

## **Web 2.0 Directed Learning Activities in Gifted, Fifth Grade Students**

### *Abstract*

The proposed research project was developed to address students' poor performance on weekly spelling tests. A blog format on the classroom website will be introduced as an ancillary homework activity. This study strives to find an engaging method for additional practice that improves students' scores with use.

### *Supporting Summary*

In this project, the efficacy of using ancillary online homework assignments will be tested in regard to weekly spelling and vocabulary list mastery. A blog that mimics the functions and characteristics of Facebook will be created on the classroom website where questions will be posted; both the researcher and other students can give feedback and critique. This action research project is a response to low student achievement on weekly spelling and vocabulary tests.

This action research project asks if there is a relationship between the language arts scores of the fifth grade students and participation in a blog-directed learning activity. The purpose of the research is to explore if there is a correlation between grades and the amount of times a student participates in the blogging activity.

As stated in the literature, Web 2.0 is the term used to describe websites that emphasize user generated content, usability, and collaboration between users. Social media and blogs are two examples. With the use of Web 2.0 sites being so prevalent, it seems that using them in an educational setting has the potential to be beneficial and entertaining for students. Garcia et al.,

(2015) note that the use of Web 2.0 sites, especially blogs, is becoming increasingly popular due to their promotion of interaction and discussion through posting, commenting, reading and replying. One of the benefits noted in several studies is that activities on a social media platform or a blog can accommodate multiple different learning styles; shy learners, competitive learners, and learners who need examples can all benefit (Chen, 2015). Bandura's social cognitive theory proposes that working in cooperative learning activities may lead to enhanced knowledge acquisition because of group work or collaboration (Fewkes & McCabe, 2012). Web 2.0 sites are platforms that encourage cooperative learning because participants can respond to each other and offer ideas and feedback. Studies about educational blogging and the use of Web 2.0 sites have been mainly concentrated on adults; however, it was seen that fourth grade students could effectively use blogs as a learning tool (Yeo & Lee, 2014).

Purposive sampling will be used in this research study in order try and find a solution to the problem of student disengagement towards spelling/vocabulary tests in the intern/researcher's classroom. The study will be described to the potential participants. The participants will be students who wish to participate in the research study from the researcher's internship classroom. Three tools will be utilized for this study: a blog on the classroom website, the grade book, and a Likert scale instrument to assess student opinions and satisfaction related to the blog activity. For this study, the grade book will be utilized in order to collect the grades of the students. The classroom website will be used in order to post questions that will be on the spelling test including questions about forming sentences utilizing the spelling words, defining the words, and providing synonyms and antonyms. The students' work will be corrected via the blog tab on the classroom website.

In order to conduct the study, the students in the fifth grade class receive a list of vocabulary words every week; they are tested every Friday. This action research project will explore whether student grades improve if they engage in a blog directed learning activity in addition to their regular assignments. This blog will be created on the classroom website, by the researcher to have features similar to a Facebook group. Questions will be posted and direct feedback will be offered to students; students will be able to comment and rate the posts. Additionally, notification emails are sent to the students. This intervention will be given as an ancillary to regular assignments and will last a period of 8 weeks. Students will still be responsible for all their regular homework; if they so choose, they will be able to complete the online activities as additional supplementation to their regular coursework.

This study will be conducted from January to April of 2016, so no results have been attained yet. However, when data is attained, they will be analyzed using SPSS.

This study is important to the field of education because it may provide insight into more engaging methods of assigning homework and tasks to help students practice their work. If this study yields favorable results, the idea would be a good one to share with other teachers because it is fairly easy to utilize can adjust to an increasingly more technological world.

## References

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