GITED 511: Technology and Education

Field Experience

Anna V. Blake

 I observed a 5th grade science class of 19 students. The class was primarily male with only 25% female. Each student had desk oriented towards the SmartBoard in the classroom. The classroom had only the SmartBoard as a means of technology in the classroom. There were many different posters depicting standards and science skills. The lights were immediately turned off and the SmartBoard was turned on as a means of starting the class.

 The class was studying the human cell. The teacher welcomed the students into the classroom and acquainted the students with the standard and learning target for the day posted on the board. The teacher then used inquiry-based questioning in order to uncover what the students already know and what to know about the human cell. The teacher then turned off the lights and asked the students to focus on the SmartBoard. The teacher then passed out a fill-in-the-blank follow along means of a graphic organizer in order for students to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation.

 The level of integration seemed to be used on a regular basis as part of the curriculum. As I talked to the teacher, I found out that this classroom used PowerPoints and document cameras on a regular basis. By handing out the graphic organizer for the PowerPoint before each class, the teacher told me that this was a great way for students to have materials to study for the unit test at the end of the month. I felt that this use of integration what the most I had seen in a classroom so far in my experience in the Instructional Technology program. By gearing her students for a more college / high school based classroom, the teacher felt that she was preparing her students for science class in the future.

 The engagement of the students ranged from 5 to 7 throughout the lesson. Although the PowerPoint contained images, text and videos that were both visually appealing, I felt that the 40-minute lecture did not fully engage the students. The teacher did stop periodically in order for the students to ask questions and fill in their graphic organizer. With more audio, and video clips in addition to more student involvement, I feel that the student engagement could reach a 10. In the end, I feel technology engaged this science classroom more than a textbook can but there still needs to be more integration through multiple means of learning such as auditory, visual, kinesthetic and oral learning styles.

 In the end, I feel this lesson showed how technology can both be innovative and also carry a disengagement of students. I feel that technology in this case was so integrated to the fact that the students didn’t appreciate the innovative nature. Through incorporating different kinds of learning such as class discussion, group work and audio/ video clips, I feel that the teacher could make the students want to see technology rather than becoming desensitized to it. Although PowerPoints are innovative and can carry a wonderful presentation for any classroom, the limited use in a 40-minute lesson I feel is the most ideal in the field of technology. By possibly showing the PowerPoint for 15 minutes and then having other activities fill the remainder of the class could increase the student engagement to a whole new level. Ultimately, teachers need to use technology as a way of presenting material in an engaging manner, at times that may mean limited the use for effect.