FACEBOOK AS AN INSTRUCTIONAL TOOL IN THE SECONDARY

CLASSROOM: A CASE STUDY

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree of

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ABSTRACT


The purpose of this study is to describe how social media networks impact secondary students when utilized as an instructional tool. The problem this study seeks to address is exploring the roles that social media play in the lives of high school students and the experiences they encounter by utilizing these networks academically and socially. A case study approach was utilized to evaluate the impact of technology integration via social media networks in a secondary English classroom. The focus of the study was to determine the academic and social impact the social media network, more specifically Facebook, has on these students. The theoretical framework driving this study is motivational theory. Participants in this study completed surveys and interviews and participated in a series of classroom observations. Data collected was then used to tell the story of Facebook as an instructional tool in a secondary classroom. Findings revealed that teacher and student perceptions aligned in relation to student behavior academically and socially when Facebook was utilized as an instructional tool.

Descriptors: social media, instructional strategies, web 2.0 tools
DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to the two most important people in my life, my “mommie” Barbara W. Stroud, and my “hubby” Kelvin J. Brown. Without the two of you in my corner I do not know how I would have made it. I am so happy God blessed me with the both of you and you have been the greatest cheerleaders any person could ever ask for. Additionally the support of all my family, friends, and colleagues has been paramount. To my “bestie” Noelle thanks for always being there when I needed to vent, cry, scream, or laugh. I have truly been blessed with people who have believed in me and been with me every step of the way. I can never thank you enough. Finally, I give a special dedication to my maternal grandparents, Johnny and Grace Watkins, who are in heaven continually watching over me. I love and miss you dearly.
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Table of Contents

Dedication ........................................................................................................................................2
Acknowledgements ..........................................................................................................................3
List of Tables ..................................................................................................................................7
List of Abbreviations .....................................................................................................................8

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................9

  Background ....................................................................................................................................9
  Situation to Self ...............................................................................................................................11
  Problem Statement .......................................................................................................................12
  Purpose Statement .......................................................................................................................13
  Research Questions ....................................................................................................................13
  Significance of the Study .............................................................................................................14
  Delimitations and Limitations .....................................................................................................15
  Research Plan ..............................................................................................................................16

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW .....................................................................................17

  Introduction ..................................................................................................................................17
  Theoretical Framework ...............................................................................................................17
  Review of the Literature ............................................................................................................19
    Digital learning: Some Pros and Cons ......................................................................................19
    Web 2.0 Tools and Classroom Instruction ...............................................................................22
    Social Networks .......................................................................................................................25
    Cyberbullying ............................................................................................................................28
    Promoting Online Safety .........................................................................................................30
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .................................................................48

Introduction .............................................................................................48
Research Design ......................................................................................49
Participants ..............................................................................................49
Setting ......................................................................................................50
Procedures ...............................................................................................50
Data Collection ........................................................................................51
Role of Researcher ....................................................................................55
Data Analysis ...........................................................................................55
Trustworthiness .........................................................................................56
Ethical Considerations .............................................................................58

CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS ......................................................................59

Research Questions ..................................................................................60
Research Question One ...........................................................................62
Student and Teacher Interview Summary .............................................63
Pros of Using Web 2.0 Tools in the Classroom .......................................70
Research Question Two ...........................................................................71
Research Question Three .......................................................................79
Research Regarding Student Interaction ..............................................83

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION ...................................................................85
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Interview Participants.................................................................53
Table 2: Students Reactions to Facebook as an Instructional Tool.............64
Table 3: Students Educational Beliefs about Facebook.................................67
Table 4: Student Teacher Interactions........................................................82
Table 5: Student Interaction (Perceptions).....................................................82
Table 6: Student Interactions (Actions).........................................................82
Table 7: Common Themes Student Interviews and Observations..................83
Table 8: Common Themes Teacher Interview and Observations....................84
LISTS OF ABBREVIATIONS

Individualized Educational Plan (IEP)

Information Rich Tasks (IRT)

Social Network Services (SNS)

Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK)
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Background

While administrators, teachers, and students have varying perspectives on the use of social networks, there have been some discussion about the pros and cons of social networking as an instructional strategy “Educators cannot ignore the important role that social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace play in young people’s social and self-development” (Siegle, 2011, p. 15). This is one of many reasons that educators have begun to integrate social networks into their classroom environment.

This study will examine the integration of Facebook in the secondary classroom. While numerous studies have examined social networks in higher education, such as Backer’s (2010) study on using smartphones and Facebook, Baran’s (2010) study examining Facebook as a formal instructional environment, and Cain’s (2008) study looking at the online social networking issues within pharmacy education, there is a need for more data to be collected and analyzed as it relates to high school classroom environments. “Teachers and their students are the two most important stakeholders in any endeavor to integrate technology into schools; their beliefs and views must be thoroughly understood before any initiative takes place” (Li, 2007, p. 377).

In a study conducted by Mazer, Murphy, and Simonds (2009), researchers found that “teachers may enhance their credibility if they use Facebook, showing they care about their students and understand contemporary student interests” (p. 177). Students often respect teachers who use instructional strategies that value what they value. This study will equip educators with data to better understand the impacts of utilizing social networks in the secondary classroom.
While there are noted advantages and opportunities awarded students who engage in social networking, there are just as many risks. Livingstone and Brake (2010) shared a study in which the practices of teenagers were reviewed in order to further research and public policy decisions. Advantages such as self-expression, learning communities, and networking are juxtaposed with the threats of privacy invasion and cyberbullying. In order to ensure students safety, educators and policy makers must make a concerted effort to instruct students in appropriate online practices. Just as students need to feel safe in the traditional school environment, policies need to be implemented to ensure virtual safety when educators integrate technology into their classroom curriculum.

Due to the risks involved in utilizing technology in the classroom, teachers may feel limited to the amount of technology they choose to integrate and the frequency of these types of activities. While this is a valid concern, students will not be able to truly benefit from the advantages until teachers take the risks and develop classroom procedures to ensure internet safety. Livingstone and Brake (2010) conclude that if: schools remain reluctant to incorporate media education into teacher training and classroom curricula, children’s knowledge will lag behind the industry’s fast-changing practices of embedded marketing, use of personal data, user tracking and so forth, most of which is opaque to young people as they navigate the options before (p.79).

This case study was inspired by the determination of secondary English teachers who were willing to take the risks of incorporating the social networking website, Facebook, into their classroom curriculum. Through the use of social networks, students are afforded communication and networking benefits that can be an enhancement to their education as well as social interactions. “Research must keep up to date with children
and young people’s social practices online, as their enthusiasm for social networking is undeniable and their future uses of this technology may, as so often before, still surprise us” (Livingstone and Brake, 2010, p. 80).

**Situation to Self**

As a high school administrator, social networks have played many roles in my daily interactions with staff, students, and parents. While there have been numerous occasions where social media has been used inappropriately, I was motivated to find more positive uses and share these with others in the building. Through observing various teachers, I discovered the social media network Facebook can be a promising instructional strategy. This discovery led me to investigate the instructional advantages to implementing this social network into the secondary curriculum.

As the researcher and a proponent of the advantages of social networks, I have to control my bias in seeing the educational value of this integration. Several teachers have voiced concerns about Facebook and others have praised the effect it has had on their classroom environment. To build better relationships with students, I explored Facebook and created a “spirit page” for my school. This page has proven to be a useful tool in supporting extra-curricular activities and building student morale. I feel students also are beginning to look at Facebook from a more positive perspective. In light of this, I am still pursuing objectivity in this case study and only reporting the data as given without any personal interjections.

The epistemology theory is the driving force for this study of the benefits of integrating technology into classroom curriculums. Through utilizing social networking technology I desire to describe how students’ knowledge will increase and higher academic success may be achieved. As a Christian educator, I believe that students
should be taught appropriate ways to utilize the new technologies available to them. The 21st century learner has a plethora of knowledge at their fingertips and can easily misuse the information they receive. Instructing students how to properly utilize these tools in order to gain higher academic success may be essential to preparing them for the future. Mullen and Wedwick (2008) stated:

To be successful in the world, students must learn to manipulate various forms of new media with a high level of comfort and skill, and school must become a place in which students can acquire the necessary skills for technological success. It is time to begin taking steps to close the digital divide (p. 69).

**Problem Statement**

The problem in this study relates to exploring the roles that social media play in the academic lives of high school students and the experiences they encounter by utilizing these networks academically and socially. The emergence of cyberbullying and virtual aggression is an increasing issue and in an effort to promote healthier online interactions many educators have integrated these social networks into their classroom curriculum. Backer (2010) concluded, “Eleven out of 12 students reported that the use of smartphones and Facebook increased their motivation, independent learning, and sense of responsibility” (p.19).

Holladay (2010) has noted that “anywhere from one-third to one-half of youths have been targeted by cyberbullies” (p.5). Due to alarming statistics like these, educators may avoid integrating online technology into their classroom curricula. However, Bosch (2009) believes that in spite of the controversies surrounding social networking, “if one considers the large numbers of students on Facebook often actively participating in
discussion groups, it cannot be ignored as a potential educational tool” (p. 190). In order to meet the academic and safety needs of students, educators must be made aware of as much research as possible regarding technology use.

**Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this qualitative case study is to describe the impact of social media when used as an instructional tool for secondary students at Technology High School. At this stage in the research, social media will be generally defined as utilizing web-based technology for interaction and communication. By examining how social media networks are being utilized by educators and administrators, this study hopes to show that these networks not only help students achieve higher academic success, but also build more positive relationships with their peers. Administrators, teachers, and students will share their beliefs via interviews and surveys about the integration of social networks in their current curriculum. The perceptions shared by participants in this study will hopefully open up a door of opportunity to give others insight on how to transform the negative impacts of social networking into a more positive experience.

**Research Questions**

The purpose of this study is to describe how social media networks impacts secondary students when utilized as an instructional tool. The following questions guide this study:

1. What, if any, is the impact of social media networks on students when integrated into their classroom activities?
2. What types of interactions occur when students engage in academic use of social networks?
3. How, if at all, does the integration of social networks in an academic
environment affect student-student and teacher-student relationships?

**Significance of the Study**

The 21st century has propelled the educational environment into a new realm. There are numerous technological advances which have made learning more interactive and created a need for a more virtual approach to instruction. Many studies have been conducted examining how computer based learning, online environments, and integrating Web 2.0 tools have improved academic achievement for the new generation of learners. While there are many advantages when utilizing these new tools, students have also found means to utilize technology to change traditional bullying, taunting, or teasing to a whole new level.

Taranto, Dalbon, and Gaetano (2011) shared in a discussion the idea that “teachers of students who regularly use 2.0 technologies must develop an understanding of new digital literacies and infuse them with their instructional practices” (p. 12). This article further explains that “web 2.0 technologies are versatile, affordable, and widely available, allowing educators to seamlessly infuse digital literacy expressions into their classrooms” (Taranto et al., p. 13, 2011). This study of middle school students who utilize social networking states that “students feel right at home using this type of technology in the classroom and enjoy a chance to interact in a way that comes so naturally to them” (Taranto et al., p. 15, 2011).

A number of school administrators and teachers are dealing with the pros and cons of technology integration in their school districts (Holladay, 2011). In the next chapter, a review of literature on the benefits of technology as well as the pitfalls will be examined. This study focuses on utilizing Web 2.0 technologies, specifically social
networks, as instructional tools. While these tools have been misused by some adolescents (Aricak, 2009) it is expected that through more appropriate use students will reap academic and social benefits.

The samples in this study are students in a school district where cyberbullying reaches from their homes into the school lives and has had a tremendous impact on how they interact with their peers (Williams & Payne, 2010). Facebook has been a major vehicle in aiding students in promoting their dislike for some of their peers and adults in their lives (Williams & Payne, 2010). Many students do not realize the impact of the virtual world and are not educated on the effects of misusing social networks. Holladay (2010) notes that “the word cyberbullying didn’t even exist a decade ago, yet the problem is pervasive today” (p. 4).

Through better education and providing a different use for this social medium it is hoped that students will benefit both academically and socially. It is also the intent of this study to show those administrators and educators who have nothing positive to voice in regards to social media that there are positive attributes both educationally and socially as well. This study will attempt to provide research and information that will promote more instructional use of social networking and shed a more positive view on how these networks can be an asset to education.

**Delimitations and Limitations**

**Delimitations.** For this study secondary students were chosen due to an interest in observing the impact of social media on this particular group. Studies such as Lee’s (2010) study with university students utilizing Facebook as a new media and Roth’s (2009) study which examines pedagogy and technology of the Facebook generation have been conducted in this area in relation to older students; however there is a need to
evaluate the effects of social media during the secondary stage of education. While Facebook began as a tool for college students there has been an increase in use of this network with high school age students.

**Limitations.** Due to the nature of this study, the results will focus on a small number of students in a centralized area and the data disseminated may not be applicable to all secondary students. Utilizing social media requires the availability of technology that all secondary students may not have access to.

**Research Plan**

This qualitative case study was conducted through observing, surveying, and interviewing high school students as they engage in a virtual classroom environment. By observing a classroom teacher as she integrates the social media network, Facebook, into the daily instructional practices, data was collected and analyzed in relation to student engagement and overall classroom behaviors. Samples from the closed groups created on Facebook, transcripts from the interviews conducted, as well as observation notes gathered throughout the duration of this study were utilized to discover the impact of social media on students’ academic and social behavior.

In order to ensure reliability and trustworthiness of this study all documentation were member checked by a sample of the students as well as the teacher who integrates the technology. Creswell (2007) states that “case study research involves the study of an issue explored through one or more cases with a bounded system. . . research is not a methodology but a choice of what is to be studied” (p. 73). The case study is an appropriate choice to study the educational impacts in that it assists in telling the story of how the instructional strategies were deployed and give a voice to the participants as they are studied.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The 21st century has propelled the educational environment into a new realm. There are numerous technological advances which have made learning more interactive and created a need for a more virtual approach to instruction. Researchers such as Greenhow and Robelia (2009), Girod and Wojcikiewicz (2009) conducted studies examining how computer based learning, online environments, and integrating Web 2.0 tools have improved academic achievement for the new generation of learners. While there are many advantages when utilizing these new tools students have also found means to utilize technology to change traditional bullying, taunting, or teasing to a whole new level (Holladay, 2010).

A number of school administrators and teachers are dealing with the pros and cons of technology integration in their school districts. Throughout this review of literature the benefits of technology as well as the pitfalls were examined. This study focuses on utilizing Web 2.0 technologies, specifically social networks, as instructional tools. While these tools have been misused by some adolescents it is the expectation that through more appropriate use students will reap academic and social benefits.

Theoretical Framework

The debate of constructivist student-centered instructional techniques has been in the forefront of researchers when discussing the integration of technology into the classroom environment. While many researchers such as Rakes, Fields, and Cox (2006) and Levin and Wadmany (2006) have conducted studies on whether a shift to constructivism has occurred due to technology integration or teachers who consider themselves constructivist easily adapt to integrating technology is, still undecided.
Researchers like Palak and Walls (2009) and Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) have agreed that in order to effectively integrate technology, a student-centered approach is essential. Vygotsky’s overall theory of constructivism describes a behavior based on foundations built on current behaviors socially and individually.  

Additionally, motivational theories of education assist in guiding this study. Theorists such as: Bandura, Maslow, and Glasser (Miller, 2011) have stressed the importance of individual motivation to succeed in all areas of life and specifically in education. The research shared during this study supports theories which emphasize that utilizing mediums that engage students in rigorous and relevant tasks helps them to reach a higher level of academic success.

Finally, the types of motivation for students is closely related to their need to belong and have choice in their academic environment. Bandura (Miller, 2011) discusses how people learn from each other through observing their behaviors and the outcomes. Maslow’s infamous hierarchy of needs displays the pyramid of needs that motivate humans. According to Glasser, if students are not motivated to do their schoolwork, it is because they view schoolwork as irrelevant to their basic human needs (Miller, 2011).

In this study the impact of social media is being examined; as Livingstone and Brake (2010) shared, “for most children, social networking affords considerable benefits in terms of communication and relationships” (p. 80). Cain (2008) supported this belief by stating, “social networking sites such as Facebook provide individuals with a way of maintaining and strengthening social ties, which can be beneficial in both social and academic settings” (p. 6). In essence there are certain levels of needs in order for students to be motivated to learn. Through social networking a variety of these needs can be met.
Review of the Literature

**Digital learning: Some pros and cons.** Today’s learners have access to the universe via the internet and it is literally in the palm of their hand. Students no longer have to go to a computer lab, library, or any other supervised area to log onto the internet and seek out information about ideas that pique their interests. Cellular phones and other handheld devices have been designed to allow students to access this information regardless of their location. While it appears that the world is at their fingertips, there is also an alarming amount of jeopardy there as well (Holladay, 2010).

Technology has allowed students to access much more information than in years past and at a much more rapid pace. The days of card catalogs and encyclopedias being sifted through in their local neighborhood or school libraries have become extinct. Stroud (2011) shared how school libraries are joining the digital transformation as they “equip students with the research skills and tools that meet their 21st century needs” (p. 18). Several libraries like the one in this proposed study are moving from print to digital reference material. Libraries all over the United States are shifting from the traditional reference books and card catalog systems to completely digital access to this information (Stroud, 2011).

“There is no way we were going to meet our goals in education without a significant improvement in our application of technology” (Fletcher, 2011, p. 14) is the statement given by Bob Wise a former Democratic governor of West Virginia. Former Governor Wise joined with Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush to begin an advocacy campaign to promote digital learning for the 21st century. Fletcher (2011) discusses how these two men came to the conclusion that this “initiative links the use of technology to
other education reforms” (p. 14). This article details how digital learning impacts educational issues.

Fletcher (2011) points out that there are various challenging assumptions regarding the Digital Learning initiatives that are key to student success. One major part of the discussion is that of grade level promotion. Traditionally, it has been age, attendance, and academic achievement that has promoted students, he argues that digital learning can remove this “artificial structure” and allow students to progress as material is mastered. Additionally, teachers need to be better equipped to deal with the advancing technologies and training for online teaching is one of several suggestions to attain this goal.

