing (or would like to do) to differentiate learning in your classroom? One of the fastest and easiest ways to get started with blended learning is through station rotation.

We chose the individual station rotation model to allow students to work at their own pace and to choose the instructional activities they are most interested in, and because it allows flexibility in which stations students visit. The flexibility allows students to visit just the stations they need, providing for more personalized learning. We have found interactions with students to be more effective because they are more focused and relaxed when they do not feel the pressure to keep up with the class when they are not ready to move on. We are able to step in with students who need extra support when they need it. Students who are more self-sufficient are able to complete assignments and keep moving forward. The individual rotation model also provides time for educators to support and challenge students who have moved quickly through the material.

Transitioning the curriculum

Delivery of content

Blended learning offers a lot of flexibility and choice when it comes to pacing and delivery of content. One of the easiest ways to implement technology in the classroom is to use online resources for content delivery. There is a wide variety of interactive software and engaging videos that can be used to enhance learning.

To transition our traditional curriculum to blended learning, we went through each lesson and determined what information could be provided in lecture or textbook readings. This was the easiest component to move to an online resource and quick checks for understanding can be added with google

forms or quizzes at the end of each lesson. Another station was created for practice activities and group work. This is where students can work together on assignments and discuss what they are learning. We typically have two days where I plan for whole-group activities. Initially I was worried that it wouldn't work well with individual pacing, but it's been amazing to see students who are further along in the unit help their classmates.

Pacing

Student attendance has a huge impact on student learning, especially at a non-traditional high school. In a more traditional classroom, assignments missed due to an absence were "made-up", but the lesson and the opportunity to work with the student were gone. With blended learning, students pick up where they left off, and teachers can easily support and answer questions for that student during class time instead of scheduled tutorial times before or after school. When given the time and support from the teacher and classmates, students will be able to better manage and direct their own learning.

Two resources that are used frequently in class are Active Classroom and Khan Academy. Active Classroom was purchased by my district and added to the students' online portal. This made it very easy to integrate into the classroom. Khan Academy is free and allows teachers to set up an online class, similar to Google Classroom. It was just a matter of providing a link for students in their Canvas course.

Nearpod, edpuzzle videos and online review games worked really well with my 8th grade students. They each have a free option and provide a variety of support to students. Nearpod is an interactive slide deck that can be used live with a whole class or assigned as individual work, and I found it extremely helpful when I wanted to see exactly what each student was understanding and how they were connecting the material. Edpuzzle allows teachers to create interactive videos with questions or comments, and if you cannot find a video in the Edpuzzle library, you can upload other videos from YouTube or other video sources. Kahoot was one of the original online review games that I used in my class, but in the last couple of years, other resources like Gimkit, Blooket, Quizizz and Quizlet Live have become very popular as well. There are unique features and functions in each game, and like Nearpod, these review games can be assigned for students to play on their own or can also be used with a live group.

With all these amazing resources, we want to stress that blended learning is much more than just putting activities online. It is about effectively blending technology into lessons to allow for more engagement and deeper learning. One element of blended learning that we are very excited about is the opportunity for more authentic, project based learning. Effective project based learning is community-based, relevant to students and involves real world issues. It is NOT a review at the end of a unit nor is it a student product that is turned in and never seen or thought about again. There are several project-based learning resources available online, and PBLworks provides project ideas and design resources along with professional development training. Project Based Learning should be authentic and allow for student choice, ownership and voice (Harapnuik, 2018). Otherwise, students will see the project as a huge burden and waste of time.

Giving control to students

Students have access to a variety of activities that help meet different learning preferences. Additionally, if a student does not understand a concept, it's a great opportunity to have a discussion about using other resources, including their own classmates. Students are given time to develop important skills that are absolutely crucial in the real world such as time management, working with a

team, accountability, prioritizing tasks, and seeking out answers and help when needed. With students taking ownership and making decisions for themselves, educators will have more time to focus on hands-on activities or work one-on-one with students.

Lessons learned

As effortless as we would like to make it look, there are some questions to consider when selecting digital resources. If you use an LMS system such as Canvas, you'll want to figure out how easily the resources integrate into the system. It can be incredibly frustrating and slow starting out with a new LMS, but we found that Youtube is extremely helpful and has tutorial videos for any questions about Canvas. Another important question to consider is how is this technology increasing engagement? Is it just replacing a paper copy with a digital one? Teaching is a job where the to-do list never gets shorter, and it is so easy to make something digital without any added engagement. The good news is that it doesn't have to be complicated. A categorizing activity can be made more engaging simply by making a google form with drag and drop boxes. You can continue to add to that activity by making it a shared google form, which allows students to collaborate, discuss and justify their answers.

One approach we were excited to try when we started blended learning was video submissions, specifically Flipgrid. Unfortunately, Flipgrid was not successful during hybrid teaching. Remote students were forced to build a relationship with me and their classmates through a zoom meeting, which resulted in most students not feeling comfortable recording themselves. However, we'll try again. Implementing Flipgrid may be more successful by starting out the year with all my students in person, building our classroom culture, and then asking students to share their thoughts in a video post. This again shows that blended learning is most effective when it combines technology with the strong relationships and trust that comes with in-person interactions.

Conclusion

After the past couple years of struggling through school during a pandemic, students are desperate to find meaning and ownership in their school work. Blended learning has made it easier to create an engaging, meaningful social studies classroom by allowing students control over activities and pacing along with authentic learning activities. With technology integrated into the lessons and a path that is personalized to their needs, students are more interested in what they're learning. It is not a road without bumps, but transitioning our classrooms to a blended learning environment has not only had a powerful impact on student learning but has also positively changed our roles as educators.