Chapter 10
Implementing New Technologies to Support Social Justice Pedagogy

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What Is the Research Base for Using New Technologies to Facilitate Critical Inquiry and Reflective Discourse in Support of Social Justice Pedagogy?

The role of learning situated in experience is central to social justice pedagogy; as Ayers et al. write, "The fundamental message of the teacher for social justice is: You can change the world" (1998, p. xvii). Social justice pedagogies are best supported when teachers do the following: (1) create environments that enable ongoing interaction, and relationship building; (2) foster autonomy and collaboration; and (3) afford opportunities for critical inquiry and reflective discourse (Cranton, 2006; Guthrie & McCracken, 2010a; Mandell & Herman, 2007; Rovai, 2002).

Social justice educators design learning tasks to foster critical literacy and bring questions of racism, homophobia, classism, sexism, and other issues into the classroom by examining media that students see, hear, and use every day (Luke & Dooley, 2007). Morrell (2004) describes the tenets of critical literacy:

> The ability to challenge existing power relations in texts and to produce new texts that delegitimize these relations; a consciousness of the relationship between the dominant culture's use of language, literacy and social injustice; the ability not only to read words but to read the world into and onto texts and recognize the correlation between the word and the world; and the ability to create political texts that inspire transformative action and conscious reflection. (p. 57)

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In order to foster critical literacy, students need to be empowered to produce messages that move beyond sharing their understanding of the content they are studying to those designed to challenge the thinking of others (Luke & Dooley, 2007; Morrell, 2004, 2007, 2008). Social justice educators guide students to explore the connections between power and information. Instructional environments designed to foster critical literacy should emphasize the development and sharing of knowledge gained through both individual experience and collaborative group processes (Guthrie & McCracken, 2010a, 2010b). Furthermore, learning environments that extend beyond the classroom environment are essential for social justice pedagogy (Merryfield, 2003).

An emerging body of research has begun to examine the potential of new technologies for offering students opportunities to communicate and critically discuss social justice issues with peers from their local community as well as the global community (Garcia, Seglem, & Share, 2013; Hobbs, 2011; Myers & Beach, 2004). New technologies such as Web 2.0 tools, mobile technologies, microblogs, video blogs, podcasts, and social networking are increasing in popularity. These technologies provide environments that potentially foster critical inquiry and reflective discourse, provide opportunities for the sharing of knowledge and experience, and foster the development of relationships among young adults from diverse cultural backgrounds (Garcia et al., 2013; Hobbs, 2011; O'Hara & Pritchard, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014; Pritchard, O'Hara, & Zwiers, 2014). Many new technologies emphasize the social aspects of communication and interaction, and these often motivate learners to participate in ways not typically seen in the past (Kellner & Share, 2007; O'Hara & Pritchard, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014; Pritchard et al., 2014).

Meyers (2008) suggests that new technologies, and virtual learning environments, offer rich opportunities for discussions structured to facilitate critical inquiry and reflective discourse when they encourage explorations of issues related to social equity. According to Garcia et al. (2013), "critical media literacy pedagogy is based on Freirian notions of praxis that link theory with action, especially as students create their own media representations for audiences beyond the classroom walls" (p. 112).

Marc Prensky (2010) asserts:

> Even elementary school students can change the world through online writing, supporting and publicizing online causes, making informational and public service videos and machine, and creating original campaigns of their own design. Anything students create that 'goes viral' on the Web reaches millions of people, and students should be continually striving to make this happen, with output that both does good and supports their learning. (p. 66)

Certainly, we have seen a societal shift from conveying individual ideas and expressions to the leveraging of individual strengths through these new technologies to create community involvement (Jenkins, Purushotma, Clinton, Weigel, & Robison, 2006; O'Hara & Pritchard, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014; Pritchard et al., 2014). Jenkins and his colleagues describe this community involvement as participatory culture, and explain "Participatory culture is emerging as the culture absorbs and

responds to the explosion of new media technologies that make it possible for average consumers to archive, annotate, appropriate, and recirculate media content in powerful new ways" (p. 8).