Finally Fletcher (2011) states that “any regulations that restrict access to digital learning experiences . . . should be eliminated” (p.16). While there are many advantages to the expedient and efficient access to this information, a doorway has also been opened to information that is not always appropriate and that can be harmful to these inquisitive young minds. There are numerous pros and cons when examining digital learning but many researchers and educators recognize the pros prevail over the cons.

Schuck, Aubusson, and Kearney (2010) noted that “Web 2.0 technologies have the power to (a) affect human cognition; (b) change the knowledge and skills necessary to participate in one's local and global communities; (c) impact upon the future development of society; and (d) disrupt school education” (p. 235). Schuck et al. (2010) discussed the use of digital spaces and the effects on students’ socialization and learning styles. The researchers concluded that Web 2.0 tools may have a positive or negative impact on the education of students as well as their behavior.
Enochsson (2007) shared that “today digital communication is a natural part of young people’s social life” (p. 2). This study examined the use of LunarStorm, one of Sweden’s largest online communities, by students between the ages of 11 and 14. Enochsson found that most of the interactions were kind and that students use the site for general socializing with their friends. It was also noted that children who were typically shy enjoyed this medium because they felt more comfortable. The study showed that girls typically communicated more so than boys and that while some families may not want their daughters on the internet, prohibition could create a generational digital divide.

Girod and Wojcikiewicz (2009) noted, “it will be important to investigate appropriate and efficacious strategies for maximizing student learning independent of delivery method” (p. 55). During Girod and Wojcikiewicz’s study there were different pedagogical strategies discovered even though the professor believes the two classes were taught identically. Implications for educators teaching web-based classes were noted in this study and though there were slight differences the researchers believed that the models are still quite comparable. The researchers also recognized possible threats to the study due to the non-random assignment of participants, who may excel in distant learning thus voluntarily enrolling in this type of class. The non-significant achievement differences could be more related to the computer skills of the web-based learners and their comfort level with the format.

The researchers in this study do conclude that both modes of instructional delivery can result in student achievement, but also agree future study is needed. Studies in which researchers take into account the technological experience of the web-based learners and that random selection and assignment are used will support their findings.
Furthermore, “careful examinations of pedagogical practices are needed to verify and extend these findings” (Girod & Wojcikiewicz, 2009, p. 56).

**Web 2.0 tools and classroom instruction.** As educators move progressively into the 21st century classroom, integrating Web 2.0 tools has become critical. Demski (2010) explains that “ten years into the new century we’re still trying to find the Web 2.0 tools that best facilitate collaboration” (p. 33). Demski decided to ask three top consultants, Hargadon, Kuglin, and Fisher, to choose three Web 2.0 tools that they believed were the most appropriate fostering collaboration in teaching and learning. The consultants each shared their thoughts on Web 2.0 instructional tools.

Steve Hargadon, who pioneered the use of social media in the classroom and is the creator of the Classroom 2.0 social network, discussed blogs, social networks, and synchronous live platforms. John Kuglin, Senior Technology Consultant and retired Associate Dean Former NASA Grant Administrator University of Montana, tools of choice were Google docs, Sliderrocket, and School Fusion. Leslie Fisher, a business marketing major and former Apple employee created her own international technology company and specializes in educational technology, selected Twitter, TypeWith.me, and Ustream. Demski (2010) believes that as the availability of numerous tools increase that educators may have may have trouble determining which tools are the most appropriate for their classroom or “which are simply new toys” (p. 33).

Web 2.0 tools come in many forms and many schools have found great success using podcasts in their instructional environments. Podcasts are simply audio files that can be downloaded and played on computers, iPods, and MP3 players. Sprague and Pixley (2008) stated:
There are three ways teachers can use podcasts in their classrooms. Teachers can have students subscribe to and access podcasts created by others, teachers can create their own podcasts for use by their students, and teachers can have students create their own podcasts (p. 230).

Podcasts like many Web 2.0 tools can easily be integrated into the classroom environment and create motivational and interactive lessons for students.

Educators utilize Web 2.0 tools in a variety of ways. Kitsis (2010) integrated blogging into her classroom routine and she “saw students who almost never turned in traditional homework regularly contribute to the blog” (p. 52). Conducting the traditional reading activity, literature circles, in a more technologically savvy environment proved to be very successful. Kitsis still had face to face components to the lesson but the addition of blogging rose her student’s motivation and participation.

Munoz and Towner (2009) stated that “in addition to the incredible usage rate among students, there are a number of unique features that make it amenable to educational pursuits” (p.4). These researchers further explain that Facebook “indirectly” creates a learning environment by connecting students to each other. Skerrett (2010) noted that “the Facebook event represented an opportunity to hold conversations about gender, male privilege, and more generally hegemonic power structures that circulate throughout social networking sites—constructs or reject or lack the tools to do” (p. 81-82).

Greenhow and Robelia (2009) conducted a study in which students utilized the social network MySpace in an educational environment and discovered that “students demonstrated responsible uses of technology within MySpace by respectfully responding to others’ bulletin requests for information and aiding other users in resolving technical
problems. Noted also in this study was that the interactions between students provided a strong advocacy for appropriate behavior and students felt comfortable chastising those who acted inappropriately.

In Baran’s (2010) study, which examined Facebook being utilized as a formal instruction environment, discussion points were noted that “not all students are ready to embrace the use of social networking tools such as Facebook in formal teaching, learning and assessment” (p. 148). This study also discussed that students may be more interested in socializing than the educational component. This is a dilemma many educators face when attempting to integrate technology into their curriculum.

Lam (2009) examined the use of Web 2.0 tools as educational motivators and found that “Web 2.0 technologies with international collaboration create a classroom with autonomy, active participation and connectedness” (p. 334). While Lam’s study showed that employing Web 2.0 tools raised student motivation, Lam like many researchers believes that further research is needed and would benefit the educational community. Whether employing blogs, wikis, or social networks in the classroom routine many educators are utilizing these tools to motivate their students.

Cowan (2008) explains that “educators attempting to integrate technology into their teaching face a variety of challenges in today’s classrooms” (p. 55). Decisions regarding what type of technology, how much technology, and how to use it are the first obstacles that must be tackled. Additionally, there is the availability of facilities to ensure all students can participate in the planned activities. Teachers must effectively plan their lesson and be prepared for alternatives when technological issues arise. This process often discourages some teachers from using technology as much as possible.

“Using technology innovatively and demonstrating through alternative assessment that
there are better ways to approach teaching and learning is a positive way to help students succeed and to offer an alternative vision for twenty-first century education” (Cowan, 2008, 59).

Alison (2008) conducted a study which explored how history teachers could utilize the nuances of technological advances to further their curriculum. The objective of this study was to “identify virtual reality tools that can be used by history educators and provide for effective learning experiences both in the classroom and in the research environment” (p. 343). During the course of the study it was discovered that virtual reality tools enabled students to question what is real and to explore a multiplicity of different parts in an immersive experience. Alison further noted that history educators need to consider how virtual reality tools can be utilized in the classroom environment.

Davis (2009) shares with his readers how social networks like Facebook can assist English as Second Language learners. Davis states that “there are a great many potential benefits of using social networking sites for language instruction, whether such learning takes place in traditional classroom or via Web sites” (p. 2). While Davis cautions that teachers who choose to use Facebook as an instructional tool guide students through the steps of properly utilizing the network, he also notes that teachers can provide a portal through which information can be shared to benefit instruction. Through this portal, teachers can provide links, videos, and digital access to classroom instruction.

Social networks. “Social networking sites such as Facebook and MySpace have been subject to much recent debate within the educational community” (Selwyn, 2009, 157). Facebook has grown to be one of the top social networks accessed by students, and while it was originally created for college students, it has rapidly spread to high school and middle school. They have even been some reports of elementary age students
accessing it even though there is a minimum age requirement (Selwyn, 2009). The computer cannot tell if a user is being untruthful about their age and many parents are not aware of what their children are accessing when they are not around.

Madge, Meek, Wellens, and Hooley (2009) examined the social integration of Facebook as well as its use in an informal learning environment. This research showed that Facebook was a useful tool when assisting first year students with transitioning socially and that academically there was some impact. Results indicated that “students thought the use of Facebook was most importantly for social reasons, not for formal teaching purposes” (Madge et al., 152). These researchers also feel strongly that more research is needed to gain a better view of this phenomenon.

There are many issues that surround the impact of employing the internet as a virtual weapon against students, peers, and society in general. Not only are students seeking out each other virtually, but adults and political groups as well have joined in this phenomenon. While studies have described the negative impacts of social networking, there are some positive ways to employ these networks to assist students academically and socially. Peowski (2010) shared that “with Facebook, a group can be created that is closed, which means that people may only join the group by submitting a request to the group's moderator” (p. 27). This is an additional measure that can be taken by educators to ensure more appropriate activity.

“In a social network, people can readily present themselves, and allow others to get acquainted with and connect them based on the data stored in their online profiles” (Shu & Chuang, 2011, p. 28). The research conducted by these university educators focused on the benefits of social networks and the principle of six degrees of separation.
Research of multiple varieties is being conducted to examine different perspectives of social networking services (SNS). An experimental study was employed by Wesley Shu and Yu-Hao Chaung to evaluate the benefits of SNS founded of the six degrees of separation network. These researchers explain that there are many benefits that arise from people utilizing SNS. Shu and Chaung (2011) believe that “we can potentially extend our social network to the whole world with much fewer degrees of separation than one might imagine” (p. 26).

Through their review of literature the researchers further define SNS and a number of approaches to understand the features of SNS. Shu and Chaung (2011) “identified 12 distinct factors associated with SNS use: meeting new friends, entertainment, maintaining relationships, understanding and learning, searching for friends, social involvement, trust in websites, trust in other members, information searching, costs, quality of friends, and attitudes” (p. 29). These identifications are the basis for their hypotheses. In each of the factors the researchers believe that students would rate themselves higher after using SNS. While there is an increase in participation on social networks, the researchers agree that much more research should be explored.

“Children within social network sites share ways of communicating and understanding about text and audience that may change how texts and communication come to be viewed” (Dowdall, 2009, p. 98). Many researchers agree that there are advantages to the instructional strategy of social networking. In 2010, while studying at George Washington University, John Gardner discussed the potential of Facebook in the classroom and noted that, “Facebook’s already well-established and popular framework
can provide students with the social capital needed to feel a sense of belonging in a learning environment” (p. 4). While there are many attributes to social networks there is also a negative impact that many students face.

**Cyberbullying.** Social networking via MySpace, Twitter, YouTube, Facebook, and many other community-based sites have opened a Pandora’s Box of communication for students. While many students and their families utilize these networks to chat with friends, play games, and stay connected to their families, there are some students who have taken this ability to reach out to others and impact peers negatively. These incidents often occur because “students in higher education do not fully understand the importance of protecting their privacy or identity in online social networks” (Cain, 2008, p. 5).

“The word cyberbullying didn’t even exist a decade ago, yet the problem is pervasive today” (Holladay, 2010). Cyberbullying is described as the repeated use of technology to harass, humiliate, or threaten someone and is just one of the countless negative impacts that many people argue advance technology has promoted to our youth (Holladay 2010). Young people have found a convenient way to target and hurt others without leaving their homes. These technological attacks have caused severe harm to many people (Aricak, 2009). While there are many positive attributes that new technology has stimulated, many researchers like Holladay (2010) and Aricak (2009) are examining the negative ones in order to assist in preventing the continuation of the phenomenon.

Cyber bullying, taunting, teasing, and making fun of other students and peers has become such a major problem that law officials, school officials, and network administrators have had to become vigilant in a movement to curtail these practices. Schools have developed internet usage policies that, if violated, can restrict students from
using technology while on school grounds. Members of these sites have the right to report abuse received by other members; however as in any case of abuse the damage has already affected the victims. Research has shown that “anywhere from one-third to one-half of youths have been targeted by cyberbullies and those experiences produce damaging consequences—from a decline in academic performance to suicide” (Holladay, 2011, 5).

Hinduja and Patchin (2011) explain “Cyberbullying is willful and repeated harm inflicted through computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices” (p.49). These researchers further detail how cyberbullies use technology to harass, threaten, or humiliate their peers. Using this technology teens can post pictures, comments, or send them via their cell phones and estimate that between 10 to 40% of youth have experienced this phenomenon.

The answer to help prevent these situations is first and foremost educating students and the community about internet safety. Aricak (2009) conducted a study on cyberbullying which resulted in determining that “some psychiatric symptoms are significant predictors of cyberbullying and the relation of psychoticism and hostility to cyberbullying particularly should be investigated in more detail in future research” (p.179). With the issues that can arise from utilizing technology of these types in the educational environment promoting internet safety protocols is essential.

Aricak gave his readers three definitions of cyberbullying as well as discussed the mental health repercussions of cyberbullying. Cyberbullying can be most simply defined as virtual harassment and according to many experts “should be considered a widespread mental and public health issue” (Aricak, 2009, p. 168). Additional research shows that cyberbullying is related to behaviors such as: anger, aggression, and rule-breaking.
Aricak supports the correlation between cyberbullying and mental health problems with literature from numerous experts in the field and concludes that “It is clear that there exists a global problem with cyberbullying” (Aricak, 2009, p. 169). “Today, 93% of children ages 8 to 18 have computers at home, 66% have cell phones, and 76% own another multimedia device, such as an iPod” (Holladay, 2010). These students are becoming more and more savvy with computer and internet usage and unfortunately the misappropriate use is damaging the victims in these scenarios. Aricak (2009) noted that “although cyberbullying is a method of harassment by means of virtual reality, its effects are anything but virtual; they are real and have potentially negative consequences” (p.168). It is the hope of many researchers that more exposure to these issues will continue in order to decrease the unfortunate use of technology. An important step in this process is providing online safety education to students.

Promoting online safety. Social networks like “Facebook provide individuals with a way of maintaining and strengthening social ties, which can beneficial in both social and academic settings. These same sites; however, also pose a danger to students’ privacy, safety, and professional reputation” (Cain, 2008, p. 6). Safety programs about how to properly navigate the internet are occurring throughout school districts and communities in the United States. Many organizations and churches have stepped up as well to assist in assuring that students are safe when they enter the portals of the World Wide Web. With so much concern about the growing epidemic of misuse of the internet it is with great urgency that parents, administrators, educators, and society in general migrate towards positive ways to change how students are spending their time on the internet.
So with all the fears surrounding this problem, what can the stakeholders involved do to protect their students, children, and family members? The most obvious answer is to set up better controls in the networking system and the homes of the users. This can curb some of the concerns adults have but the 21st century child is technologically savvy and can easily find loopholes around parameters set by the not so savvy adults. Parents and teachers working together to monitor students is essential to online safety.

Another option is to model more positive ways to interact on the internet, create computer-generated environments that are connecting students academically and holding them responsible for more than just socializing or playing games when they embark on their virtual adventures. Ferriter (2011) explains that “students who see digital tools as vehicles for collective action are less likely to engage in risky behaviors online” (p. 93).

Utilizing social networks as educational tools is a viable option and “to date, the reactions of using social network sites for educational purposes are mixed” (Munoz & Towner, 2009, 3). Many parents have strong convictions about social networks and the safety issues. While students have found ways around the monitoring systems that some schools have in place there are still ways adults can work together to protect them. Stronger privacy controls placed on devices as well as security software that allows parents to see every action their child makes is one option; however in reference to social networks parents need to be a part of them as well.

A major concern for adults is online safety and has become a major obstacle as teachers are becoming more and more concerned about social networks like Facebook. Law (2010) stated:

Create a separate account just for your classes. Learn how to use the privacy settings especially on your private Facebook site. Accept friend requests only
from your present students and only on your school account. Ensure students put you on limited access to their own pages. Keep your comments on line as professional as your conversations with students in class. That way using Facebook in your classroom can be a pleasurable experience (p. 32).

**Student perceptions.** When evaluating the effectiveness of any instructional tools that teachers utilize in the classroom, it is important to examine the students’ motivation to learn. Bekele (2010) explains that motivation is a critical condition for productive learning. The purpose of the study conducted by Bekele (2010) was to “examine the motivation of internet supported learning environment and identify key theoretical and methodological issues” (p. 117). Bekele (2010) grouped motivation and satisfaction sources into the following categories: technology attributes, course elements, engagement and interaction, program quality and flexibility. Through this study, Bekele concluded that internet supported learning environments may be seen as less structured than the traditional classroom environment; however, they were student focused and process oriented. Bekele also noted that student motivation is essential to academic success.

DeGennaro (2008) noted that “today’s youth learn differently as a result of their pervasive social interactions during technology-mediated activities” (p. 1). The study conducted by DeGennaro (2008) explored the potential of examining youth technology practices for learning. A theoretical foundation based on sociotechnical analysis was employed to evaluate which participation structures develop from the social and technical merging of teacher and student. The study followed four male students over a six month period to examine student engagement when adopting new technologies. While
DeGennaro conducted a study with a small sample size, the results support that teachers and administrators should consider the possibilities that technology will afford. Luckin, Clark, Graber, Logan, Mee, and Oliver (2009) examined whether Web 2.0 tools truly assist students in the academic environment. The researchers note that “there is evidence that some young people are making effective and/or ‘groundbreaking’ use of Web 2.0 and other internet technologies” (Luckin et al., 2009, p. 88). In this study the researchers report on the practices, perception, and profiles of 11 - 16-year-old learners and their use of Web 2.0 technologies as well as the perceptions of these participants.

The researchers in this study focused on what types of technologies the learners use, how they used them, and the differences between school and non-school engagement. Technologies such as email, instant messaging, wikis, blogs, podcasts, forums and discussions were discussed and examined throughout the study. It was noted that “some learners felt that the internet can be less text-heavy than books” (Luckin et al., 2009, p. 93). Web 2.0 users were also defined based on the categories of researchers, collaborators, producers and publishers. The studied showed that while students utilize these technologies freely for personal use, students look to their teachers for direction when utilized for educational purposes.

Luckin et al. (2009) further noted that the collaboration of Web 2.0 technologies can help deepen a student’s engagement via peer review as well as a sense of audience and shared purpose. Educators who choose the endeavor in this collaboration are offering new opportunities to their students and the researchers suggest they develop a “pedagogic model which provides the in-school learning community with a conceptual
model of the learning potentials of these technologies and the kinds of connections these can engender across and between spaces for learning” (Luckin et al., 2009, p. 102).

