# INCORPORATING TECHNOLOGY INTO THE INSTRUCTION OF SOCIAL STUDIES

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## Abstract

In this action research project report, the teacher researcher focused on the problem of lack of achievement of students in middle school social studies classes. The purpose of the project was to increase motivation and engagement of students by incorporating the use of technology; thereby, increasing achievement. A total of 105 sixth-grade students participated in the study, which took place September 6th through December 16, 2011.

The teacher researcher documented low achievement in social studies by using a technology checklist, a social studies attitudinal survey, and behavior checklists. From the tools, the teacher researcher determined that students had a 25% greater rate of recreational technology usage versus school usage. Additionally, the teacher researcher discerned that 59% of students had social studies instruction one to three times a week, on average, as fifth graders, thus signaling limited exposure to social studies curriculum. By using the behavior checklists, the teacher researcher observed that students exhibited poor attention/concentration when traditional methods of instruction were employed.

The teacher researcher chose to use technology as a solution strategy for increasing achievement in social studies. The following technologies were used during the intervention: SMARTboard, WebQuest, PowerPoint, and SMART Response Interactive Student Response System or clickers. A SMARTboard is an interactive projection display device that students interfaced with to experience a variety of activities. A WebQuest was an inquiry-oriented activity where students got the majority of their resources online and PowerPoint software allowed them to present information in a visually engaging manner. Finally, clickers were an interactive way for students to respond to questions, whereby results were tallied and immediate feedback given.

Counterproductive behaviors that were evident with traditional pedagogy appeared to diminish when technology methods were being used. Disruptive behaviors decreased by nearly 45%. The teacher researcher was professionally satisfied that all of her students had now been exposed to the four technology methods of the project. As a result, the teacher researcher concluded that technology markedly increased motivation and engagement of students.

# Chapter 1

## Problem Statement and Context

### General Statement of the Problem

This action research project was conducted by one teacher researcher who taught social studies for grade 6 at a public middle school. The problem area focused on lack of engagement and achievement in social studies. The teacher researcher used technology to enhance student learning. The teacher researcher documented evidence by conducting two student surveys and by collecting quantitative data on students' classroom behaviors.

### Immediate Context of the Problem

The middle school was in a public school district located in north central Illinois. The public school district lies in an urban area by a major interstate and a large tributary of the Mississippi River. The following demographic data describe the school makeup in comparison to the district and state. The unit, district, and state data is from the Illinois Interactive Report Card (Northern Illinois University, 2010), unless otherwise noted.

In 2010, the school had a total enrollment of 950. The students were diverse with comparable percentages of Caucasian (40.3%) and Hispanic (33.5%) students. At the district level, Caucasians accounted for one-third (n=10,084) of enrollment. At the state level, slightly over half (n=1,089,957) of the students were Caucasian. In all three instances, the Hispanic (318; 6,279; 435,570) population was greater than the African American (178; 8,046; 388,091; respectively).

Table 1

*Total Enrollment and Racial/Ethnic Background*

| | Total Enrollment | Caucasian | African American | Hispanic | Native American | Asian/Pacific Islander | Multiracial/ Ethnic |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| School | 950 | 383 | 178 | 318 | 19 | 26 | 43 |
| District | 27,181 | 10,084 | 8,046 | 6,279 | 27 | 924 | 1,794 |
| State | 2,064,312 | 1,089,957 | 388,091 | 435,570 | 4,128 | 86,701 | 59,865 |

The Illinois Interactive Report Card, 2010, stated that 63.5% (n=603) of students in the school and 75.3% (n=20,467) of the children in the district were classified as low income as compared to 45.4% (n=937,198) in the state. According to the school report card, "Low-income students come from families receiving public aid; live in institutions for neglected or delinquent children; are supported in foster homes with public funds; or are eligible to receive free or reduced-price lunches" (p. 1).

The school's mobility rate of 10.1% (n=96) was slightly lower than both the district average of 13.5% (n=3,669), and the state average of 13.0% (n=268,361).