New technologies, like social media, can provide opportunities for teachers and students to critically analyze relationships between media, audiences, information, and power. In addition, the practice of critical and engaged reflection has a dramatic impact on facilitating learning around social justice, and the process is made particularly visible and interactive through online communication and collaboration platforms (Merryfield, 2006; O'Hara & Pritchard, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014; Pritchard et al., 2014). Garrison, Anderson, and Archer (2000) found that virtual classrooms provide environments in critical inquiry and reflective discourse are fostered as a means to extend positive, collaborative educational interactions. Instruction designed to utilize new technologies can facilitate critical literacy as students interact with multimodal texts and produce their own multimodal texts to deepen their understanding of complex social justice issues (Hull & Moje, 2012; O'Hara & Pritchard, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014; Pritchard et al., 2014; White, Booker, Ching, & Martin, 2012). These tools can also promote the use of cognitive and metacognitive learning strategies as students decide how to represent information and communicate messages, and decide what associations to make between the text they are reading or producing and the multimedia components they are utilizing (O'Hara & Pritchard, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014; Pritchard et al., 2014).

Which High-Impact Instructional Practices Facilitate Critical Inquiry and Reflective Discourse in Support of Social Justice Pedagogies?

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS), more than previous sets of standards, emphasize an advanced level of interaction and communication skills essential for critical inquiry and reflective discourse. An analysis of the Standards reveals a core set of skills that are common across grade levels and disciplines. These "common core across the Common Core" skills include making conjectures, presenting explanations, constructing arguments with sound reasoning and logical evidence, questioning assumptions, understanding multiple perspectives, making sense of complex texts, and negotiating meaning in disciplinary discussions with others across subject areas (CCSS, 2012a, 2012b).

By conducting an extant review of research and analyzing the teaching moves that foster high level interaction and communication skills, we identified high-impact, essential teaching practices that align with the new CCSS and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) and are essential to social justice pedagogy. Our research revealed not just a list of practices, but ways in which the essential instructional practices support one another (O'Hara & Pritchard, 2012, 2013; Zwiers, O'Hara, &

		DISICPLINARY USES OF EVIDENCE		
High-Impact Practices		• Foster students' ability to analyze multiple forms of textual and oral evidence for the criteria of accuracy, relevancy and persuasiveness • Provide and support a variety of opportunities for students to identify and use multiple forms of evidence to develop and support claims in disciplinary writing and speaking		
		DISCIPLINARY COMMUNICATION		
		• Provide and support extended and rich opportunities for students to produce original disciplinary oral output appropriate to task, purpose and audience • Provide and support extended and rich opportunities for students to produce & edit original disciplinary written output appropriate to task, purpose and audience		
		DISCIPLINARY DISCUSSIONS		
		• Build disciplinary conversation skills (create, clarify, fortify, negotiate) • Provide and support extended and rich opportunities for students to engage in disciplinary discussions to build ideas and negotiate meaning		
Cross-Cutting Practices	PROMOTING A CULTURE OF DISCPLINARY LEARNING	MODELING		GUIDIING LEARNING
Foundational Practices	DESIGNING INSTRUCTION FOR DISCIPLINARY THINKING AND UNDERSTANDING			

Fig. 10.1 Essential practice frames

Pritchard, 2014a, 2014b). The authors, therefore, organized the practices into three "frames," each consisting of a high-impact essential practice at the top supported by three crosscutting practices and a foundational practice that are common across the three frames. See Fig. 10.1. The three essential practices identified as having the highest impact were Disciplinary Communications, Disciplinary Discussions, and Disciplinary Uses of Evidence. The three crosscutting, essential practices were Promoting a Culture of Disciplinary Learning, Strategy Use and Instruction, and Guiding Learning. These are all supported by the foundational essential practice, Designing Instruction for Disciplinary Thinking and Understanding.

Many teaching checklists contain discrete practices that do not relate to one another in significant ways. Unlike lists, the frames we have developed show the interconnectedness and interdependence of the practices. These frames help educators see how the essential practices support one another, and they help teachers focus on the essential practices with the highest impact at the top of each frame. Within each practice are more observable and detailed "strands," each of which describes three levels of expertise.

The first of the three high-impact practices is Disciplinary Uses of Evidence, which focuses on structuring and strengthening uses of multiple forms of evidence in disciplinary writing and speaking. At the high end, the teacher scaffolds multiple

opportunities for students to identify, analyze, and use relevant and sufficient evidence to support claims and constructively evaluate others' use of evidence. We believe that developing students' abilities to understand how evidence is used to support a specific claim, constructively evaluate others' use of evidence, and analyze the use of evidence to persuade are essential components of social justice pedagogy.

The second high-impact practice is Disciplinary Communication, which focuses on structuring, strengthening, and supporting the quantity and quality of students' disciplinary oral and written output. Oral and written output should include a variety of text types as defined in CCSS (i.e., argument, informational/explanatory, narrative). Examples of disciplinary oral output include video advertising, microblogging, and YouTube channel interviews. Examples of disciplinary written output include a variety of genres, multimodal texts, and visual representations. At the high end, the teacher scaffolds multiple opportunities for students to produce and edit original messages that use disciplinary language appropriately. Effective social justice educators fortify students' ability to produce output using a variety of genres, multimodal texts, and visual representations with the goal of challenging the thinking of the world around them.