Sheehy and Bucknall (2008) examined how technology is seen in the vision of young people and their educational future. These researchers stated that “young learners can engage with the task of imagining future learning scenarios and have interesting ideas about the ways in which technology might develop in an educational context” (Sheehy & Bucknall, 2008, p. 102). Sheehy and Bucknall’s (2008) study showed that the participants envisioned a future education where “pupils learn from people who are successful in particular areas and enjoy what they do” (p.110). Finally, the study reported an overall consensus that learners need to be comfortable emotionally and physically in order for learning to occur.

Mazer et al., (2009) conducted a study which examined teacher’s credibility when utilizing Facebook as an instructional tool in relation to how much personal information was shared. In this study, the researchers note that Facebook has opened a communication portal in which students and teachers can be easily accessible to one another. The use of social networking “can increase mediated immediacy by including forms of self-disclosure on personal webpages; however to date, research has not explored the effects of teacher self-disclosure on student perception of teacher credibility via virtual social networks” (Mazer et al., 2009, p.176).

The hypotheses of the study conducted by Mazer et al., (2009) was that students who viewed teachers utilizing Facebook with high-disclosure would be viewed as more competent, trustworthy, and caring. Throughout the study the researchers found that students were able to identify more with teachers based on pictures, profile comments, messages, and general discussion topics. This hypothesis was proven true and the results
showed that there was a correlation between high self-disclosure of teachers and positive influences on classroom instruction and student learning.

Whereas the use of social networks like Facebook can be an attribute to the classroom teacher, Mazer et al. (2009) cautioned that a teacher’s amount of disclosure and teaching styles both play a huge role in the students’ perceptions. Teachers who have one personality on Facebook but a totally different one in the classroom can be seen negatively by their students and opposing feelings can become part of the instructional environments. Teachers choosing to use Facebook as an instructional tool will be more successful when there is consistency between the virtual world and reality.

Beaudoin’s (2010) study of student use of media set out to determine whether these new technologies are providing information that is innovative or creating problems for media literacy. Beaudoin ask the question of objectivity in analysis of these media created through online social networks. There is a convergence where new producers of information are colliding with older ones explains Beaudoin. The concern that arises with educators is the amount of information that students now have access to as well as the influence it will have on them.

The multitude of media available to students demands a curriculum which will instruct students on the appropriate ways to interpret and verify the information they retrieve from various networks. Curricula designed to help students become objective analyst of media will enable students to be engaged and motivated in the learning process. Beaudoin (2010) conducts surveys to analyze how the media influences students’ ideas and values. Conclusions drawn from this study are the needs for educators to ensure students are taught how to analyze and ask questions about their media.
Teacher perceptions. As teachers endeavor to create a classroom environment that utilizes technology as an instructional aide or tool, one of the major components to successful implementation is the teacher. Teachers of students who are technologically savvy need to be aware of the many technological experiences available to their students in order to engage and motivate them to achieve academically. Teachers’ personal perceptions of technology as well as their willingness to learn how to properly utilize it in the classroom are essential to student success.

Levin and Wadmany (2006) conducted a study which explored “the evolution of teachers’ beliefs on learning and teaching in the context of a technology-based classroom environment, integrating technology-based information-rich tasks (IRT) in the school curriculum” (p. 157). These researchers believed that by studying the connection between teacher beliefs and their classroom practices a relationship between teachers’ educational convictions regarding technology goals in the classroom can be established. Levin and Wadmany (2006) noted that teachers who have no hesitations with integrating technology into their classroom environment are typically more constructivist minded and their classrooms are student-centered and technology is recognized as a prominent learning tool.

Additional research suggests that these teachers who have student-centered classrooms are more successful when it comes to technology integration. As with previous researchers Levin and Wadmany (2006) found that the teachers’ beliefs or perceptions about technology directly affect the use of technology in the classroom. These beliefs can be derived from personal technological experiences had by the teacher; however, it is important to note that these beliefs and or perceptions can be changed by utilizing the appropriate technology-based activity.
Teachers are often more comfortable relying on what they have always done to manage their classrooms. Levin and Wadmany (2006) conducted a study which demonstrated that “spending three years in a technology-rich learning environment produces substantive change in teachers’ educational beliefs and classroom practices” (p. 172). As a result of this study schools find creative ways to introduce technology integration to their staff. Through studies like the one conducted by Levin and Wadmany (2006) teachers are selected in small groups to begin the technology integration. As other reluctant teachers see the process unfold and the benefits to their colleagues and students they begin to get on board. As noted by several other researchers, there are many factors that determine whether a teacher is ready to make the move to technology integration and the key factor is selecting the proper tools to begin the process. Levin and Wadmany (2006) found that technology integration can happen over time and as each teacher is unique, the process will be as well.

Rakes, et al. (2006) examined the relationship between technology practices and the constructivist instructional practices of teachers in rural schools and noted that “teachers are beginning to use technology as a tool to promote students’ ability to reason and solve authentic problems” (p.411). Rakes et al. (2006) further explain that the evolution of technology allows opportunities for constructivist classroom environments. Teachers who participated in this study completed a 50 question Level of Technology Implementation instrument. Results of this survey found that more than half the teachers use constructivist instructional techniques, more training is needed for technology related to curriculum, teachers have a comfort level with technology that can support constructivist teaching, and appropriate use of technology with constructivist teaching strategies can support higher thinking and problem solving skills.
Matzen and Edmunds (2007) conducted a study which examined a professional development program guiding technology integration based on the constructivist theory and student-centered classrooms. The researchers in this study noted that “this shift to more student-centered instruction may occur initially only whenever technology is used” (Matzen & Edmunds, 2007, p. 418). Due to a vast amount of literature on technology integration indicating constructivism as a direct relation this study examines the relationship between professional development, instructional use of technology, and broader instructional practices (Matzen & Edmunds, 2007).

Matzen and Edmunds (2007) stated that when teachers are comfortable and begin to integrate technology on a more effective basis they use a constructivist more student-centered approach. The researchers also note that some researchers have argued that technology integration may cause a shift to more constructivists teaching while others believe that technology is more of a facilitator of student-centered instruction. This study initially showed survey results of where use of technology increased constructivist practices and no change in general instructional practices.

Matzen and Edmunds (2007) collected both quantitative and qualitative data to examine the instructional practices utilized in relation to technology integration. Results from the analysis produced a complex assessment of teachers’ instructional practices. While the results in this study were consistent with other research in which there was a correlation between the way teachers use technology with their instructional beliefs, there is also evidence that “when technology is placed in the context of a specific instructional practice, teachers may use technology to support the demonstrated instructional practice” (Matzen & Edmunds, 2007, p. 427).

Palak and Walls (2009) conducted a mixed method study to “examine the
relationship between teachers’ belief and their technology instructional practices” (p.417), and found that technology was utilized for management versus student-centered instruction. The study was prompted by a lack of research to bridge the gap between teachers’ beliefs and their technology practices. The intention of the researchers is that by using both quantitative and qualitative procedures the results will be much more definitive in regards to beliefs and practices. The main purpose of the study was to determine if teachers who integrate technology more frequently shifted beliefs to more student-centered instruction.

Palak and Walls (2009) analyzed survey responses of 113 teachers (quantitative) as well as case studies of an additional four teachers (qualitative) which both resulted in similar findings of prior research. There was not a significant shift towards student-centered learning. Most of the teachers in this study, even with ample technology available, continue to use technology for administrative or management related tasks. Teachers used technology to communicate with parents and post grades as well as to prepare instructional materials. Palak and Walls (2009) noted “using technology to support student collaboration, project-based learning, and problem solving is rare even among teachers who hold student-centered beliefs” (p. 437).

Palak and Walls (2009) offered explanations for this lack of technology integration being due to lack of teacher knowledge of how to integrate the technology and teachers’ contextual beliefs about class size and student ability. The researchers concluded that in order for technology to be integrated and student-centered the focus much shift from teacher-centered tasks to student-centered pedagogy.

Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) explore the importance of educational changes needed due to 21st century technology and state that “we need to help teachers
understand how to use technology to facilitate meaningful learning” (p. 257). The type of learning which they further explain can be applied to real world real situations. When discussing technology these researchers express that teacher change is essential. It is suggested that educators expand their belief of good teaching including technological tools, of which the teachers themselves must gain additional knowledge and skills.

When teachers are presented with new instructional tools the value judgments they make directly affect the implementation of the tools. In order for teachers to be able to successfully combine technology into their classroom environment there are key variables noted by the researchers as being necessary. Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) describe knowledge and skills, self-efficacy, pedagogical beliefs, and culture as being key variables in facilitating teacher change.

Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich (2010) further explain that it is “essential that we provide our future teachers with solid evidence that technology-based, student-centered instruction can have a positive impact on students’ learning” (p.268). An example shared is providing students the opportunity to reflect on what makes a lesson good and how technology can play a role in that lesson. Essential to ensuring teachers are comfortable utilizing new technology is by conducting sessions where they are shown specific tools and how to use them in their curriculum. Ertmer and Ottenbreit-Leftwich conclude that perhaps the best way to facilitate teacher change in relation to technology is showing them how it works. “When teachers witnessed the impact of technology on their students’ learning, they were motivated to experiment with additional technologies in their teaching” (Ertmer & Ottenbreit-Leftwich, 2010, p. 277).

Lee, Cerreto, and Lee (2010) argued that “teachers’ competence is only one of several factors determining their decisions regarding the use of educational technology”
(p.152). The researchers suggested that other influences such as their personal values in relation to technology may occur and some teachers may not feel it adds any value to their teaching. When deciding to use technology teachers have often found that they are allowed to make local decisions about technology based on a problem area or academic issues that arise. Typically these types of technologies are put in place to address a specific need.

Lee et al. (2010) found that when discussing the value of technology in classrooms teachers felt that utilizing computers to create and deliver lessons led to better teaching and student behavior. Teachers also noted that presentations via computer versus a blackboard commanded better attention and were more time efficient. Some teachers did have concerns about computer programs producing incorrect information, which helps support the need for making sure hardware and software is reliable.

Lee et al. (2010) noted that their primary interest in the study was the factors both direct and indirect that determined a teacher’s intention to utilize technology. What they believe this study demonstrated is that “precise definitions must be used in order to determine the predictors of teachers’ intentions to use technology in a specific way” (Lee et al., 2010, p. 162). The researchers further concluded that a study of this type needs to be conducted in other geographic locations in order to establish generalizations.

**Professional development.** When teachers consider utilizing Web 2.0 tools in their classrooms, specifically social networking sites, there are some red flags that immediately arise. As stated before in other areas of this study, there are guidelines, procedures, and parameters that are needed in order for classrooms to effectively implement technology instructionally. Amid the studies that have been conducted regarding instructional use of these tools there have also been studies conducted to
address how to properly prepare teachers to integrate technology into their curriculum and implement instructional techniques in the classroom environment.

In a study conducted by Foulger, Ewbank, Kay, Popp, and Carter (2009) teachers shared their perspectives regarding issues surrounding social networking. The study conducted was driven by the purpose of preparing new teachers and assisting them in avoiding the risks of social networks and helping them to understand the issues surrounding them. Preservice teachers were given controversial and complex cases in which teacher were involved in due to information shared on social networks. The researchers in this study were hoping to gain an understanding of how new teachers perceive social networks as well as the study’s impact on their beliefs.

Foulger et al. (2009) “examine reasoning about teacher responsibility and authority regarding students’ social networking behaviors” (p.5). Students shared how they use social networks as well as their beliefs about social networking. The various cases viewed by the Preservice teachers allowed them to reflect on their perceptions of social conventions and social contracts in relation to parent, teacher, and student roles. Throughout the study welfare, fairness and rights, and potential risks were also analyzed by the future teachers. The researchers concluded that social networking technologies enable a new spectrum of teaching and learning opportunities in the classroom” (Foulger et al., 2009, p.18).

Harris, Mishra, and Koehler (2009) conducted a study which introduced TPACK-based learning approach (Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge) which was designed to assist teachers with integrating technology into their practice. TPACK “emphasizes the importance of helping teachers develop and apply integrated and interdependent understandings of technology, pedagogy, content, and context” (Harris et
This framework offers connections among technology, pedagogy, and content which can help teachers deepen their understanding more effectively use technology in an educational environment.

Teachers need the knowledge and skills to appropriately use technology instructionally and through this learning framework which is offered through professional development sessions teachers are able to make the connections between the curriculum content and the technology tools. TPACK addresses the plight of teachers deciding which technology is most appropriate for which lesson or activity. Furthermore, TPACK supports that technology skills should not be taught in isolation, but in direct relation to curricular content. This framework empowers and enables educators to make the connection between pedagogy and technology. Teachers are provided with various activities, their descriptions, as well as the most compatible technologies to properly deliver the instruction.

Harris et al. (2009) conclude that flexibility is important when this framework is utilized for professional development and that it should accommodate a wide range of teaching philosophies, styles, and approaches. It is also noted that while there are numerous activities offered in this framework these should not be the total lesson that teachers conduct. Teachers should use these activities to supplement their curriculum not replace it.

Baran and Cagiltay (2010) collected data as the participated and shared the experiences of teachers who participated in an online learning environment. Throughout the process of this study there were both mandatory and voluntary phases. The goal of the researchers was to gain an in-depth analysis of teachers’ community building efforts when engaged in an online environment. When discussing what could be learned from
this type of study the researchers concluded that: “better understanding of field practice as well as gaining different experiences, perspectives, and ideas” (Baran & Cagiltay, 2010, p. 160).

Through the duration of this study teachers were able to confirm their ideas related to practice and learn from both the positive and negative reflections they shared. As a part of the online community teachers were able to visit other classrooms through videos which allowed them to see many more teachers than in the traditional school setting. Baran and Cagiltay (2010) also noted that teachers felt they had the opportunity to learn many different teaching strategies in a cost effective manner. Viewing other teachers and participating in an online community allowed the participants to gain great insights on their curriculum and instruction. Baran and Cagiltay (2010) concluded that more research is needed in this area and that digital video recordings of classroom activities are great tools for teachers. The researchers also noted that Facebook can be used as a tool to increase the social presence of teachers in a community.

Social learning theories support that teachers as well as students are able to gain knowledge when participating in community environments. Hur and Brush (2009) conducted a study to investigate why some teachers choose to participate in online communities and found that “these communities may provide unique elements that help teachers’ professional work” (p.280). The researchers noted that teachers’ participation may occur so that knowledge or emotions can be shared. Hur and Brush (2009) shared prior literature in regards to teachers participation and concluded that there are a variety of reasons teachers participate in these communities and they can be based upon “individual goals, personal experiences and characteristics, relationships with others, and school culture” (p.283).
Hur and Brush (2009) conducted a case study, founded on the social learning theories, in which they interviewed teachers from three different online communities. Through collecting archived postings, community guidelines, and members’ public profiles they were able to code and categorize their data and analyze teachers’ reasons for participating in the online communities. Five reasons were discovered for teacher participation in online communities: “sharing emotions, utilizing the advantages of online environments, combating teacher isolation, exploring ideas, and experiencing a sense of camaraderie” (Hur and Brush, 2009, p.290).

Implications derived from this study were based on teachers need for emotions sharing and ways to strengthen as well as support teacher self-esteem and confidence. The researchers propose these factors be addressed through professional development programs for teachers. Furthermore the findings during this study as described by the researchers have provided critical insight to the needs of many teachers.

While many educators may agree that integrating technology into their curriculum has academic merits there are some that also believe technology can create a level of engagement as an instructional management tool. Loving and Ochoa (2011) conducted a study in which Facebook was utilized as a classroom management solution by instructors and librarians. This study in essence showed that the teachers were able to utilize Facebook by creating a class page that students could submit work to, be aware of deadlines and objectives, as well as communicate with the instructors and classmates.

The researchers have noted that while there are many factors that offer great instructional opportunities there are also many privacy right concerns. With that in mind, teachers who choose to use this medium will have to take steps to ensure there are privacy procedures in place. There are hundreds of privacy options available through the
site and utilizing these will ensure that the focus can be academic. For this reason, and the overwhelming popularity of the social network, Loving and Ochoa (2011) specifically chose Facebook to conduct their study.

Loving and Ochoa (2011) found that communicating with students through messages gave the instructor confidence. They found that the ease of creating a closed environment for the students to privately discuss assignments was also extremely beneficial. In addition to the academic advantages the instructor began to notice profile pictures became more subdued. Throughout the study the researchers point out numerous assets that Facebook has to offer as a classroom environment. While there are decisions instructors have to make in regards to which type of communication methods they prefer when using Facebook, “the faculty found that the tradeoffs between the appropriation of Facebook as on online classroom management solution were few and worth the necessary workarounds” (Loving & Ochoa, 2011, p. 129).

Summary

When educators integrate Web 2.0 tools there are numerous possibilities for their students to attain academic success. Teachers have to assess the pros and cons of the digital world before choosing the best tools to utilize in their classroom. Social networks, blogs, podcasts, cyberbullying, and promoting online safety are just a few of the numerous subjects that arise when researchers have examined technology integration. Social networks, more specifically Facebook, have become a phenomenon among 21st century learners and require a significant amount of monitoring. Law (2010) shared that the most noteworthy way students are using technology is via Facebook.

In order to work toward meeting the educational needs of these students, integrating this medium may increase the students’ motivation to participate in classroom
activities as well as compel them to make more appropriate choices when interacting in a virtual environment. “Our amazing, ever-changing technological world may seem overwhelming at times, but educators must rise to the challenge of closing the growing digital divide in education” (Mullen & Wedwick, 2008, p. 69).

While there have been many studies that examine social media in post-secondary education there has been little research which focuses on its impact on secondary curriculum. This study’s objective is to provide data that will display how, if at all, the use of social media, specifically Facebook, impacts the academic and social environments of secondary students. “As with any technology, it is not the technology, but the interactions the technology affords that make it a valuable learning tool” (Siegle, 2011, p. 18).
CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

In the era of 21st century learning the use of social networks has become a universal phenomenon. Students all over the world can log onto computers, cell phones, iPods, and numerous other personal devices and instantaneously become connected to the world. While there are many pros and cons to these technological advances there is no way to avoid the rise of the machines. Today’s classrooms have evolved into virtual environments and teachers must get on board in order to reach their students (Taranto et al., 2011).

