

CM220 SAMPLE DISCUSSION POST:

UNIT 7

Please note that this is a **sample** Discussion post to help inspire and guide your own original writing of the Assignment. Your Assignment does not need to look exactly like the sample, as this sample is just a possible response to the Assignment prompt. Be sure to review the Reading and grading rubric, complete each task in the instructions, and contact the instructor with any questions.

DISCUSSION POST:

How to use this graphic organizer: Each numbered (e.g., 1, 2, 3) block represents either a page or a paragraph in your composition. Use the spaces below to help you brainstorm ideas and organize your draft. The “notes” blocks help you organize future research opportunities and potential outside sources.

Working thesis statement: High schools in the San Antonio Independent School District should provide tablets to students to encourage more learning outside of the classroom and increase mastery of skills.

1	2	3	4
Idea #1: San Antonio Independent School District (SAISD) students are struggling compared to students elsewhere in the city and state, with lower graduation rates and test scores.	Idea #2: Technology can increase students’ ability to learn and review materials at their own pace.	Idea #3: More self-directed learning outside of the classroom will give teachers more flexibility with in-class time.	Idea #4 (Challenge): Not enough evidence currently exists that technology has a positive impact on student learning.
Notes	Notes	Notes	Notes
I can find statistics on Texas education sites with graduation/drop-out rates and test scores to compare this district to others in the state.	I know from my experience at the university that more self-directed learning is both a challenge (time management) and a benefit. I can skim through things I already know and spend more	I definitely need to find more research about the “flipped classroom” model to support this claim. What are the benefits? Will teachers be able to individualize each student’s education? Khan’s TED video (2011) will be	I will need to find research that technology really does make a difference. Catalano (2013) talks about high-profile failures in districts that have tried giving students tablets, but those problems were more related to failures with the tablets themselves.

	time on what I find confusing.	helpful support here, as will the <i>Ubiquitous Learning</i> ebook I found for the Unit 4 project (Kidd & Chen, 2011).	
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My paragraph for point #4:

While advocates like Salman Khan (2011) argue that technology helps students to understand concepts in ways that traditional classroom approaches do not, many school districts wonder if the investment will lead to improved student learning outcomes. Justin Reich (2012) notes that a study commissioned by President Clinton in the 1990s failed to find evidence that educational technology led to improved outcomes. Without carefully considering the purpose of the technology and training teachers to use that technology effectively, he argues, technology will fail to have a real impact on learning (Reich, 2012). However, evidence shows that technology can, in fact, make a difference. Minnesota’s Byron Independent School District decided to abandon textbooks and create their own math curriculum (Fulton, 2013). They used Moodle, an open-source platform. Many teachers also created instructional videos so they could use the flipped classroom approach. While they faced numerous challenges, teachers noted a key benefit was that students were able to watch videos from multiple teachers, so if one person’s explanation of a concept was not reaching the student, another teacher’s approach might work (Fulton, 2013). After about 2.5 years, students in district in flipped classrooms score higher on chapter tests than those in traditional, lecture-oriented classes (Fulton, 2013).

References

- Catalano, F. (2013, October 9). Tech happens: When tablets and schools don’t mix. Retrieved from <http://www.geekwire.com/2013/tech-tablets-schools-mix/>.
- Fulton, K. (2013). Byron’s flipped classrooms. *Education Digest*, 79(1), 22–26.
- Kidd, T. T. & Chen, I. (Eds.). (2011). *Ubiquitous learning: Strategies for pedagogy, course design, and technology*. Retrieved from <http://library.kaplan.edu>.
- Khan, S. (2011, March). *Let’s use video to reinvent education* [Video file]. *TED Talks*. Retrieved from http://www.ted.com/talks/salman_khan_let_s_use_video_to_reinvent_education.html.
- Reich, J. (2012, July 5). Technology is not a silver bullet [Blog post]. *Education Week*. Retrieved from http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/edtechresearcher/2012/07/technology_is_not_a_silver_bullet.html.

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RESPONSE POST:

Hi Steve,

You have a lot of great ideas listed in your organizational chart, and the thesis statement is concise and persuasive. Based on the tips in “How to Write a Strong Paragraph,” I think I would probably split this long paragraph into two separate ones, though, with a new paragraph beginning with the “However, evidence shows . . .” sentence. That would help to highlight your rebuttal to those like Reich (2012) who worry that technology is the primary solution to improving outcomes. If you do have a transition into a new paragraph, I wonder if a better topic sentence might be “Despite such concerns, technology allows for possibilities like the flipped classroom, which allow more students to master the course objectives.” That seems to be the case with the math students in the Byron Independent School District since their test scores are higher than those of students in traditional classes.

While I did not see any grammar or sentence structure errors in your paragraph, one sentence in your paragraph seems a little wordy. Here it is: While they faced numerous challenges, teachers noted a key benefit was students were able to watch videos from multiple teachers, so if one person’s explanation of a concept was not reaching the student, another teacher’s approach might work.

How about this: Despite the challenges, teachers noted benefits such as students being able to review other teachers’ video lectures if they did not grasp their own teacher’s explanation of a concept.

I hope the suggestions help!

Todd

References

- Reich, J. (2012, July 5). Technology is not a silver bullet [Blog post]. *Education Week*. Retrieved from http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/edtechresearcher/2012/07/technology_is_not_a_silver_bullet.html.
- Kaplan University Writing Center. (n.d.). How to write a strong paragraph. Retrieved from https://kucampus.kaplan.edu/DocumentStore/Docs11/pdf/WC/How_to_Write_a_Strong_Paragraph.pdf.