Perhaps the most challenging high-impact practice is Disciplinary Discussions, which focuses on structuring and strengthening student-to-student disciplinary discussion skills (e.g., build and elaborate on others' ideas, express their own clearly, and negotiate meaning). Disciplinary discussions can consist of two-way dialogue such as paired conversations, small group tasks, and whole class discussions with methods to ensure that all participate. At the high end, the teacher scaffolds multiple opportunities for students to produce original, disciplinary messages. Effective social justice educators foster student's disciplinary discussion skills in support of critical inquiry and reflective discourse.

How Can Teachers Use New Technologies to Enact High-Impact Practices in Support of Social Justice Pedagogy?

More and more educators are finding that new technologies engage the visual, auditory, and sensory learning modalities of their students in conjunction with stimulating interactive activities (Garcia et al., 2013; Hobbs, 2011; Myers & Beach, 2004; O'Hara & Pritchard, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2014; Pritchard et al., 2014; Zwiers et al., 2014a, 2014b). All of the following activities utilize new technologies and target a high-impact practice to foster critical inquiry and reflective discourse among young adults, as well as a deeper understanding of complex social justice issues.

Many new technologies can be used to help students to constructively evaluate others' use of evidence and analyze how evidence has been used to support a particular social or political agenda. In a high school classroom in New Jersey, for example, students analyze multiple forms of evidence about the Ferguson shooting

Ms. B's sixth grade students are examining the uses of nonviolence as a way to pursue justice and equality. As part of this unit Ms. B wants her students to explore primary source documents guided by the following questions:

- Why did many civil rights activists choose nonviolence as a way to pursue equal rights?
- How were evidence and persuasion used as nonviolent strategies?
- What evidence can we use to support the claim that nonviolent strategies were successful or unsuccessful?

Ms. B has introduced the following objectives for the unit: (1) Analyze multiple forms of evidence used to persuade society to take nonviolent action for civil rights; (2) Learn to evaluate multiple sources of evidence, including historical primary source documents; and (3) Understand what is meant by relevant and sufficient evidence in support of claims .

At the beginning of the Unit Ms. B introduces students to the Six Principles of Nonviolence (http://www.thekingcenter.org/king-philosophy#sub2) (1) Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people; (2) Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding; (3) Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice not people; (4) Nonviolence holds that suffering can educate and transform; (5) Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate; and (6) Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice. Students engage in critical inquiry and reflective discourse as they discuss these principles. Students then examine primary source documents including the SNCC Statement of Purpose and the Congress for Racial Equality (CORE) Rules for Action.

Next Ms. B engages students in a complete and accurate analysis of two sources of evidence for the criteria of accuracy, relevancy and persuasiveness. During this activity, she deconstructs the evidence by explaining why and how it is or is not accurate, relevant, and persuasive. Teams then engage in multiple, supported activities where they identify and use multiple forms of evidence to develop and support the claim that nonviolent strategies were successful in pursuing equal rights and those that support the claim that nonviolent strategies were unsuccessful in pursuing equal rights. Teams share out their findings with the whole class.

As a culminating activity, student teams select a current social justice issue they would like to address. They develop a claim around this issue and identify and use multiple forms of evidence to support their claim. The teams then produce a multimodal text, blog or video message to use the evidence to persuade the community to take nonviolent action.

Fig. 10.2 Analyzing uses of evidence vignette—primary sources and civil rights

of Michael Brown. They look at videos from members of the local community shared directly after the shooting through social media, evidence documents released from the grand jury investigation, images, articles, and news clips from various media sources. They discuss how the same sources of evidence can be used to support very different claims. The access that new technologies provide to immediate evidence in different forms can be very powerful and complex. The following vignette illustrates how one sixth-grade teacher enacts this practice in her classroom (Fig. 10.2).

Teachers can develop learning tasks that integrate new technologies and are designed to foster disciplinary communication skills is support of social justice pedagogy. Students can create multimodal texts that incorporate sound, images, text, and animation and serve to challenge thinking. These products can be shared widely with local and global communities. The following vignette illustrates how one twelfth-grade teacher enacts this practice in his classroom (Fig. 10.3).