Social networks like Facebook have created virtual communities that numerous citizens are tied into. Siegle (2011) stated that: “Facebook has more than one-half trillion members; 1 out of every 12 people on the planet has a Facebook account” (p.14). With these types of numbers researchers like Roth (2009), Bosch (2009), and Holladay (2010) have begun to evaluate social media in a new realm, education.

Research has shown that students learn more from their peers and respect teachers who utilize mediums they are comfortable with when providing instruction (Roth, 2009). This being noted, social networks may prove to be a useful tool for teachers. When discussing pedagogy Roth (2009) points out that, “If we are to teach this new generation of learners accordingly, we will do it best if we meet them on their terms, lest we risk their failure to learn through an unfamiliar medium and style” (p. 125).

In order to further describe the role social media may play in the secondary classroom this study will address the following questions:

**Research Question 1.** What, if any, is the impact of social media networks on students when integrated into their classroom activities?
**Research Question 2.** What types of interactions occur when students engage in academic use of social networks?

**Research Question 3.** How, if at all, does the integration of social networks in an academic environment affect student-student and teacher-student relationships?

**Research Design**

This study utilized a qualitative case study approach. A qualitative case study was appropriate because this research explored the integration of Facebook as an instructional tool in the classroom environment of a specific classroom teacher. An instrumental case study is described by Creswell (2007) as that in which “the researcher focuses on an issue or concern, and then selects one bounded case to illustrate this issue” (p.74). I hope to gain a deeper understanding of how using social networks as educational tools impact students behavior both socially and academically by observing a classroom teachers integration of Facebook into her curriculum.

Tellis (1997) explained that in case study “the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of the actors, but also of the relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them” (p.6). Through this study, the voices of the participants as well as their social network interactions will provide a new and more positive perspective on the integration of technologies like Facebook in the classroom in environment.

**Participants**

The population in this study consists of 100-120 students enrolled in an Advanced/ Regular English 11 class instructed by a teacher who has been at her current school three years. The classes consist of males and females age 16-17 years old. All students enrolled in the class were given the opportunity to participate in the classroom observations, closed Facebook groups, as well as the surveys. The interview process
consisted of the teacher, as well as 13 of the participants who were chosen based on academic performance above grade level, at grade level, and below grade level. There were two students purposefully selected in each of these categories and seven additional student volunteers to ensure a variety of perspectives.

**Setting**

Technology High is the largest high school in a district located in the peninsula area of Virginia. Student demographics consist of 75% White, 9% Black, 8% Asian, 5% Hispanic, and 3% other. This school is fully accredited with scores in all contents within the 96%-98% passage rate. Twenty-four percent of the students are enrolled in Advanced Placement courses with a 100% pass rate. The staff consists of 80 teachers who are all categorized as highly qualified. Technology High has traditionally been regarded as a school of high achievers and innovative educators and was recognized by Newsweek as one of America’s top schools (York County School Division, 2010a).

**Procedures**

As in the steps prescribed for conducting a case study, I had to first determine that this is the most appropriate approach for this phenomenon (Creswell, 2007). Teacher A has chosen Facebook as an instructional strategy because she realized that the majority of her students interact in this medium on a daily basis. Teacher A participated in a professional development session where a colleague demonstrated how she uses Facebook instructionally. Shortly after the session Teacher A began to integrate Facebook as part of her instruction. Teacher A and the students in her English classes’ were then identified as the best case to study. I decided that through observations, student surveys, and teacher and student interviews providing the perspectives of the participants, the case study could be best documented.
After learning that Teacher A utilized Facebook as an instructional tool, I contacted the school board administration office to receive verbal permission to study this class for a possible dissertation. The Superintendent as well as the Director of Secondary Instruction both supported the idea and were very excited to see where the study would lead. Next I submitted an official request to the building administrator and the district office and received written permission from both (Appendices A and B) to conduct the study. The next step was to submit my application to Liberty University for IRB approval. The IRB fully approved the study (Appendix C) and then data collection began.

**Data Collection**

Creswell (2007) stated that the collection of data should occur “in a natural setting sensitive to the people and places under study” (p.37). As mentioned in the procedures section, a variety of tools were used to collect data in this case study. I chose these methods in order to explore the impact of integrating social networks into the classroom curriculum and to ensure enough information was gathered to produce a fully developed picture of the case. Observations of the classroom environment and the Facebook closed groups provided me with a clear picture of the types of activities the students became engaged in. All data was collected in regular classroom settings that were comfortable for all participants.

The student interviews and surveys afforded the opportunity for the students to express how they felt about Facebook as a classroom tool. Through the individual interviews students were able to tell their story and further express their feelings and attitudes toward social media networks in the classroom environment. The interview conducted with the classroom teacher provided insight to the researcher as well as fellow
educators on the rationale behind utilizing Facebook as an instructional tool and the procedures and safeguards required to do so. Using all of the data collected I was then able create a detailed analysis of the case.

**Interviews.** Creswell (2007) states “interviews play a central role in the data collection” (p.131). The classroom teacher was interviewed at the end of the school year (see Appendix G). Throughout the year the teacher looked for student motivation, engagement, and overall academic achievement. The teacher also commented on any social interactions noticed throughout the school year.

Thirteen students were interviewed, with a specific series of questions, in order to gain a deeper understanding of their perceptions about Facebook as a classroom tool. The questions were open-ended, based on research regarding the integration of technology to engage students. The interviews were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher utilizing an iPad Quick Voice application in order to ensure proper documentation. The interviews took place during final exam week and were conducted in my office. Throughout each interview all participants appeared relaxed and eager to share their thoughts. Table 1 indicates demographics and usage information for the students who were interviewed.

Before beginning each interview the students were informed of the purpose of the study and that the interviews would be confidential. It was also explained to each student that it was acceptable for them to refrain from answering any of the questions. Each student fully participated in the interview by answering all questions. Upon the conclusion of the interview I thanked the student, replayed the recording and allowed the students to view the security measures taken to ensure no one else would have access to their recordings.
Table 1 Interview Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Academic Standing</th>
<th>Facebook Member</th>
<th>Login Frequency</th>
<th>Social/Educational Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>P/DB,N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>10 months</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>SU/DB,N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>NF,AF,FR/DB,SG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>SU,PC/DB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>P,C/N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&gt;Average</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>NF,P/DB,N,L,GP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&gt;Average</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>PF/DB,N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&gt;Average</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>P,PC/DB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>&gt;Average</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>NF,PC/DB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>M</td>
<td>&gt;Average</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>C/DB,GP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>&gt;Average</td>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>P,PC,SU/DB,L,GP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Daily</td>
<td>P,PC,SU/DB,L,N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>F</td>
<td>IEP</td>
<td>3 years</td>
<td>Biweekly</td>
<td>P,NF/DB,N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Academic Standing:**  >Average=Student with all A’s, Average=Student with B’s and C’s, IEP=Students with identified learning disabilities that participates in regular classroom with some accommodations

**Social Activities:**  P=Pictures, PC=Posting Comments, NF=Newsfeed, SU=Status Updates, AF=Adding Friends, FR=Friend Requests, PF=Poking Friends, C=Chats

**Educational Activities:**  DB= Discussion Board, N=Notifications, SG= School Groups, L=Links, GP=Group Projects

**Observations.** Tellis (1997) shares that observations can be simple and casual, or utilize more formal protocols, and “this technique is useful for providing additional information about the topic being studied” (p.10). In order to provide more detailed
information classroom observations were used to collect data regarding this phenomenon. I conducted classroom visits biweekly. Additionally I became a member of the closed Facebook class groups and observed and reviewed activities weekly in the virtual environment. Just as in the classroom observations, the students were aware that an administrator was present.

These observations followed the guidelines of a specific observation form (Appendix J) created to evaluate the academic and social interactions occurring between the participants. Throughout the school year I visited the classroom and observed as students worked on a variety of assignments. During the last quarter of the school year I daily visited the Facebook class group and observed the class wall activities.

**Document analysis.** “Physical artifacts can be tools, instruments, or some other physical evidence that may be collected during the study” (Tellis, 1997, p. 10). In addition to the data collection the teacher submitted weekly lesson plans (Appendix K) to ensure the curriculum consistently integrated the social network activities. Teacher reflections on lesson plans were also submitted monthly in order to evaluate the progress and any concerns the teacher experienced. These documents were reviewed and analyzed and are included in the results section of the study.

**Surveys.** (Appendix H) McMillan and Schumacher (2001) explain that in survey research the researcher chooses a sample of participants in order to “describe attitudes, beliefs, opinions, and other types of information” (p. 34). Fifty-four students anonymously completed electronic surveys (Appendix L) at the end of the school year to determine the academic and social impacts of utilizing Facebook in an academic environment. Survey 1 was completed by 28 students and Survey 2 was completed by 26. The surveys were designed to measure the perceptions and attitudes of the students
who were participating in a classroom where Facebook was being utilized as an instructional tool. The analysis of these surveys are presented in the findings section as well as shared in the discussion section to draw conclusions about the phenomenon.

**Role of Researcher**

McMillan and Schumacher (2001) explained “qualitative researchers become ‘immersed’ in the situation and the phenomena studied” (p.396). I am currently Assistant Principal at the school where the study occurred which allows me to participate in this study daily. Additionally I teach a developmental reading course as an Assistant Professor at a local community college. My educational experience includes: middle school Special Education teacher, elementary school Special Education teacher, high school English teacher, and middle school Reading Specialist. The decision to conduct this research came out of my desire to examine a medium that has been used in many negative ways and explore more positive usages. As an administrator I had witnessed how social networks have traumatized students through cyberbullying and virtual abuse.

While observing a teacher who developed lessons to integrate this technology into her classroom environment I became intrigued and aspired to get a deeper understanding of the educational impact of this phenomenon. Additionally it is my desire that students will resolve to use these social networks more appropriately. I will have access to the closed class pages on Facebook as well as the daily classroom activities that occur.

**Data Analysis**

**Case description.** In order to create a usual of the social network phenomenon I chose to use narratives, pictures, and tables. A descriptive narrative summarizing perspectives noted from interviews and surveys of participants as well as notes from observations of participation in the classroom and on Facebook. Pictures and tables
visualizing questions and types of activities completed during the study allowed me to gain further insight about the activities the teacher and students experienced due to interactions on Facebook.

**Categorical aggregation.** I also developed categories for data collected and established patterns and themes in reference to the social network phenomenon based on all data that was gathered. This process allowed me to identify generalizations that can assist in further understanding and application of the phenomenon of social networks. The categories developed related to teacher and student preparation, academic attributes, social learning, and resources. Themes generated from these categories were: teacher training, student engagement, and teacher-student interactions.

**Naturalistic generalizations.** I then analyzed the data and developed generalizations that educators and students can learn from the phenomenon studied. These generalizations can also be applied to other populations of cases. This is a “holistic approach using multiplicity of data to provide an understanding of the divergent values of a practice from the participants’ perspectives” (McMillan and Schumacher, 2001, p.538). Throughout the study it was noted that educators can garner techniques for implementing social networks in their classroom as well as evidence that these types of lessons can be beneficial.

**Trustworthiness**

Creswell (2007) implores that it is not enough that a researcher seeks out perspectives and terms. These ideas need to be transformed into practice. To increase reliability of this study, the following methods were utilized: peer review, bias clarification, triangulation and member checking. The use of these multiple methods ensured that I provided a full and accurate picture of the phenomenon being studied.
**Peer review.** The first method employed was peer review, which “provides an external check of the research process” (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). A peer/collleague encouraged and supported my study by asking me probing questions and listening to my insights and thoughts. This process increased the credibility and validity of the study because the peer helped to keep me honest and provided documentation of this process. The peer reviewed the interview and survey questions and offered additional insights throughout the study. During this process two questions were removed from the original 22 question survey and clarification points were added to the interview questions.

**Research bias clarification.** The next method employed during this study was research bias clarification. “Clarifying research bias from the outset of the study is important so that the reader understands the researcher’s position and any biases or assumptions that impact the inquiry” (Creswell, 2007, p. 208). I shared past experiences and any bias in relation to the phenomenon explored in the study. This process increases the credibility and validity because the reader is made aware of any bias that exists prior to the study.

**Triangulation.** This method was used in order to connect the multiple methods, resources, and theories shared throughout this study to help describe the impact of social media networks in the classroom. “In triangulation, researchers make use of multiple and different sources, methods, investigators, and theories to provide corroborating evidence” (Creswell, 2007, p. 208).

**Member checking.** The final approach to establishing trustworthiness is member checking, which Creswell (2007) describes as when the researcher beseeches the participants interpretations of the findings. I shared data, analyses, interpretations, and
conclusions with the teacher and participants in study. This process increased the credibility and validity because the participants can provide critiques and alternate perspectives of the data shared.

**Ethical Considerations**

The ethical considerations of this study are the threats of cyberbullying or inappropriate use of Facebook. Therefore in an effort to prevent this from occurring, all students participating, as well as their parents, signed a consent form (Appendix D) with rules regarding expected behavior and consequences if expectations were not met. An additional ethical consideration is the fear of negative impacts on grades for students who choose not to participate. Students and parents who did not wish to participate in Facebook activities were allowed to complete alternate assignments in an effort to be sensitive to their concerns. To ensure the privacy of the participants, pseudonyms were utilized. All documentation collected was stored in a locked file cabinet; electronic files were password protected. Additionally, as an administrator in the building where the study occurred, I relinquished any supervisory roles directly related to the participating teacher and classroom to the other building administrator.
CHAPTER FOUR: FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of social media networks on secondary students when utilized as an instructional tool. In order to best document the academic and social impact of social media on the academic lives of secondary students, this study focused on a classroom teacher that utilized Facebook as a component of her classroom instruction. Through classroom observations, interviews, surveys, and document analysis this study explored the teacher and students’ perceptions of Facebook as a classroom tool.

To ensure confidentiality throughout the study, pseudonyms were created for the teacher, students, school, and district. In order to safeguard the data collected during the study all files were locked electronically or placed in secured file cabinets in the office of the researcher. All interviews were conducted in the researcher’s office and surveys were completed anonymously via the internet on a secured website.

In this chapter the research questions which directed this study are reviewed, the documents that were collected are analyzed, and finally the survey and interview results are shared. Student motivation, academic success, and types of relationships are themes examined throughout this chapter.

Research Questions

The following questions guided this study:

Research question one. What, if any, is the impact of social media networks on students when integrated into their classroom activities? Question one is the central question which as described by Creswell (2007) should “restate the purpose of the study in more specific terms” (p.107). As stated previously the impact of social media is the overarching phenomenon that was examined during this study. Through the student
interviews, the most in depth information was provided by the students who participate in a classroom where Facebook is a part of their daily instruction. The interviews consisted of eleven questions which allowed the students to provide meaningful feedback regarding their feelings about Facebook as an instructional tool, as well as discuss the academic and social impacts they have encountered. In addition to the interview two electronic surveys completed by 26-28 students shed light on their perspectives on Facebook in their classroom.

**Research question two.** What types of interactions occur when students engage in academic use of social networks? Question two is a subquestion that was designed as a procedural subquestion to “foreshadow the steps in the procedures of the data collection, analysis, and narrative format construction” (Creswell, 2007, p. 113). The interviews, surveys, and classroom observations were used in compilation to create the story that can be communicated to the readers regarding the level of engagement during instruction. Additionally the lesson plans and excerpts from the class wall can assist other educators who may wish to explore Facebook as an instructional tool for their classrooms. While a variety of procedures were utilized to collect data, the classroom observations were the most prevalent evidence of the interactions that occurred between students in both the physical classroom as well as the Facebook class group wall.

**Research question three.** How, if at all, does the integration of social networks in an academic environment affect student-student and teacher-student relationships? Question three which is the final subquestion goal is to determine the specific impact of relationships: not only between the students, but also between the students and the teacher. During the survey five statements were presented which directly relate to relationships, and during the interviews both the student and teacher participants were
asked to discuss any perceptions about the effects of Facebook on their relationships.

**Research Question One**

As displayed in Chapter 3, (Table 1) 13 students participated in one-on-one interviews with the researcher to discuss their participation in a classroom that utilized Facebook as an instructional tool. Each interview transpired in the office of the researcher. All students were audio recorded via an iPad application *Quick Voice.* Upon the completion of each interview students were allowed to listen to the interview. Students were also able to review the transcriptions to ensure that they were correctly quoted. Each student answered all questions and prior to the interview was provided with a script which explained that they could refrain from answering any of the questions. When conducting these interviews there were specific criteria developed for a sample of the interview pool.

In order to ensure a variety of perspectives there were three academic categories determined for six of the 13 students to meet. The remaining seven students volunteered to be interviewed. The first category was for the students who performed in the “above average” range, typically receiving all As and participated in advance classes. The next category was for students who consistently received As, Bs, and some Cs and were considered functioning at the “average” academic level. The final category consisted of students who were identified with a disability and were receiving specialized instruction through an Individualized Educational Plan (IEP). These students’ grades ranged between above average to below average; however, due to the nature of their access to specialized instruction their perspectives were desired to provide diversity in the student feedback.

The following paragraphs will share the voice of the students and teacher.

**Student and Teacher Interview Summary**
Based on the information shared by students during the interviews the students as a whole agree that Facebook is an appropriate tool for instruction. While a few students made reference to Facebook being used appropriately, many students stated that the use of Facebook made class more engaging and that teachers who use it are “up with the times.” Interview questions 5, 7, and 10 focused on the impact of Facebook as a classroom tool. Question 5 asked students how they felt about using Facebook in their class. When answering this question students described it as “interesting, fun, cool, nice, great, excellent.” More specifically, students shared that it is a way to get students involved and allow all students to have the opportunity to participate in class.

When answering question 7, which asked students if their use of Facebook has changed since becoming a member of the class group, replies varied. Several students have not noted changes; however, some students expressed being more careful about posts and comments, as well as taking advantage of the educational advantages. Students are able to receive notifications about important due dates as well as receive links to other educational tools.

When asked how students felt about teachers using Facebook as an instructional tool students expressed liking it for a variety of reasons. Some students appreciate the ability to use social media because it is easier to contact their teacher and the other students in the class. Students reported that it is more engaging, fun, and they respect teachers who utilize Facebook to help with classroom instruction.

