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Fall 2009- Practicum Lesson

Context and Background of Lesson-

Finding Resources Beyond Google

Collaboration is a huge piece of the puzzle for many library media specialists. Or at least that is what I have learned throughout my coursework at Mansfield University. Unfortunately, making this a reality is the tough part. Many teachers find themselves in such a hectic schedule, that it is difficult to collaborate with others. They are not trying to avoid us; they are just downright BUSY!!

So, I was lucky enough to have Robin Siesel agree to work with me during my Practicum hours at Marathon Central School District. Ms. Siesel is one of four social studies teachers at the Middle School/ High School level. She teaches a homogenous group of students in an AP Government class as well as several other classes. This is the group that I will be permitted to work with as a collaborative effort between Ms. Siesel and myself. The students in this class did not need to fulfill any prerequisites to be in the class. All they needed was the interest to be there. This particular group has no special needs, and all students work in a similar range of abilities.

Ms. Siesel has a very good history with the students. She has taught at the schoo for several years as a social studies teacher. Much of the staff and students seem to feel that she is a very good educator and co-worker.

The subject of the lesson that I will be teaching is search-tools that are available other than the Google search engine. Ms. Siesel has assigned the class a multipart project, which begins with the class writing a speech for which they will do no prior research. The topics that were permitted to use are of their own choosing but must be something that they feel very strongly about. The goal is this aspect of the project is to make them understand that it is very difficult to support you opinions without having content to back it up. After the students write their first draft, I will then introduce them to many different types of searching tools that they have not been exposed to until this point. We will discuss various search engines; some general and others more specialized. We will also discuss meta-search engines and the Invisible Web. The students will then use these tools to conduct research to support their speeches. The speeches will then be presented in front of the class for their peers to evaluate them. Public speaking is another component of this project. The research will be conducted in the library media center as well as in the classroom using wireless laptop computers. The library media center offers a laptop cart and ample table space for all students to work comfortably. The school offers many database subscriptions for students use.