New technologies in the form of online communication and collaboration tools and social media provide opportunities for rich and extended discussions. These technologies allow students to engage in authentic discussions with classmates and

> Mr. M's twelfth grade students have been exploring how musical lyrics provide social commentary on issues of discrimination across history. The unit is designed to deepen students understanding of how songs provide documentation of the changes in our culture and society and have been used not only as social commentary but also to challenge thinking and bring about change. On the wall in the classroom Mr. M has posted the following quote:
> "Words make you think a thought. Music makes you feel a feeling. A song makes you feel a thought." (E. Y. Harburg (1898-1981)
>
> Mr. M has introduced the following objectives; (1) Analyze and discuss the lyrical content of music to find examples of social commentary; (2) Examine how the lyrical content of music been designed to challenge our thinking; (3) Recognize the importance of artistic expression as a means of cultural and societal documentation; and (4) Learn to interpret messages conveyed in one medium and convey a similar message using another medium.
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> On the first day of the unit, Mr. M plays the 1968 song Everyday People by Sly and the Family Stone. The teacher highlights one short passage from the song:
> *There is a blue one who can't accept the green one; For living with a fat one trying to be a skinny one; And different strokes for different folks; And so on and so on and; We got to live together I am no better and neither are you; We are the same whatever we do*
>
> Students engage in a discussion about the song and what it reflects about the era in which it is written. Mr. M has students conduct some research about the song. Students discover that the Family Stone was the first major integrated band in rock history. Sly & the Family Stone's message was about peace and equality through music, and this song reflects the same and unlike the band's more typically funky and psychedelic records, "Everyday People" is a mid-tempo number with a more mainstream pop feel. Students analyze the lyrics and engage in a discussion about how the melody, beat and rhythm of the song are used to enhance the message.
>
> As the unit continues students divide into two classroom groups where one group listens to one song and the other group listens to a different song from the same era. In their groups, students discuss the cultural and societal issues that existed during that era. Students brainstorm some of the societal issues reflected in the lyrics of their song. Individual groups then play the song for the class and share their lists for discussion.
>
> As a culminating activity student teams of four choose a contemporary song of their choice. They research and discuss the issues and message reflected in the song. Student teams discuss how the song reflects the culture and political issues of our time. Students then assemble digital images (photographs they take, images they draw, images they find online). They create a multimodal text to reflect the message conveyed by their chosen song and some suggestions for actions that could be taken to address the underlying issues.

Fig. 10.3   Fortifying output vignette—music as social commentary

young adults in different communities and countries. In recent years, many different cultural and societal perspectives are made public through the use of these tools, advancing in-depth public discussions about social justice issues. The following vignette illustrates how one eighth-grade teacher enacts this practice in her classroom (Fig. 10.4).

In summary, these vignettes illustrate ways in which teachers can utilize new technologies that target the high-impact practices and support social justice pedagogy. By creating and implementing learning tasks similar to those illustrated by the vignettes, teachers can:

- Provide students with multiple opportunities for critical inquiry and reflective discourse.
- Create environments in which students encounter authentic social justice issues and choose pathways and strategies for problem solution.

Ms. J's eight grade students are studying famous walls that exist in all nations of the world. Ms. J introduces the unit with a whole class discussion to illustrate that famous walls are indicators of political, social, cultural and historical events across time. The unit is designed to engage students in critical inquiry and reflective discourse as they learn about people and nations from famous walls within their borders. These young adults are then challenged to compare this information with the stories told by walls within their own communities.

Ms. J posts the following objectives on the wall and discusses these with the class: (1) Discuss the implications that walls have had for global peoples and cultures; (2) Compare and contrast global walls from historical, political, and cultural perspectives; (3) Explore views of global and local walls with students from other countries; and (4) Design and create an annotated multimodal virtual environment of walls within the local community.

The nine-day unit begins with student teams engaging in an exploration of famous walls from around the world (e.g., Great Wall of China, Wailing Wall in Jerusalem). Students explore nonfiction and fictional multimodal texts describing the famous walls of the world. Ms. J engages the whole class in an analysis of some of these multimodal texts. During the analysis students come to see how text, sound, and visual images are at the heart of understanding the history, cultures, and politics of varying groups of people from around the world. As the research and exploration continues, teams are provided with prompts and supports to foster discussions about the meaning of each wall in the particular time and culture that it was built, and how these walls reflect differences and similarities across sociocultural and political perspectives and values. Tasks and supports are structured to provide extended opportunities for discussion and to foster students' ability to build and elaborate on others' ideas, express their own clearly, and negotiate meaning. Posted on the walls around the classroom are norms of interaction that were co-constructed with the students to promote a culture of learning where all students feel safe to participate. These norms highlight the use of respectful language, attentive listening, collegial discussions, positive dialog and interactions, and dignified responses. Periodically, Ms. J prompts for their use.