The interactions that occur via Facebook also play a major role in the classroom. Several students reported that on Facebook they have become friends with students from the class group for both academic and social purposes. Group projects created on Facebook require extra time and communication between students who may not have
Interaction outside of the class group. Only one student stated that they have not become Facebook friends with members of the class outside of the group; whereas another student shared they were already friends with everyone in the class group. Table 2 displays some comments in general students have about Facebook being used in their classroom.

Additionally the teacher interview played an important role in understanding the impact of social media in the classroom. Teacher A shared in her personal interview (Teacher A, personal communication, June 26, 2012) what led to her decision to utilize Facebook as an instructional tool and the impact of its integration:

Social Networking is ubiquitous in our society, to say nothing of the high school setting. Since becoming a member of the teaching community, it has seemed obvious to me that Facebook could provide an invaluable virtual tool to enhance the physical classroom. It wasn’t until my third year of teaching, however, when a colleague showed me how she utilized Facebook groups in her classroom that I began to effectively implement the media as an instructional tool. I had been looking for a way to facilitate online discussions for both my regular and AP courses, but the students were frustrated and unimpressed by some of the strictly “educational” forums we tried out. The students suggested we use Facebook instead, and after talking it over with a colleague who had already set up something like this in her classroom, I decided to go for it. Once the groups got started, we used them for so much more than straightforward discussion. Facebook became an effective tool for sharing ideas, posting reminders, and publishing student work.
### Table 2 Students Reactions to Facebook as an Instructional Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>“it’s a great tool and I think more classes not just English should use it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>“if they use it responsibly it can work really well”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>“it’s a great instructional tool, great way to communicate and get people active”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>“it’s a great tool…more teachers in the classes should use it, it helps”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>“it’s really nice to have ….our teachers don’t let us forget when we have essays due”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>“it’s a lot better than just having stuff in the classroom”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>“More classes should use it”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>“I think it opens your minds to more ideas”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>“I just like the way….technology’s going to allow students to use those types of social networking and for school on top of what they use in their personal lives”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>“it’s a nice way to interact . . . you can formulate your answers better”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>“it’s a good instructional tool”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>“it can help people gain more friends”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>“it would be nice if every class could have Facebook”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Teacher A also described what observations she noted as her students continued to use Facebook as part of their class:

One of the most effective aspects of using a social network like Facebook as a forum for discussion is that it lends a voice to students who are uncomfortable speaking up in class. Although Facebook discussions are not anonymous, shy students tend to feel more comfortable posting their thoughts and opinions on
Facebook. When I ask my students about why this is, they often describe their
anxiety over having to come up with a meaningful discussion contribution on
the spot during class. They prefer to have time to reflect on their thoughts and
opinions and formulate a response more deliberately. Virtual discussions
allow them to do that. Facebook in particular is useful because almost all of
my students are already members and experts in using the media by the time
we set up our virtual classroom on the site. This comfort level helps minimize
any technological hurdles and helps empower the students with a sense of
ownership. Facebook is already their place, their world, and students find it
natural to extend the knowledge and skills they learn in school into their
virtual environment. Along the same lines of student ownership, I’ve noticed
that my students quickly take it upon themselves to post questions, reminders,
and resources that are relevant to the entire class. This is not something I
asked them to do, but I think that because Facebook is so much a part of their
daily lives, they innately understand its function, purpose, and power as a tool
for communication. (Teacher A, personal communication, June 26, 2012)

Additional survey information. In addition to the information gathered from
teacher and student interviews, information from the survey showed that all of the
students feel that using technology like Facebook is something that is natural to them
and more than 70% believe it is an appropriate tool for education. Responses also
indicated that more than 60% of the students believe Facebook assignments are more
interesting than the regular classroom lessons and they receive greater feedback from
their classmates. More than 70% of the students enjoy participating in Facebook
activities and believe it allows students to have more ownership of their learning.

More than 80% of the students feel safe using this technology. They believe it is a good instructional tool and there is educational value in Facebook. At least 45% of the students surveyed believe using Facebook in the educational environment will better prepare them for the future and agree that they feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts. While more than 40% of the students agree that they have been more successful due to using Facebook in class, only 10-20% agree that they learn better or complete more of their classroom assignments because of Facebook being used in the classroom. Table 3 displays the results to statements regarding these beliefs.

Lam (2009) has shared that “students are motivated in the cyber environment in which they are actively interacting and collaborating with students” (p.326). The results of listening to the students and teacher’s voice about the impact felt by Facebook proved that while many educators may find social media intimidating or controversial it can be implemented into classroom instruction and serve as a powerful tool. Lim’s (2010) study demonstrated that “Facebook may be used by course facilitators in a variety of ways to help engage students in the learning process” (p. 73).

Bauer (2012) shared that “using social media as an instructional tool can offer teachers and students to interact with each other and the world around them in unique ways” (p.8). More teachers are beginning to realize that despite the controversy around Facebook it can be a powerful tool. “When you think more deeply about how powerful and versatile Facebook can be, you realize how many roles it can serve in the classroom” (Bauer, 2012, p.11).
Table 3: Students Educational Beliefs about Facebook

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Statements</th>
<th>Percentages of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook is easy to use and comes natural to students my age.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook is an appropriate tool for education.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook assignments are more interesting than regular classroom lessons.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook class groups allow students to have more ownership of their learning.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The concepts in class are easier to learn with Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I enjoy participating in educational activities on Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learn better using Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I complete more of my assignments than usual now because of Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I comment more in the Facebook discussion than in my regular classroom.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel more comfortable sharing my thoughts on the Facebook class wall than inside the classroom at school.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My classmates give me more feedback in the Facebook discussions than they do in our regular classroom.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that I have been more successful in class because we have the Facebook group.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel safe using Facebook for my class assignments.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe there is educational value in Facebook.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe using Facebook in an educational environment will better prepare me for my future.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note. N(s) = Number of students  SA = Strongly Agree  A = Agree  N = Neutral  D = Disagree  SD = Strongly Disagree
Overall the students and teacher in this study, like many others, agreed that using Facebook is helpful as a part of their classroom instruction. Lam (2009) shared that

**Pros of Using Web 2.0 Tools in the Classroom**

“Web 2.0 tools allows learners to generate their own learning content, a full autonomy is given in the learning process” (p. 326). When used as an extension to their physical classroom students are able to participate in discussions, access additional information, and communicate more efficiently with their teacher and other classmates.

Abrams (2012) shared in an interview about the new direction of social media that teachers were instructed that when dealing with the awkward situation of dealing with friending students on Facebook they should “set up a separate Facebook page in order to communicate with them about class work only and follow certain guidelines” (Abrams, 2012, p.14).

Taranto, et al. (2011) study revealed that “Web 2.0 technologies are versatile, affordable, and widely available, allowing educators to seamlessly infuse digitally literacy experiences into their classrooms” (p.13). The perceived benefits of Web 2.0 tools in any classroom are academic, social, and financial.

**Research Question Two**

Data collection is an integral part of any study and can be presented in numerous ways; however, when conducting a case study researchers “typically use a report format with vignettes to provide various experiences for the readers” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2001, p. 490). In order to tell the story of the students who participated in Facebook activities the researcher observed the physical class and the class’ group wall. To fully evaluate the interactions between students; portions of the class wall are shared in this chapter as well as observational notes and teacher reflections.
**Assignment 1.** Teacher A informed students of an extra credit opportunity if they planned to watch or were interested in the GOP Presidential debate that would air that week. If the students tuned into the debate and logged into their Facebook class for an open discussion regarding the rhetorical devices used by the candidates they would be awarded additional credit on the upcoming assessment on rhetorical devices. The researcher noted that this was not only an innovative way to have students apply what they were learning in class, but also an assignment that offered a cross curriculum or interdisciplinary prospect.

Upon completion of this activity the teacher’s reflection noted that a video link to other debates could be posted to the class wall and students could be instructed to view it and posts discussion responses referencing the candidates use of rhetorical devices. The following are actual excerpts from the class wall where the students participated in the assignment:

Student A: i expect lots of rhetorical devices to be used. what do you think?

Student B: In this case Michael, Santorum is using an ad hominem, since he attacked Romney directly by calling him a coldly calculating “C.E.O”.

Student C: Mitt Romney just used ad hominem against Obama for not creating enough jobs.

Teacher: Did you also catch that first concession from Romney? He has to acknowledge that the economy has begun to improve, but then he counters that by saying that the improvement is not the result of Obama's policies.

Student D: I think Romney is currently using faulty emotional appeal in order to appease voters. He is declaring specific positive statistics on jobs increasing which very much appeals to the American people during this
bad economy. Santorum just attacked Ron Paul by implying that he is
lying (ad hominem). Ron Paul returns by also using ad hominem on both
Santorum and Romney.

Student E: Rick Santorum uses ad hominem and red herring mostly. He's also pretty
rude for interrupting the other candidate.

Student D: Santorum is defending himself by declaring that the other candidates had
faulty evidence (hasty generalization).

Student F: Romney got somewhat off topic when talking about his success in his
businesses and he is taking full credit for them. He didn't do it alone and
he is saying that government doesn't make jobs. How can he argue that he
can make jobs when he just said that government can't do so?

Student C: Yes, I caught that too. I think that is called logical fallacy because his
reasoning is faulty. He can't say the government can't influence the
economy and brag about starting new jobs as governor.

Student D: That's true, but I think he is trying to compare to Barack Obama in person.
In order to beat Obama, he has got to have some serious credentials.

Teacher: By relying on this notion of having "outsider status", Perry is falling into
the ad populum fallacy. He knows that the majority of people are sick of
Washington and Wall St. insiders.

Student G: Rick Santorum is attempting to appeal to middle class working
Americans by discussing his history of working in the coal mines with his
grandfather.

Teacher: You're right. This is called a "common folks" appeal. I don't think we've
talked about that in class yet.

Student C: Huntsman just did the "two wrongs make a right" by talking about trusting
leadership and economy issues when he was questioned about Iran's nuclear program and being commander in chief

Student E: it appers to me that both perry, paul, and santorum are soo focused on slanting each other that huntsman made them look like off topic squwabbling politions.

Student G: Jon huntsman is using statistics to show that he has a successful record in improving the economy in his state. He also used ad hominem to demote mitt Romney and the economy of massachusetts

Student A: Although true, I believe he tries to never directly attack someone. He never mentioned his name, and seems to be much more respectful and less aggressive towards the candidates.

Student H: Ron Paul is constantly using ad hominem by stating inaccurate information about the other candidates.

Student F: Ron Paul uses plain folk when referring to the young men coming back from the war. He is targeting parents with children for the war to try to get them on his side

Student G: Ron Paul is using red herring because he is not answering the question that he was asked, but rather beating around the bush with off topic statements

Student A: Ron Paul is trying to appeal to minorities currently.

Student D: Ron Paul just appealed to the African-American population by stating his love for Martin Luther King jr, as well as appealing to the equality between whites and blacks. This is using ad populum.

Student F: Ron Paul is targeting the minorities with faulty emotional appeal, instilling fear in them that they are currently more likely to be given harsher punishments for their actions than whites. He says that he will change this
and therefore gains their support.

Student D: Many of the candidates are using appeal to traditional as well as bandwagon on the topic of leadership. Traditionally, I think the United States has always worked well under strong leadership and in order to obtain the votes of peoples, the candidates all try to join the strong "leadership" bandwagon

Student E: I disagree with the appeal to traditional because they keep going in circles about the same topics while slanting Obama and the other candidates. I do agree with the bandwagon of leadership, but that also goes along with Rick Perry's appeal to the "plain folk"

Student D: Well they are going in circles but they are appealing to traditional appeal because many people want to go back in history for leadership.

Teacher: This exchange between Paul and Gingrich is definitely ad hominem—personal rather than issue-based attacks.

Student G: Yes, I think Ron Paul is trying to show that he is braver and he knows more about military and wars than Gingrich.

Student I: I agree. I thought the comment about Mr. Paul's history of saying inaccurate things was unnecessary and did not address the issue in question.

Student J: I think Ron Paul is trying to show that he is a better man than Gingrich.

Student D: I think he needs to address the important topics and not personal issues.

Student A: True. Why Paul talked about his draft is understandable, since he was angry, but such an attitude was unacceptable.

Student D: Yeah, who cares about something that happened during the 70s when many of the voters don't understand.
Student F: Voters don't care what they did, they care what the candidates are going to do as President. By getting off topic they are losing support and respect from voters.

Student E: most of the canadaites have talked about how they lead companies and are military leaders as well as a leader in politics. but that has been proven with obama to not just be enough, we need a president with a level head and common sense

Student A: voters do care what they did since this could affect how they act as president, but the candidates should not attack each other for personal gain in polls, that's just wrong.

Student H: I think Ron Paul's frequent uses of ad hominem are only harming himself.

Observation notes from this assignment documented:

-Expectations and objectives were clear.

-Students were actively engaged in assignment.

-Objectives meet curriculum and SOL standards.-Innovative assignment.

-Interdisciplinary with Social Studies and Technology standards.

-Relevant/Real-World connections.

-Student engagement extended beyond required objective.

-Students were graded for participation not writing.

Teacher reflections:

-Excited about level or participation.

-Will continue to use this type of activity.

-Will look for more ways to create interdisciplinary lessons.

-Students reported enjoying Facebook as a classroom medium.
As mentioned earlier there were also class discussions driven by specific activities occurring in the classroom. While studying “Into the Wild” in the physical classroom, Teacher A posted the following assignment on the class wall as an extension to what the students were learning. The following excerpts are from the Facebook walls of two different sections of the English class. These classes are coded as Class A and Class B.

All students’ original post were identified in numerical order. Students who responded to each post were identified by the student’s number and a letter identification.

Teacher: "Into the Wild" Discussion Assignment: In order to receive full credit on this you must post one original post (do not just repeat what others have said) and two "response" comments responding to something two of your classmates wrote. Use the prompt below to guide your discussion. You may also post new discussion questions as you think of them.

1. Do you think Chris McCandless was an admirable adventurer and individualist or do you think he was foolish and over confident? Explain your feelings about him using evidence from the film, article, and other information you gather on your own. Also consider what the ABC news article criticizes about the movie "Into the Wild" and its popularity. Do you agree with this criticism? Why or why not?

Class A:

Student 1: I think that Chris McCandless was an admirable adventurer. He wanted to prove to society that you can make it on your own and that being an individual was important. Even though he didn't make it out alive, I think he was still able to make an impact on society about his beliefs. He
showed that even when times are tough you can still find a way to make it on your own. He did this when he found all those people to stay with along the way. I do not agree with ABC's criticism because no one forced those people to try and copy Chris and do what he did. Many things are dangerous, like sky diving or bungee jumping, it's the person's choice to do it or not.

Student 2: Chris McCandless did act carelessly when he took his trip into the wild, although he was aware of what he was doing and some of the risks that came with his actions. He may not have thought everything through well, such as only bringing a 10lb. bag of rice, which created a short food supply for his journey. McCandless has good motive for his trip, he wanted to find himself in the world through nature without society's impact on his character. When he set out on his journey he was looking for an experience close to that of Thoreau. Although, it seems as if he did not find the outcome he was looking for and rather than having a transcendentalist outlook on the experience and on life he had more of a naturalist feeling. ABC's opinion on the book "Into the Wild" is an opinion shared with many people. They are right in the sense that many people have died trying to mimic McCandless, so yes the trip is dangerous but these people are aware of the risks. They have to be aware if they care so much because they have read the book and they have researched about the journey. I personally do not agree with ABC because I believe that when a person does something, they are responsible for their actions and the
consequences. They have fair warning and if they still want to follow through with it, then so be it.

Responses to Student 2:

Student 2A: I agree that he did not plan well for his trip. If he had thoroughly researched his final destination, he would have known that the water level would rise after the snow melts.

Student 2B: I agree when you say that the people who are copying McCandless's journey are responsible for their own actions and that they have the knowledge and all the facts to make an informed decision whether to do something that dangerous or not.

Student 2C: I agree when you said people are responsible for their own actions. It's like when people have to sign a paper when they do dangerous things that they can't sue the company, but they still do it. Just like people are going to still do the adventure.

Student 3: I think McCandless was foolish and overconfident. He should have researched a route for him to take and about the times and seasons he would be there. If he had done these things, he would know that there is less game in the winter, and the water rises in the spring. He would also have done research on the types of plants in that region, rather than take a book on edible plants and hope for the best. Eating a wild plant if you don't know what it is, can be the most dangerous thing you can do in the wild.

Responses to Student 3:
Student 3A: I agree with the points that you brought up. His whole death could have been avoided if he would had done some research. He went into the situation blindly and did not fully think about the consequences before embarking on his journey.

Student 3B: oh yes this is so fabulous and i just love all the points you hit in it!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Student 3C: I agree, he should have researched. But I have to say that him eating the wrong plant was a last resort and an act of desperation due to his malnourishment. I mean, can you honestly say you can concentrate on an empty stomach?

Class B:

Student 1: I think that Chris was confident, and strong enough to last as long as he did with close to nothing. Although he was confident he needed to be more cautious. He may not have known fully what it was going to be like completely out in the wild because before he had always had something or someone to rely on. When he dropped all communication that left him in a situation he had never known before. Chris thinking he was going to survive leads others to believe they can, when in reality they are no wiser than he was. So overall he was brave and confident, not admirable.

Responses to Student 1:

Student 1A: I agree, he certainly has a lot of courage to set out on his own after living in civilization all his life, but at the same time I don't think it makes him a great role model for others.
Student 1B: I agree that Chris was courageous and brave for what he did with little supplies, but I do think he is admirable for setting out to Alaska. In my opinion its what people take out of his story, those that just follow him aren't thinking about what the cost was. Those that understood Chris's message will go out and find their own adventure.

Student 1C: I royalty agree that Chris was confident and a little unprepared, but I disagree with the ladder. He was an admirable man, he shunned society and realized that nature was the answer. He did what others could never dreamed of. He lived a fulfilled life, and for that I admire him.

Observer notes for this assignment documented that:

- Expectations and objectives were clear.

- Students were actively engaged in assignment.

