

Driving Question and Inspiration

ED 792 Capstone

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The question driving the transformation of my thought and practice has centered on the value of vocabulary instruction, especially targeted verbs and academic vocabulary, for English Language Learner Students. I asked what would happen if ELLs were taught specific vocabulary using technology enhancements. I wanted to know if they would participate more in class literature discussions. Even though my original research was inconclusive in that specific area, there was enough improvement in the quality of responses to keep my interest. My question now is whether the use of technology to learn vocabulary in a manner that is collaborative and creative will move ELL students one or more levels up on the California English Language Development Test (CELDT) and/or Speaking and Listening Rubric.

My inspiration for this project sits in front of me every day. The brilliant student that rarely participates because language and lack of experience impedes his progress. The creative problem solver that no one listens to because she cannot fully describe her process. I see them and it pains me that I cannot teach them more, at a faster pace so they can fully take part in their own learning. I think this is where my work relates to the goals of Napa Learns. I am fully committed to the challenge of bringing all my students to their grade level of literacy and I am using this Master's program to facilitate their growth through my own. I see a picture of my classroom where all students participate fully without restraint for lack of vocabulary. I see a structure for learning that requires students to work together for a common vocabulary goal – deep understanding. The means to this end will be my use of technology tools and lesson design that promotes acquisition of 21st century skills and aligns with the new strategies of the Common Core State Standards. I have iPads so I will use them, but I hope to use them in new and innovative ways to meet the needs of my inspirational students.