Using Skype, the teams communicate with peers in other parts of the world to discuss walls in their communities and regions. During these sessions, teams discuss the customs, traditions and values linked to the community/nations decision to erect a wall and also the impact on society when a decision is made to take down a wall. As a culminating project, students go out into their own community to locate and photograph walls that represent current values and/or issues. They build and annotate presentations about these community walls in Voicethread[1] and use the online program to enhance or challenge the thinking of their peers about the messages behind the walls. These interactions through Voicethread foster creative thinking, knowledge construction, and the development of innovative products and processes.

Fig. 10.4 Fostering disciplinary discussions vignette—behind every wall (Voicethread is a free program available online at voicethread.com)

- Change the role of students from passive recipients of information to active, strategic learners choosing instructional resources, methods of learning, and modes of communication.
- Enable students to determine the meaning of language and multimodal components in a particular social justice message.
- Combine language and multimodal features to communicate, clarify, negotiate meaning, and challenge the thinking of the world around them.

As you prepare learning tasks, consider the following suggestions for selecting the appropriate technology: (a) choose a technology tool that helps students maximize their communication; (b) choose a tool that works within the reality of the technology your classroom, e.g., number of computers that are available,

internet access; (c) choose a tool that focuses on the overall goal of integration of complex language, technology, and content; and (d) be cognizant of safety concerns for teachers and students engaging in online activities, especially those of a sensitive nature.

What Are the Implications of This Work for Teacher Professional Development and Instructional Capacity Building?

Our work has convinced us that in order for teachers to enact high-impact practices that foster uses of new technologies to develop critical inquiry and reflective discourse skills, the right conditions need to be in place at the classroom, school, and district levels. There needs to be a focus on building school-based instructional leadership teams to drive the development of the sociocultural and organizational conditions that are needed to support teachers in enacting these high-impact practices in their teaching. We draw on the work of Ann Jaquith (2009, 2012, 2013) which is premised on four central ideas: (1) instructional leadership is most effective when leadership is shared among a team of people who have different roles and expertise; (2) a shared understanding of the purpose for and value of social justice pedagogy is essential for the uptake of new practices; (3) capacity can be built within a school to stimulate, support, and sustain learning about the use of the high-impact practices; and (4) generating site-based capacity to use high-impact social justice practices and reflect upon their use creates the conditions for ongoing learning and sustained use of these practices.

Furthermore, any professional development initiative should attend to helping school and district teams create the conditions needed for continuous improvement and professional growth related to social justice pedagogy. Professional learning opportunities for teachers and coaches should include the following components:

- Developing shared norms and language related to the importance of social justice pedagogy and critical literacy development in our classrooms.
- Engaging in professional dialogue about how to approach social justice issues in respectful, responsible ways including dealing with sensitivity concerns, conflict, and communication with parents and the community about the issues under study.
- Unpacking instructional practices and moves designed to engage students in critical discussions through new technologies.
- Examining traditional vs. multimodal genres, the role of audience and purpose, and the discourse language embedded in texts.
- Collaborating with peers to design goal-oriented units based on questions critical to social justice understandings that endure beyond the lesson/unit (e.g., Understanding by Design).

- Exploring and discussing classroom examples of critical literacy approaches to social justice instruction and curriculum design that show how to effectively integrate technology into social justice lessons.
- Increasing fluency for the use of technology tools, software, apps, Web 2.0 tools, etc., including effective troubleshooting strategies.

Conclusions

Learning how to use new technologies to further critical inquiry and reflective discourse in support of social justice requires teachers to develop knowledge and practice in three areas: technology use, the teaching of content, and social justice pedagogies. In this chapter, we explain how a set of essential practice frames that articulate high-impact practices provides a framework for building teacher capacity in these areas. Furthermore, classroom vignettes demonstrate concrete ways in which these practices can be enacted across a variety of subject areas and grade levels.

Key Instructional Practices and Strategies

1. Analyzing uses of evidence
2. Fortifying disciplinary output
3. Fostering disciplinary discussions

Multimedia Resources

1. The World Is As Big Or As Small As You Make It: Sundance Institute (https://vimeo.com/116915456)
2. Teaching Social Justice (http://teachingsocialjustice.com)
3. Center for Social Justice Research, Teaching and Service (https://csj.georgetown.edu/academic)
4. Education and Social Justice Project (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hc6d3QO3_Lg)
5. Center for Digital Storytelling (http://storycenter.org)
6. Center for Media Literacy (http://www.medialit.org)

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