- Objectives meet curriculum and SOL standards.

- Innovative assignment.

- Interdisciplinary with Technology standards.

- Relevant/Real-World connections.

Student engagement extended beyond required objective

- Character analysis displays rigor.

- Students made personal connection to character.

- Textual support provided as evidence for argument.

Teacher Reflections:

- Impressed by student responses.

- Pleased with participation.

- Enjoying this format for discussion.
-Voices of students who are normally quiet are being heard.

**Research Question Three**

When observing the relationships between the students and that of the student and the teacher during this study, there was evidence of a positive rapport both shown in the physical classroom as well as on the class wall. During classroom visits students were noted as being engaged in the lesson as well as respectful to each other and the teacher during instruction. During small group activities and whole class discussions there was noted a variety in levels of participation. When asked how students felt about teachers who use Facebook as an instructional tool, student responses varied.

**Teacher and student relationships.** One student stated when discussing teachers who use Facebook, “I think it gives students like more respect for them because they are on the same level and same technology.” Another student added, “This just gives them a little bit of a connection with the kids.” Additionally students added that teachers who use Facebook for class are “fun, getting with the times, and actually kind of cool like they’re stepping up their game and trying to do more things.” Throughout the duration of this case study students worked cooperatively in the classroom and during wall discussions and activities. Mazer, et al. (2009) study revealed that teachers who use Facebook are perceived as caring about not only their students but also understanding their interest.

During the interview Teacher A was asked about any changes she noticed about the relationships between her students and herself one the implication of Facebook began and shared that:

“As far as their relationship with me goes, I do think they saw me as more in tune with technology and communication than some of their other
teachers. They were also very willing to send me messages and questions through our facebook page, which tells me that the felt comfortable communicating with me through that venue.”

The survey conducted during this study (Table 4) displayed that when reporting on relationships between the students and teacher, the majority of the students felt neutral; however, more than 35% did agree to feeling that teachers who utilize Facebook have greater respect for them. Over 45% of the students also appreciating teachers who use Facebook as a classroom tool and more that 35% admitted they would do more work if other teachers used Facebook in their class.

**Student relationships.** When discussing respect for one another in the classroom where Facebook has been integrated 54% of the students surveyed had a neutral response 23% felt that students respected each other more in the Facebook class and the remaining 23% did not agree. When students responded to a statement regarding getting to know their classmates better through the Facebook class 32% answered neutral whereas 36% agreed they have (Table 5). During the student interview students were asked not only if they had added classmates as friends but also interacted with them outside of the class activities. Table 6 displays the answers to those questions.

During the interview when asked about student relationships Teacher A shared:

I'm not sure that the facebook classroom affected the students' relationships with one another significantly. Though I will say that, especially in my AP class, the students would often come in to the classroom and talk about the discussion they had had on facebook the
night before. So in some ways students were more engaged with one another academically due to Facebook. (Teacher A, personal communication, June 26, 2012)

Research Regarding Student Interaction

Baran (2010) conducted a study which examined Facebook as a part of the instructional environment and found that “Facebook helped them maintain contact with their teacher” and also that “students believed that Facebook was valuable for keeping them in contact with their friends . . . and over half of them felt that Facebook helped them to get to know their classmates better” (p. 147). Cain (2008) further supports the student interaction by noting that “social networking sites such as Facebook provide individuals with a way of maintaining and strengthening social ties which can be beneficial in both social and academic settings (p.6). Tables 7 and 8 display the common themes discovered during the interviews and observations. The final chapter will discuss the findings.
Table 4 Student Teacher Interactions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Statement</th>
<th>Percentage of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N (s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms have greater respect for their students.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I appreciate my teacher using Facebook as a classroom tool.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N (s) = Number of students  SA = Strongly Agree  A = Agree  N = Neutral  D = Disagree  SD = Strongly Disagree*

Table 5 Student Relationships (Perceptions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey Statement</th>
<th>Percentage of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N (s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My classmates respect each other more in the Facebook class than they do in other classes.</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have gotten to know my classmates better because of the class group on Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note. N (s) = Number of students  SA = Strongly Agree  A = Agree  N = Neutral  D = Disagree  SD = Strongly Disagree*

Table 6 Student Relationships (Actions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
<th>8</th>
<th>9</th>
<th>10</th>
<th>11</th>
<th>12</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 7: Common Themes Student Interviews and Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Common Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How often do you use Facebook?</td>
<td>Majority of students use daily.</td>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How long have you had a Facebook account?</td>
<td>Majority of students have had accounts more than 1 year.</td>
<td>Student Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What do you like about Facebook?</td>
<td>Students enjoy as instructional tool.</td>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?</td>
<td>Students enjoy interaction with classmates.</td>
<td>Student Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?</td>
<td>Students feel positive about using Facebook in class.</td>
<td>Student Motivation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?</td>
<td>Students participated in numerous instructional activities.</td>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?</td>
<td>Students see Facebook as more than just social.</td>
<td>Student Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?</td>
<td>Students interacted with new friends through class assignments.</td>
<td>Student Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Do you interact on Facebook With these students outside of the class group?</td>
<td>Students interacted with new friends socially on Facebook.</td>
<td>Student Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classroom?</td>
<td>Students feel positive about teachers using Facebook in the class.</td>
<td>Student Engagement/Motivation/Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Share with me any other Thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.</td>
<td>Students participated and were fully engaged in assignments.</td>
<td>Student Engagement/Motivation/Interaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8: Common Themes Teacher Interview and Observations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>Observations</th>
<th>Common Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What led to your decision to use Facebook as an instructional tool?</td>
<td>Students are comfortable and enjoy Facebook.</td>
<td>Student Engagement/Motivation/Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. How long have you been utilizing it in your classroom?</td>
<td>Students have participated in Facebook assignments throughout the school year.</td>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. What observations have you noted about the effectiveness of social networking in an academic setting?</td>
<td>Students discuss Facebook assignments on class wall as well as in classroom.</td>
<td>Student Engagement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How do you think using Facebook in the classroom affects student relationships with each other? With you?</td>
<td>Students enjoyed interacting with teacher and classmates.</td>
<td>Student Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. What pitfalls have you encountered?</td>
<td>Students were responsible, interacted appropriately.</td>
<td>Student Engagement/Motivation/Interaction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Do you recommend teachers utilizing Facebook?</td>
<td>Students enjoy Facebook socially and academically and is an asset to the class.</td>
<td>Student Engagement/Motivation/Interaction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Overview

Teacher and students interviews, surveys, observations, as well as document analysis were utilized to explore the impact of using Facebook as a classroom tool with secondary students. Through the variety of data collected, the researcher was able to present the perspective of the classroom teacher as well as the students. The interviews provided the most in-depth information by telling the story in the voices of the participants. Through the surveys a sample of students were able to respond to general statements about Facebook’s academic and social qualities.

Classroom observations, lesson plans, and reflections of the lessons taught as well as actual excerpts from the Facebook class wall gave additional information and provided a model of how the instructional tool was utilized. The researcher and participants were able to reflect and share their ideas about the integration of Facebook. Throughout this study the academic and social impacts of Facebook were examined. This was demonstrated by exploring the types of activities students participated in within the Facebook class as well as they type of interactions between the students and the students and teacher.

The results showed that students feel comfortable using Facebook instructionally. Additionally the teacher and students reported that Facebook is easy to integrate into the secondary classroom and promotes a positive and productive classroom environment. Students feel that using Facebook allows them an opportunity to give more in depth
feedback, share information with classmates, and contact teachers and classmates more efficiently. The teacher agreed that students seem to be more participatory and engaged in the activities on the Facebook class wall. Based on the data collected Facebook as a classroom toll had an over positive impact on students academically and socially.

**Implications**

Vygotsky (1978) views learning as a process that requires environmental input and social interaction. He further explains that his belief that scaffolding, or building upon a foundation, through a process of constructivism which takes place at a developmentally appropriate and prime learning zone, and where peers act as motivators to reach the next level of capacity and potential. Facebook is a prime example of an educational environment in which students can interact with their classmates as well as instructors comfortably and motivate each other to academic success. The teacher in this study provides assignments in which students have to extend on the knowledge they have already gained and then peer reinforce these knowledge through their Facebook interactions.

Bandura (1977) describes learning as a change in behaviors resulting from social exposure: which includes observations, interaction, and modeling. His social learning theory recognizes that environmental input available to students during their lives from peers, to media, technology, superiors, and family are necessary for academic success. Facebook allows teachers to easily integrate technology and media into the everyday classroom instruction of students. It also enables students to observe their teacher and peers as they build on their knowledge.
With school districts’ offering online instruction for students it is important to
give students opportunities to utilize internet tools in the classroom as much as possible.
The school in this study is in a district which is undergoing policy changes which will
require high school students to have online courses in order to meet graduation
requirements, teachers who utilize networks, such as Facebook, in their instructional
practices will assist students in this transition. The Virginia Department of Education
shared:

Legislation approved by the 2010 General Assembly creates a new
framework for virtual schools and online instruction designed to expand
options for students while ensuring quality and alignment with the
commonwealth’s academic standards. The Code of Virginia allows school
divisions to offer online instruction to students in multiple school divisions
by entering into a contract with any private organization, educational
institutions, or nonprofit virtual school organization that has been approved
by the superintendent of public instruction to operate as a multidivision
online provider (www.vdoe.gov).

Online learning has become prevalent at numerous colleges and universities
throughout the United States and providing students with the advantage of online learning
experiences will be beneficial.

Relevant Literature

Teacher training. This new era of many technological advances has promoted
many school districts to become creative instructionally and financially to ensure students
are prepared for a future that will be heavily immersed in technology. Teachers
recognize the need to integrate technology into their classroom instruction but they also
realize in order for this integration to be successful there are several barriers. Teachers and students must have access to new technologies as well as be trained to use them properly in order for any academic success to occur.

When discussing Web 2.0 tools “current debates on what young people are doing with these technologies . . . and how such activities might usefully be harnessed in formal educational settings” (Luckin et al., 2009, p. 87). When considering social media networks, like Facebook, this is a concern of many educators; however, teachers can model appropriate digital usage by incorporating social media in the classroom in an open and honest way” (Bauer, 2012, p. 12). In order to assist with this task of assisting teachers Foulger et al. (2009), conducted a study focusing on professional development to help new teachers with the implementation of social networks realizing “the concern, debate, and vulnerability for educators who use social networking sites suggest a proactive strategy to minimize risks” (p.3).

The TPACK framework discussed earlier in the literature recognized that “using new technologies can prompt fundamental changes in the nature of the discipline themselves and teachers must understand which technologies are best suited for addressing which types of subject-matter” (Harris et al., 2009, p. 400). Research has shown that technology integration is necessary to prepare today’s students for tomorrow’s world and that teacher development plays a major role in this movement.

**Student engagement.** Student engagement and academic success are just two of the numerous desires educators have when conducting instruction in their classrooms. Research has supported that modern students enjoy being engaged in classroom environments where technology is used instructionally. Students report not only enjoying these activities but also appreciating their teachers for using them.
Moore & Pflugfelder (2010) share that “education in virtual worlds has potential, it seems, for engaging students in innovative ways and for enabling new discourses on a host of issues” (p.249).

Pennay (2009) discusses the importance of student writing and shares that “we have a responsibility, both to our students and ourselves, to investigate the ways in which we can embrace techno-literacy” (p.18). In this article Pennay also notes that while educators may have person opinions about various Web 2.0 tools, student are utilizing these mediums to write daily, sometimes even numerous times during the day. Peowski (2010) shares that today’s students see “video games and internet not just as tools for entertainment, but also as platforms for learning, creating, collaborating, and effecting social change” (p.26). Pennay (2010) furthers explains that:

If you want to reach out to this community and forge relationships that foster cooperation, collaboration, understanding, and lifelong learning between the generations, the way to do it is through the Internet (p.26).

Student engagement is a key factor to student success. Through utilizing Web 2.0 tools teachers can take their classroom instruction to new heights.

**Limitations**

While the purpose of this study was to explore the impact of Facebook as an instructional tool in secondary classrooms the information gain can be used to give only a small glimpse of its effectiveness. For this study a small sample of participants were studied in a location where access to the phenomenon was easily accessible. In other schools the students may not have as much access to technology and therefore may not benefit from the impact of social networking. In order for Facebook to be beneficial in classroom environments students and teachers must have access to the technology as
well as the appropriate resources for all students to utilize it.

When conducting this study the participants were specifically targeted due to the implementation of Facebook already taking place. The teacher and students had been utilizing the social media for almost a full school year which allowed for any conflict resolution to occur prior to the study. Another purpose for conducting this study was to tell the story of how social networks function in a secondary classroom. Due to the willingness and enthusiasm of the students who were interviewed, most of which who volunteered, the results can be viewed as bias. The students who were most intrigued by the implementation were more than likely to share positive attributes of the study.

In addition to the students who volunteered for the interview the 54 students who completed the electronic surveys did so under their own volition and had an option of neutral versus having to choose a definite agreement or disagreement regarding statements about Facebook in the classroom. Due to the willingness of these participants to share their perspectives it can be assumed that these students felt more positively about the experience. Students who may have a less favorable feeling about Facebook could have been overlooked.

In order to try to limit the threat of the validity the students who did participate were continually reminded of the confidentiality assured during the study. Participants were also encouraged to be honest in their feelings about the classroom environment to assist with decisions about future use of Facebook instructionally. Additionally the electronic surveys were completely anonymous which allowed students to feel assured that no one would be penalized for expressing how they felt whether it was positive or not.

Documentation of the classroom observations and lesson plans were paramount
in assuring the validity of the implementation of Facebook in the classroom. The researcher and teacher were able to review the lesson plans prior to the lesson as well as debrief about the lesson following the observation. The observations of the virtual component of the Facebook interactions were also validated due to class group’s wall being archived on the Facebook server. All assignments completed by students are a part of the wall and cannot be manipulated or edited by anyone other than the original writer. Additionally, to ensure no bias on the part of the researcher, peer review and member checking were conducted in a thorough manner. Each interview transcription was reviewed as well as peer reviews of the survey and interview questions.

The findings in this study implicate that when used appropriately Web 2.0 tools, like Facebook, can have positive academic and social impacts on classroom environments. Appropriate use includes training for teachers and modeling for students. Before engaging on the implementation of Facebook in her classroom Teacher A had attended a professional development session which provided her with a foundation from which to work. Additionally the teacher had been a member of Facebook for several years, this provided additional skills when utilizing this instructional tool. The students in this study where given specific objectives and directives when completing Facebook assignments. Among the immediate advantage of increasing the level of engagement is also the ability to interact regularly with the teacher and students when participating in the Facebook activities. Throughout this study a majority of the students surveyed and interviewed expressed that they enjoy using internet and respected their teacher for using Facebook in their classroom. Several of these students also shared that they were able to have meaningful educational experiences with this classroom tool.

When attempting to integrate technology one of the biggest barriers is finance.
As many researchers and educators have found, access to Facebook is free and the majority of students and many teachers are already members of this network. While the concern of digital equity may arise, teachers have the option of using labs at school as well as having students use their local libraries after school hours.

**Recommendations for Future Research**

When examining technology and instruction there are vast amounts of areas to be explored. Technology is continually advancing and going through a variety of upgrades. As new technologies develop it will be important to determine how, if at all, these advances can assist with education. Observing larger samples of teachers who use these technologies, especially those who master this feat in districts where resources are limited, will be extremely advantageous to the educators who wish to implement these tools.

Investigating teacher’s perceptions about professional development needs for technology and how to best integrate newer tools into the classroom is an area that has been researched sporadically but much more information could be discovered. The teachers’ perceptions are a primary concern; however, hearing the voice of the students is essential to truly understanding the depth of the impact technology has on education and the future of the students.

For this study I chose secondary students due to the nature of my role in education, yet I have also found that social networks can play a major role in elementary schools with parent communication. While younger students may not have access to the social network, Facebook, there are other ways teacher can create classroom networks. Social networks as well as other Web 2.0 tools can play numerous roles in the educational environment. Whatever role researchers have in society there are many
different paths that can be explored regarding technology.

**Conclusion**

This study demonstrates one teacher’s integration of Facebook as an instructional tool in a secondary classroom. The participants in this study believe that Facebook is an appropriate tool for instruction and when used properly can provide a safe and engaging learning environment. Both the teacher and students perceived that the relationships between the class and teacher were positive, respectful and that utilizing this type of medium allowed students to enjoy and feel more comfortable participating in class activities. The integration of Facebook in the classroom afforded students the opportunity to use a technology that was natural for them and allowed students to interact with their classmates and teacher in an innovative manner.
REFERENCES


Holladay, J. (2010). Cyberbullying the stakes have never been higher for students-or schools. *Teaching Tolerance, 38*, 42-45.


Peowski, L. (2010). Where are all the teens? Engaging and empowering them online. *Young Adult Library Services, 26*-28.


Skiba, D. (2010). Nursing education 2.0: Social networking and the WOTY. *Nursing Education Perspectives, 31*(1), 44-46.


May 2, 2012

To: IRB Committee, Liberty University

From: Royce Hart, Sr., Principal

Re: Hunter-Brown Site-based Case study

I am writing this letter granting Stephanie Hunter-Brown, Doctoral candidate at Liberty University, permission to conduct a study on the instructional use of Facebook involving staff and students at [Redacted] High School. I understand that this study will have minimal risks and its purpose it to ascertain the impact, if any, that social networks have on students when integrated into the classroom curriculum.

I am confident that Mrs. Hunter-Brown will conduct this study in a professional manner and appropriately collect and handle any information received.

Sincerely,

Royce Hart, Sr.
Principal, York County School Division
May 3, 2012

Stephanie Hunter-Brown

Dear Stephanie:

Re: Your request for Teachers and Students to Participate in Research

Per your request in your May 2nd email, this letter authorizes you to contact the Principal at Grafton High School regarding teacher and student participation in your study Facebook as an Instructional Tool for your doctoral/Ph.D. program. Please reference this letter when you contact the Principal.

Please note that participation by any YCSD employee in an outside study is completely voluntary.

Sincerely,

Betsy Overkamp-Smith, APR
Community and Public Relations Coordinator

Via E-mail
May 23, 2012

Stephanie Hunter-Brown
IRB Approval 1342.052312: Facebook as an Instructional Tool in Secondary Classrooms: A Case Study

Dear Stephanie,

We are pleased to inform you that your above study has been approved by the Liberty IRB. This approval is extended to you for one year. If data collection proceeds past one year, or if you make changes in the methodology as it pertains to human subjects, you must submit an appropriate update form to the IRB. The forms for these cases were attached to your approval email.

Thank you for your cooperation with the IRB and we wish you well with your research project.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D.
Professor, IRB Chair
Counseling

(434) 592-4054
APPENDIX D: PARENT/STUDENT CONSENT FORM

PARENT/STUDENT CONSENT FORM

Facebook as an instructional tool in secondary classrooms
Stephanie R. Hunter-Brown
Liberty University
Educational Leadership

Dear Parent,

Your child has been invited to be in a research study of Facebook as an instructional tool in secondary classrooms. They were selected as a possible participant because he/she is currently enrolled in a class in which Facebook is a part of the curriculum. We ask that you and your child read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

Please note that at the beginning of the class, the teacher will poll students to see if they have a Facebook account. Those who do not have one will be asked if they wish to open one in order to participate in the class activities. Those who do not wish to participate will be given alternative assignments. Parents who do not wish for their child to create a Facebook account are asked to please decline participation in this study.

This study is being conducted by: Stephanie R. Hunter-Brown, Liberty University

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is: to evaluate the academic and social impact of Facebook when used in the classroom environment.

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:
During the fourth quarter complete a survey which asks questions about how Facebook is used in your class. Throughout the school year participate in Facebook activities, which may be used as documentation during study, as assigned by teacher. May be selected to participate in an audio-recorded interview about Facebook as a classroom practice. All students will not participate in the interview process and regular classroom instruction will not be altered or compromised due to this research. All audio of withdrawn participants will be deleted.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:

The study has minimal risks no more than the participant would encounter in everyday life. Safeguards such as: the Bring Your Own Technology contracts and a closed group which is only available to the enrolled students have been put in place to prevent cyberbullying or inappropriate use of technology during instructional activities. Violations of the division’s BYOT contract will be handled administratively.

The benefits to participation are: technological academic and social growth through the utilization of web 2.0 tools.
Confidentiality:

The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. All data collected will be secured in locked electronic files as well as file cabinets for hard copies of data. Interviews will be recorded via a secured device and only accessed by the principal investigator during the study. No personal information will be attached to any data collected. Once the required three-year data maintenance period has expired all data will be permanently destroyed electronically and via shredder.

Compensation:

There will be no compensation for participants in this study.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or the York County School Division. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions:

The researcher conducting this study is: Stephanie R. Hunter-Brown. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact her at Grafton High School, 757-898-0547, srhunterbrown@liberty.edu. or her Dissertation Chair, Dr. Beth Ackerman at mackerman@liberty.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.

Statement of Consent:

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent for my child to participate in the study.

______ I consent to have my child audio-recorded if selected to participate in the interview component of this study. (initial)

Signature of parent or guardian: __________________________ Date: __________________

I have read and understand and asked questions if necessary and agree to participate in this study.
____ I consent to be audio-recorded if selected to participate in the interview component of this study.____(initial)

Student Signature:__________________________________________ Date: ______________________

Signature of Investigator:___________________________________ Date: ____________________
APPENDIX E: TEACHER CONSENT FORM

TEACHER CONSENT FORM

Facebook as an instructional tool in secondary classrooms
Stephanie R. Hunter-Brown
Liberty University
Educational Leadership

You are invited to be in a research study of Facebook as an instructional tool in secondary classrooms. You were selected as a possible participant because you are currently teaching a class in which Facebook is a part of the curriculum. We ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study.

This study is being conducted by: Stephanie R. Hunter-Brown, Liberty University

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is: to evaluate the academic and social impact of Facebook when used in the classroom environment

Procedures:

If you agree to be in this study, we would ask you to do the following things:

Participate in a 20-30 minute audio recorded interview in which you answer questions about your utilization of Facebook as a classroom tool.
Submit weekly lesson plans with reflections.
Allow Mrs. Hunter-Brown, principal investigator, access to the closed class group on Facebook.
Enforce BYOT policies to ensure safeguards are in place.

Have your students:

Complete a survey which asks questions about how Facebook is used in your class.
Participate in Facebook activities, which may be used as documentation during study, as assigned by teacher.
Participate in an interview about Facebook as a classroom practice.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:

The study has minimal risks no more than the participant would encounter in everyday life. In order to provide safeguards for the participants the classroom teachers participating in the study will not be evaluated by the administrator conducting the study.

The benefits to participation are: technological academic and social growth through the utilization of web 2.0 tools.

Confidentiality:
The records of this study will be kept private. In any sort of report we might publish, we will not include any information that will make it possible to identify a subject. Research records will be stored securely and only researchers will have access to the records. All audio of withdrawn participants will be deleted.

All data collected will be secured in locked electronic files as well as file cabinets for hard copies of data. Interviews will be recorded via a secured device and only accessed by the principal investigator during the study. No personal information will be attached to any data collected. Once the study is completed and all information published all data will be permanently destroyed electronically and via shredder. The administrator conducting this study will not perform any evaluative duties for the teacher involved during this study.

**Voluntary Nature of the Study:**

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with the Liberty University or the York County School Division. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

**Compensation:**

There will be no compensation for participation in this study.

**Contacts and Questions:**

The researcher conducting this study is: Stephanie R. Hunter-Brown. You may ask any questions you have now. If you have questions later, **you are encouraged** to contact her at Grafton High School, 757-898-0547, srhunterbrown@liberty.edu, or her Dissertation Chair, Dr. Beth Ackerman at mackerman@liberty.edu

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), **you are encouraged** to contact the Institutional Review Board, Dr. Fernando Garzon, Chair, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1582, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or email at fgarzon@liberty.edu.

*You will be given a copy of this information to keep for your records.*

**Statement of Consent:**

I have read and understood the above information. I have asked questions and have received answers. I consent to participate in the study.

_____ I consent to be audio-recorded if selected to participate in the interview component of this study. (Initial)_____

Signature: _____________________________________________ Date: __________________

Signature of Investigator: ______________________________ Date: __________________
APPENDIX F: OBSERVATION NOTES PROCEDURE

Information will be gathered through:
- electronic surveys of students in class
- face to face interviews with samples from each class
- interview with the teacher
- copies of lesson plans and teacher reflections
- observation notes of in class performance
- documentation of activities completed on Facebook
- Facebook activities from site
APPENDIX G: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

(Student)
Introduction: Hi I am Assistant Principal Hunter-Brown and I have been observing teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms. I would like to ask you a few questions about how you feel about using Facebook both in class and socially. If there are any questions you do not wish to answer please let me know. Thank you for your time!

1. How often do you use Facebook?
2. How long have you had a Facebook account?
3. What do you like about Facebook?
4. While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?
5. How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?
6. What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?
7. Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?
8. Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?
9. Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?
10. How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?
11. Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

(Teacher)

1. What led to your decision to use Facebook as an instructional tool?
2. How long have you been utilizing it in your classroom?
3. What observations have you noted about the effectiveness of social networking in an academic setting?
4. How do you think using Facebook in the classroom affects student relationships with each other? With you?
5. What pitfalls have you encountered?
6. Do you recommend teachers utilizing Facebook?
APPENDIX H: SURVEY QUESTIONS

Facebook Survey

1. Facebook is easy to use and comes natural to students my age.
2. Facebook is an appropriate tool for education.
3. Facebook assignments are more interesting than regular classroom lessons.
4. Facebook class groups allow students to have more ownership of their learning.
5. The concepts in class are easier to learn with Facebook.
6. I enjoy participating in educational activities on Facebook.
7. I learn better using Facebook.
8. I have gotten to know my classmates better because of the class group on Facebook.
9. I complete more of my assignments than usual now because of Facebook.
10. I appreciate my teacher using Facebook as a classroom tool.
11. I comment more in the Facebook discussion than in my regular classroom.
12. I feel more comfortable sharing my thoughts on the Facebook class wall than inside the classroom at school.
13. My classmates give me more feedback in the Facebook discussions than they do in our regular classroom.
14. My classmates respect each other more in the Facebook class than they do in other classes.
15. Teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms have greater respect for their students.
16. If other teachers used Facebook I would do more work in their classes.
17. I feel that I have been more successful in class because we have the Facebook group.
18. I feel safe using Facebook for my class assignments.
19. I believe there is educational value in Facebook.
20. I believe using Facebook in an educational environment will better prepare me for my future.
APPENDIX I: SCHOOL USER POLICY

Form A-6
Rev. 6/10

Last Name       First Name       Grade Level

SCHOOL ______________________________ TEACHER ______________________________

STUDENT NETWORK SERVICES/INTERNET ACCEPTABLE USE POLICY

_____ I give permission for my child to use Network Services and Internet services provided by the York County School Division

_____ I give permission for my child to use ONLY Network Services provided by the York County School Division

_____ I DO NOT give permission for my child to use any Network Services provided by the York County School Division

_____ I DO NOT give permission for my child to receive Internet Safety Instruction.

I/We understand that these permissions may be changed at any time during a school year by contacting the school and submitting the appropriate forms.

I agree to the terms and conditions contained in this Network Services/Internet Acceptable Use Policy and understand that any misuse or abuse of these terms and conditions will result in the suspension or revocation of those privileges, disciplinary actions up to and including expulsion from the York County School Division and/or appropriate legal action.

I/We acknowledge that it is the policy of the division that students may not provide personal information to a website or on-line service while using division property and I/we have discussed this prohibition with my/our child.

Student Signature: _____________________________ Date: ______________________

Parent Signature: ______________________________ Date: ______________________
APPENDIX J: CLASSROOM OBSERVATION FORM

Teacher:

Date:

Location:

Class:

Subject/Title:

SOL(s):

Objective:

Length of Observation:

Instructional Strategies Observed:

Student Engagement:

Teacher Comments:

Student Comments:
# Lesson Plan Template

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title:</th>
<th>Content Area/s:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade level:</td>
<td>Time Frame:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Date:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### SOL:

### Related SOLs:

### Technology SOLs:
- C/T8.1 The student will communicate through application software.
- C/T8.2 The student will communicate through networks and telecommunication.
- C/T8.3 The student will have a basic understanding of computer processing, storage, retrieval, and transmission technologies and a practical appreciation of the relevant advantages and disadvantages of various processing, storage, retrieval, and transmission technologies.
- C/T8.4 The student will process, store, retrieve, and transmit electronic information.

### Lesson Objectives:
The student will:

### Resources (Text & Technology)

- Text Name: ________________
- Handout
- Dry Erase Board
- Library Research Material
- Overhead
- Audio Technology
- Video Technology
- Other

### Technology integration

- Power point
- Internet
- Word Processing
- Video/Audio
- Other
Instructional Procedures:
(Number steps beginning with Initial Activity and ending with Closing Activity.)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Marzano’s Nine High Yield Strategies:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Id Similarities &amp; Differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Summarizing &amp; Note Taking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Reinforcing Effort &amp; Providing Recognition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Homework &amp; Practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cues, Questions, &amp; Adv. Organizers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bloom's Taxonomy:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Comprehension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Application</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Synthesis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Evaluation</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Extension Activities/Interdisciplinary Links:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Art</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- History</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Math</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Science</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Physical Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Other</td>
</tr>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Differentiation Strategies/Activities:</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Readiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Learning Profile</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Modify:  
- Assignment  
- Procedure  
- Assessment

Other:

*Explain in Instructional Procedures section.*

Observations/Recommendations for Future Use:
### APPENDIX L: SURVEY TABLE

\( N(s) = \text{Number of students} \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Survey # 1 Statements</th>
<th>( N(s) )</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Facebook is easy to use and comes natural to students my age.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook is an appropriate tool for education.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Facebook assignments are more interesting than regular classroom lessons.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>46.4</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facebook class groups allow students to have more ownership of their learning.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The concepts in class are easier to learn with Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>53.6</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>I enjoy participating in educational activities on Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>60.7</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I learn better using Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>21.4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have gotten to know my classmates better because of the class group on Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>28.6</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I complete more of my assignments than usual now because of Facebook.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I appreciate my teacher using Facebook as a classroom tool.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>42.9</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
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<th>Survey # 2 Statements</th>
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<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I comment more in the Facebook discussion than in my regular classroom.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel more comfortable sharing my thoughts on the Facebook class wall than inside the classroom at school.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My classmates give me more feedback in the Facebook discussions than they do in our regular classroom.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My classmates respect each other more in the Facebook class than they do in other classes.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms have greater respect for their students.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>53.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If other teachers used Facebook I would do more work in their classes.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>11.5</td>
<td>26.9</td>
<td>38.5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>3.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel that I have been more successful in class because we have the Facebook group.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>42.3</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel safe using Facebook for my class assignments.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>65.4</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I believe there is educational value in Facebook.</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30.8</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>19.2</td>
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<td>I believe using Facebook in an educational environment will better prepare me for my future.</td>
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APPENDIX M: STUDENT INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPTS

Student 1.

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S1: Um, I use Facebook every day for a good couple of hours every day, um I know I do it for educational purposes and talk to friends so I use it every day.

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S1: Since I was in 7th grade, so a good 4 or 5 years now so.

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S1: I like how um since I travel Europe and I originally came from Spain how I can find my friends and keep in touch with friends and family from around the country and in other countries and I do I like how my teachers can post things and remind me about schoolwork cause I am quite forgetful.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S1: Um most of the time I look at new pictures posted um that’s the only thing I really do now.

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S1: I think it’s a great idea because most of us teenagers nowadays do have access to internet and I think it’s a great tool for teachers to update, to remind kids and also I think it’s a new fun way to get kids involved with you know discussions and things like that.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S1: Um this year I have done group discussions and what we did was, we had to, our teacher posted a question and we had to answer the question but then we also had to post a comment on somebody else’s answer whether there we agreed on it or disagreed on it so.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?
S1: (Pause) Um I look at it from a different perspective now I use to do Facebook I guess I use to just go on socially but now I can look for educational things and I have made my profile where I get updates from York County, etc. and things like that.

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S1: Um not really because most of them have already been my friends on Facebook.

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S1: Um yes

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S1: Um I think it’s a great idea, I think they should do it more often, it I think it keeps kids entertained now it’s more fun and interactive for them so.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S1: Um I just think it’s a great tool and I think more classes not just English should use it maybe get math involved and more things like that so.

Student 2.

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S2: I typically check it once every day.

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S2: Since September of last year.

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S2: Uh it allows me to see what my friends are doing, and um like relationships and how everything’s working.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S2: Looking at other people statuses.
R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?
S2: Um I think it’s pretty good the discussions have been ok and I think it, (pause) that way it works really well.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?
S2: Uh class discussions, uh she reminded us once about homework and so I used it for that.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?
S2: Um, not really changed

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?
S2: No

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?
S2: Ah, I do.

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?
S2: Um I think if they use it responsibly it works well. I mean to use it the right way.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.
S2: Um I think if teachers, like I said if they use it responsibly then it can work really well there can be a problem if like students abuse teachers letting them use facebook or if the if students don’t have a facebook account or don’t have an internet connection.

Student 3.
R: How often do you use Facebook?
S3: 24 7
R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S3: Um let’s see 3 years now

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S3: Um how I can keep in touch with my friends and family members.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S3: Um adding people, checking my friend requests, all sorts of stuff, oh and reading all the drama that’s on there.

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S3: I think it’s an excellent way to get students involved instead of giving them like sheets of paper to have them write on cause that would be really boring.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S3: Um I have a group for English and a group for the GSA, a group for the [redacted] High cheerleading and a group for competition (P: ok and what type of activities do you do…lessons, things that you do like in your English class?) Um yeah she writes questions on the page and we answer them on the Facebook um

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?

S3: Um I talk to most of my classmates now instead of um other friends

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S3: I have

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S3: Sometimes

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?
S3: I think it gives students like more respect for them because they are on the same level and same technology.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S3: Um it’s a great instructional tool, great way to communicate and get people active.

Student 4.

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S4: Um everyday

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S4: 3 years

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S4: I can connect with old friends and I can talk to people that have moved or like are leaving this year or can help other students too.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S4: Um looking at other people’s walls and posting on other people’s statuses.

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S4: It’s, it’s very interesting cause you can talk to other students and you can help other kids as well and it’ll creates like a connection into your class with your Facebook.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S4: Well we’ve had um group discussions and there’s like she post or our teacher posted a few like questions that we could do and then we could work with other students and we can read their responses to the questions as along with posting ours.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?
S4: Well I was a little more careful about what I posted with online cause you know now my teacher’s watching too.

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S4: Uh yes I have

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S4: Sometimes

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S4: It’s, it’s a good tool to use cause not everyone can call their teachers or anything and this just gives them a little bit of a connection with the kids.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S4: I I think it’s a really good tool, more more teachers in the classes should use it, it helps.

Student 5.

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S5: Uh, it’s always logged on so I have it on my phone almost all day.

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S5: For 2 years

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S5: I can catch up with friends.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S5: Um looking through pictures, talking to people

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S5: Um it, it’s nice to have because the teachers remind us of our homework and dates.
R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S5: Um I’m not sure (laughs)

R: like what types of things did the teacher have you do when you were on Facebook for the class part?

S5: oh, um we, we just kind of talked to our teacher about certain things, it was easy to get in touch with her about like essays we had to do so we used Facebook.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?

S5: get a lot of notifications from my teacher about what’s due.

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S5: Yea

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S5: Yea

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S5: I’m not so sure about that, uh, we just kind of did when were in class she just tells us not really Facebook, unless were at home and out of school and then she’ll remind us about certain things.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S5: Um there’s really nothing else except for its really nice to have because we don’t forget our teachers don’t let us forget when we have essays due or like big projects due.

Student 6.

R: How often do you use Facebook?
S6: Um I’m kind of addicted so I use it obsessively, like I get in trouble. (laughs) I’m always on.

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S6: Um that you can kind of get in everybody’s business. I don’t know (laughs). I just like seeing what everybody’s doing, and it’s kind of like all your friends are in one place so you can see what everybody’s doing see who you wanna hang out with and stuff it’s a lot easier than just texting people and seeing what they’re doing.

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S6: Um I had to fight really hard with my parents to let me have one so maybe freshman year.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S6: Just going down my um newsfeed and just reading everything and looking at pictures.

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S6: Um I like it (laughs)

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S6: Um well in a few classes I have like class pages and stuff so we can have all our discussions in one place and it’s easier to go and do it at home, we don’t have time in class.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?

S6: Um well there is this side and it says like groups and stuff like that and I never used to pay attention to it because I’m not in any groups but now I check it obsessively whenever I have a notification in case I have something coming up that I forget cause I don’t really use my agenda.

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S6: Yea for like group projects and stuff.
R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S6: Um yea for like group projects and stuff I gotta do a group project with people that I don’t would never usually associate with and so we had to like go back and forth and send each other messages and….

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S6: Um I think that they’re getting with the times (laughs) because it’s a lot easier for me to just Facebook a teacher a question about a take home test or something than it is for me to email them because a lot of them don’t check their email at home.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S6: Um I think that it’s a lot better than just having stuff in the classroom because you can go home like I said and you can check it cause I, a lot of people don’t use their agenda and I’m really disorganized but Facebook is organized for me so it’s like I can go and see when a teacher post something new and I can um find links and stuff instead of writing them down because I write stuff down and lose it (laughs) in like a few minutes so it’s just easier.

Student 7.

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S7: Every day (giggles)

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S7: Since I was 14

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S7: I can check to see like when my honor societies are meeting and what my homework assignments are and I can poke people on Facebook.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S7: Poking somebody because they poke me back a hundred times a minute (giggles).
R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S7: It’s a lot of fun cause I can check what homework I might need for the next class and we’ll have like discussions on the book we’re reading so it’s really cool to see like other people’s comments and I feel like they participate more than they do in class.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S7: We do discussion questions on like the books we’re reading and sometimes she’ll post like different questionnaires on the books or different projects to remind us of upcoming projects.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?

S7: Hmm, It’s been pretty much the same because um more teachers have started using Facebook, I think I’ve had 3 or 4 English teachers now use Facebook. Most of them um use it for like just asking questions about the book and we’ll have like a question and answer and you have to do at least 2 original posts and then you’ll have to comment on like 3 or 4 other comments.

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S7: Yes.

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S7: No (giggles).

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S7: I think it’s a lot of fun I think they’re fun.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S7: More classes should use it.

Student 8.

R: How often do you use Facebook?
S8: Uh pretty much every day.
R: How long have you had a Facebook account?
S8: For 3 years now.
R: What do you like about Facebook?
S8: Um I like how I can communicate with people that’s not in the same state as me.
R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?
S8: Um uploading pictures and commenting um to other people.
R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?
S8: I think it’s uh really cool, you get to know other people in your class and your teacher communicates with you, reminds you about stuff.
R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?
S8: Um, (sighs and giggles), like not that I don’t know, not that much.
R: What type of assignments does the teacher have you do on Facebook for the Facebook class?
S8: We had to talk about uh this essay we did and we had to comment on other people’s um ideas and say why it was good and why it was bad.
R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?
S8: Um, it actually hasn’t changed.
R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?
S8: Yes
R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?
S8: Yes
R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S8: I think that they’re actually kind of cool like they’re stepping up their game and trying to do more things.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S8: Um, I think it’ll open your eyes to more ideas and uh yea (giggles).

Student 9.

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S9: I use Facebook about once a month.

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S9: I’ve had a Facebook account about 3 years now.

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S9: I like that you get to interact with people easily and stay on top of people that you don’t see every day.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S9: Spend most of my time reading through the newsfeed and posting in certain groups I’m a part of.

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S9: I feel it’s a good way to have a group discussion because not everybody likes to participate when you are in a classroom setting.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S9: We had numerous discussion boards where we all answered questions that the teacher posted into the group.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?

S9: It’s been more intellectual based versus social interactions.
R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S9: Yes.

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S9: No.

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S9: I feel that it’s more engaging for the students because they’re more willing to participate in those type of activities.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S9: I just like the way with um how technology’s going it allows students to use those types of social networking and for school on top of what they use in their personal lives.

Student 10.

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S10: Uh personally or um I use it quite a bit maybe 2 hours 3 hours a day.

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S10: For about 2 years.

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S10: I like it’s a really good way to talk to friends cause I don’t have texting so it’s the best way I can talk to them without actually calling them or going over to their houses.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S10: Chats

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S10: Uh I feel it’s a, it’s a nice way to communicate when you’re not actually in class and it’s not too different and it also it’s nice that it gives you time to
think and formulate your response a bit better than in an actual face to face class.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S10: Uh just mostly group discussions we’ll post on our um our class page, ah group small group projects or uh individual projects and then our uh peers will comment on them.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?

S10: Uh it hadn’t really changed at all, I mean I use it a tiny bit more just because I have to for class but other than that.

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S10: Uh maybe one or two yea.

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S10: Uh not much no.

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S10: I like that they use it it’s definitely nice to be at home doing homework and be able to talk to people about it ,and I, I just like the experience, I mean it works well I feel like it would have been better almost if we had used it more but…

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S10: I’m sure I have something to say, it is a nice way to interact, um I do like, like like I said that you can, you can formulate your responses a little bit better um cause in class you’ll be we’ll be doing a discussion and then right when the bell rings you’ll be walking to your next class and think of like 5 things you could have said whereas on Facebook it’s, it’s easy to post those um and I feel like it does help our discussions go a little bit deeper especially for an English class um and we have time where we can look at the book that we’re talking about go back look at old passages review them if someone has said something interesting about them.
Student 11.

R: How often do you use Facebook?
S11: At least once a day
R: How long have you had a Facebook account?
S11: Since 7th grade
R: What do you like about Facebook?
S11: I keep up with other people and know things that I need
R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?
S11: Liking pictures and commenting on statuses
R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?
S11: It makes it interesting, I don’t get bored.
R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?
S11: She would post question, videos, and links and my group would have to comment with our answers.
R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?
S11: I got on it more often to check for class assignments.
R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?
S11: Basically I became friends with everyone in my class even though I didn’t have to.
R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?
S11: I talked to some of them on a daily basis but did not hang out or anything.
R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?
S11: I think it is a good idea because it requires everyone to interact and it made me like her more, I could relate to her more because a lot of teachers don’t know how to use technology.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S11: I think it is a good instructional tool because I like Facebook and I like to be on the internet and anytime I can use it that is good.

**Student 12.**

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S12: Daily

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S12: 2 years

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S12: Yeah I guess connecting with people you haven’t seen in a very long time, um like if they’re in the military. A lot of clubs have Facebook pages too.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S12: I look at other people’s pictures and comments, like statuses or make statuses of my own.

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S12: Um I like it because it’s another tool for students to use to learn and interact with their teachers that’s not so um personal, you know like sometimes people have other pages.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?

S12: Class discussions and would post links to other websites to help us prepare for test, and class reminders for tests and other things.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?

S12: I don’t think it’s really changed for me at all.
R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S12: Yes

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S12: Yea

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S12: I feel that is does help students to know what teachers opinions are.

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S12: I think that maybe some if teachers could make games for instructional purposes it would work as well. It can help people gain more friends, not just because, you would want to talk to them outside of class as well.

Student 13.

R: How often do you use Facebook?

S13: Twice a month.

R: How long have you had a Facebook account?

S13: 3 years

R: What do you like about Facebook?

S13: Connections you can have and pictures. I could look at pictures all day.

R: While on Facebook what do you spend the most time doing?

S13: Either newsfeed or looking at people’s pictures.

R: How do you feel about using Facebook as part of your class?

S13: I liked it, um, I think sometimes it’s nice to do something else other than paper and pencil.

R: What type of instructional activities do you participate in on Facebook?
S13: She had a couple of discussions when we did transcendentalism, a class discussion. Then another thing was good like on the status she would put paper due in a few weeks and that was good because I would be like oh I have something due.

R: Describe how your use of Facebook changed in any way since you joined the class group?

S13: None

R: Have you added new friends from your class since joining the closed group?

S13: Yes

R: Do you interact on Facebook with these students outside of the class group?

S13: No

R: How do you feel about teachers who use Facebook in their classrooms?

S13: I like it (nodding) very helpful

R: Share with me any other thoughts you have about Facebook as an instructional tool.

S13: Um I think it is very helpful. I really think it would be nice if every class could have Facebook, so we could ask questions and get updates, that was very helpful. I had a question and she answered it the next day.
APPENDIX N: TEACHER INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

R: What led to your decision to use Facebook as an instructional tool?

T: Social Networking is ubiquitous in our society, to say nothing of the high school setting. Since becoming a member of the teaching community, it has seemed obvious to me that Facebook could provide an invaluable virtual tool to enhance the physical classroom. It wasn’t until my 3rd year of teaching, however, when a colleague showed me how she utilized Facebook groups in her classroom, that I began to effectively implement the media as an instructional tool. I had been looking for a way to facilitate online discussions for both my regular and AP courses, but the students were frustrated and unimpressed by some of the strictly “educational” forums we tried out. The students suggested we use Facebook instead, and after talking it over with a colleague who had already set up something like this in her classroom, I decided to go for it. Once the groups got started, we used them for so much more than straightforward discussion. Facebook became an effective tool for sharing ideas, posting reminders, and publishing student work.

R: How long have you been utilizing it in your classroom?

T: Since September 2011, so one full school year.

R: What observations have you noted about the effectiveness of social networking in an academic setting?

T: One of the most effective aspects of using a social network like Facebook as a forum for discussion is that it lends a voice to students who are uncomfortable speaking up in class. Although Facebook discussions are not anonymous, shy students tend to feel more comfortable posting their thoughts and opinions on Facebook. When I ask my students about why this is, they often describe their anxiety over having to come up with a meaningful discussion contribution on the spot during class. They prefer to have time to reflect on their thoughts and opinions and formulate a response more deliberately. Virtual discussions allow them to do that. Facebook in particular is useful because almost all of my students are already members and experts in using the media by the time we set up our virtual classroom on the site. This comfort level helps minimize any technological hurdles and helps empower the students with a sense of ownership. Facebook is already their place, their world, and students find it natural to extend the knowledge and skills they learn in school into their virtual environment. Along the same lines of student ownership, I’ve noticed that my students quickly take it upon themselves to post questions, reminders, and resources that are relevant to the entire class. This is not something I asked them to do, but I think that because Facebook is so much a part of
their daily lives, they innately understand its function, purpose, and power as a tool for communication.

R: How do you think using Facebook in the classroom affects student relationships with each other? With you?

T: I'm not sure that the facebook classroom affected the students' relationships with one another significantly. Though I will say that, especially in my AP class, the students would often come in to the classroom and talk about the discussion they had had on facebook the night before. So in some ways students were more engaged with one another academically due to facebook. As far as their relationship with me goes, I do think they saw me as more in tune with technology and communication than some of their other teachers. They were also very willing to send me messages and questions through our facebook page, which tells me that the felt comfortable communicating with me through that venue.

R: What pitfalls have you encountered?

T: I have only encountered two notable pitfalls in my instructional use of Facebook so far. First, students occasionally post something silly or unrelated to the class page. This only happened once out of four classes whose Facebook groups were active for the entire school year. I never had anything inappropriate posted to my pages, but there was one student who posted gibberish once or twice. To many teachers, this is probably the scariest part about integrating Facebook into the classroom: group members can post anything they want at any time. Because teachers have administrative privileges in the groups, they can of course delete any inappropriate or irrelevant comments/posts, but there is no “prior approval” of comments/posts. I made it very clear to my students that the expectations for our online classroom are the same as the expectations for our physical classroom. Any violation of those expectations could result in an infraction notice, as well as a loss of membership in the Facebook group. Next year, I think that I will send home a permission form and a student contract just to clarify those expectations for both students and parents.

The second, and to me more challenging, pitfall is that not all students are Facebook members. This is difficult to believe, I know, but I had at least one student in each class who either was not allowed on Facebook, or who chose not to participate in Facebook. Obviously it is critical to provide alternative assignments to these students, but I still felt that I was doing them a disservice by leaving them out of the online aspect of our classroom community.

R: Do you recommend teachers utilizing Facebook?
I highly recommend that teachers utilize Facebook. It has the potential to be an effective instructional tool that enhances student understanding, engagement, and participation at no cost to the school or locality. Students are often already part of the Facebook community, and bringing the right classroom assignments into that community helps increase the relevancy and authenticity of our instruction.
### APPENDIX O: ASSIGNMENT 2 LESSON PLAN

#### Lesson Plan

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<th>Content Area/s: English</th>
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<td>Time Frame:</td>
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**SOL:**

**Reading 11.4**
The student will read, comprehend, and analyze relationships among American literature, history, and culture.

- a) Describe contributions of different cultures to the development of American literature.
- b) Compare and contrast the development of American literature in its historical context.
- c) Discuss American literature as it reflects traditional and contemporary themes, motifs, universal characters, and genres.
- d) Analyze the social or cultural function of American literature.
- e) Analyze how context and language structures convey an author’s intent and viewpoint.
- f) Explain how the sound of a poem (rhyme, rhythm, onomatopoeia, repetition, alliteration, assonance, and parallelism) supports the subject, mood, and theme.
- g) Explain how imagery and figures of speech appeal to the reader’s senses and experience.
- h) Explain how an author’s specific word choices, syntax, tone, and voice support the author’s purpose.
- i) Read and analyze a variety of American dramatic selections.
- j) Analyze the use of literary elements and dramatic conventions including verbal, situational and dramatic irony used in American literature.
- k) Generate and respond logically to literal, inferential, evaluative, synthesizing, and critical thinking questions before, during, and after reading texts.

**Writing 11.6**
The student will write in a variety of forms, with an emphasis on persuasion.

- a) Generate, gather, plan, and organize ideas for writing to address a specific audience and purpose.
- b) Produce arguments in writing developing a thesis that demonstrates knowledgeable judgments, addresses counterclaims, and provides effective conclusions.
- c) Organize ideas in a sustained and logical manner.
- d) Clarify and defend position with precise and relevant evidence elaborating ideas clearly and accurately.
- e) Adapt content, vocabulary, voice, and tone to audience, purpose, and situation.
- f) Revise writing for clarity of content, accuracy and depth of information.

**Related SOLs:**

**Technology SOLs:**
- [ ] C/T8.1 The student will communicate through application software.
- [ ] C/T8.2 The student will communicate through networks and telecommunication.
- [x] C/T8.3 The student will have a basic understanding of computer processing, storage, retrieval, and transmission technologies and a practical appreciation of the relevant advantages and disadvantages of various processing, storage, retrieval, and transmission technologies.
- [ ] C/T8.4 The student will process, store, retrieve, and transmit electronic information.

**Lesson Objectives:**
The student will:

- Students will know the biography of Chris McCandless and Henry David Thoreau.
- Students will know the key characteristics of

**Resources (Text & Technology):**

- Text Name: _______________
- Handout
- Dry Erase Board
- Library Research Material
- Overhead
- Audio Technology
naturalist and transcendental writing and apply these characteristics to Sean Penn’s film *Into the Wild*.

- Students will be able to compare and contrast Chris McCandless, Henry David Thoreau, and the man in London’s “To Build A Fire”.
- Students will be able to write persuasively on the topics of transcendentalism, naturalism, adventurism, and these three figures.

### Technology integration

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### Assessment:

**Summative:**
- Persuasive/analytical essay

**Formative:**
- Comprehension questions: ABC news article
- Reading quiz- Jack London (quiz grade)
- Discussion participation
- Journals/Exit slips

### Instructional Procedures:

**Day 1**
1. Watch 1st 30 min of *Into the Wild*
2. Exit Slip: How does Chris McCandless embody transcendentalist ideals?

**Day 2**
3. Finish clips of *Into the Wild*
4. Venn Diagram: H. D. Thoreau vs. Chris McCandless (create as a class, but keep a “teacher key” to hand out to certain students as well)
5. HW: Read ABC news article and answer corresponding questions (emphasize non-fiction text structure (headings/subheadings).

**Day 3**
1. Notes: Naturalism and Jack London (Compare/contrast with Transcendentalism)
2. Begin “To Build A Fire”, finish for HW- reading quiz next class
3. **HW:** Facebook discussion based on film clips and ABC news article: Is McCandless an admirable figure? (students must post one original response of 6-10 sentences, and post meaningful comments to at least 2 classmates’ posts)

**Day 4**
4. Finish “To Build A Fire” and Discuss
5. Debrief Facebook discussion—what are the two sides of the argument?
6. Compare/contrast: McCandless and London’s “man”, London’s “man” and Thoreau
7. Assign essay, work on pre-writing, thesis due next class

**Day 5**
8. Self-edit activity
9. Final draft due 2/15
Assessment: (Formal)  | Assessment (Informal)  | Resources (Text, Technology, Other)  
---|---|---  
- Homework  | - Observation  | - Guest Speaker  
- Written Report  | - Walk Around  | - Technology/Internet  
- Quiz/Test  | - Signaling  | - TV/VCR  
- Presentation  | - Choral Response  | - Novel, other books  
- Project  | - Class Work  | - Graphic Organizer  
- Class Work  | - Oral Questioning  | - Other  
- Other Facebook  | - Discussion  

Marzano’s Nine High Yield Strategies:  
- Id Similarities & Differences  
- Summarizing & Note Taking  
- Reinforcing Effort & Providing Recognition  
- Homework & Practice  
- Cues, Questions, & Adv. Organizers  
- Nonlinguistic Representation  
- Cooperative Learning  
- Setting Objectives & Providing Feedback  
- Generating & Testing Hypotheses  

Bloom’s Taxonomy:  
- Knowledge  
- Comprehension  
- Application  
- Analysis  
- Synthesis  
- Evaluation  

Extension Activities/Interdisciplinary Links:  
- Art  
- History  
- Math  
- Science  
- Physical Education  
- Foreign Language  
- English  
- Other  

Differentiation Strategies/Activities:  
- Content  
- Process  
- Readiness  
- Interest  
- Learning Profile  

Modify:  
- Assignment  
- Procedure  
- Assessment  

Other:  

Observations/Recommendations for Future Use:  
Students were highly engaged in Facebook discussion. Ideas were well thought out and the interactions between students were powerful. Facebook is ideal for these types of assignments.