Table 2

*Socioeconomic Status and Other Student Background Information by Percentage*

| | Truancy | Mobility Rate | Attendance Rate |
|---|---|---|---|
| School | 1.7 | 10.1 | 94.4 |
| District | 6.1 | 13.5 | 92.1 |
| State | 3.6 | 13.0 | 93.9 |

The school's Limited English Proficient Rate of 22.2% (n=211) was twice that of the district's rate of 10.2% (n=2,772), and nearly three times the rate of 7.6% (n=156,888) for the state. This school housed the district's middle school bilingual program which accounted for the high percentage of LEP students.

The majority (87.9%, n=1,620) of the district's 1,843 teachers are Caucasian, which is dissimilar to the percentage (37.1%, n=10,084) of Caucasians in the student body. The division of gender within district (25.2% male, n=464; 74.8% female, n=1,379) shows more male teachers than the state average (23.0% male, 77.0% female). As tallied by the teacher researcher with data provided by the district's human resources office, the school had 17 male teachers (26%) and 49 female teachers (74%). Of the 66 teachers at the school, 74.2% (n=49), have master's degrees. Years of experience for teachers in the school was unavailable. Teachers in the district averaged 15.0 years of experience with 70.0% (n=1,290), having master's degrees. This was higher than the state average (57%). The district teacher's average salary was $66,771, which was slightly higher than the state average of $63,296. Average class size in the school was 19.5 students while the state average was 18 students.

In Table 3, Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) data was compiled for the 2009-2010 school year. One trend remained consistent for every grade level. In both reading and math, the school outperformed the district but lagged behind the state's average in proficiency.

Table 3

*Reading/Math Proficiency Percentage*

| | Reading | | | Math | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 6th Grade | 7th Grade | 8th Grade | 6th Grade | 7th Grade | 8th Grade |
| School | 70.7 | 73.1 | 75.8 | 83.3 | 77.7 | 77.7 |
| District | 65.5 | 59.7 | 72.0 | 71.3 | 69.3 | 70.8 |
| State | 81.2 | 77.5 | 84.1 | 84.6 | 84.4 | 83.7 |

The academic program at the school consisted of core subjects such as language arts, English, mathematics, social studies, and science. Other subjects taught were art, music, physical education, and band. The teacher researcher would like the reader to note that the time devoted to teaching core subjects was 52 minutes in mathematics, 49 minutes in science, 72 minutes in English/language arts, and 49 minutes in social science per day.

The school's administrative structure consists of one principal and three assistant principals. There are three guidance counselors; one for each grade level, and one counselor for the bilingual program. There are three main-office secretaries. The school has 2 full-time day custodians and 5 full-time night custodians. Other staff include: 1 librarian and 1 library aide, 1 nurse, 10 teacher aides, 6 cafeteria workers, 1 Reading Education Leader, and 1 Math Education Leader.

In Table 4, the data is heavily concentrated in the areas of bilingual and special education. Two of the special education teachers serve only the bilingual population. The core subjects of English, math, science, and social studies have very few staff members entirely

devoted to the instruction of them. Elective courses include: language arts (7th & 8th grade), P.E., art, music, band, health, journalism, yearbook, and computers.

Table 4

*Staff at School*

| Position | Number | Position | Number |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6th Grade Teacher | 8 | Elective | 13 |
| 7th Grade Teacher | 8 | Bilingual | 13 |
| 8th Grade Teacher | 8 | Special Education | 9 |

The school is a two-story brick building located in a residential neighborhood. The building houses a sixth through eighth grade traditional program and a sixth through eighth grade bilingual program. It has 54 total classrooms, 6 of which are classrooms devoted to special education, an office for the psychologist, a gymnasium, a cafeteria, a kitchen, 1 computer laboratory that has approximately 30 computers, a library with approximately 30 computers, a nurse's office, a faculty lounge, and a main office that includes a principal's office and three assistant principal's offices. Each classroom is equipped with a laptop computer, a desktop computer, and a projector.

**Local Context of the Problem**

The school was located in an established neighborhood in a major urban population center. A large number of the students lived immediately surrounding the school or in an attendance zone located across the river. All information about the demographics of the city and the state was found at the US Census Bureau (2010), unless otherwise noted.

The population of the city was 157,272. Since 2005, Rockford's population has grown by about 3% (City-Data.com, 2010). The average household size was 2.52 for the city and the average for the United States was 2.61 persons. The median age of residents of the city was 35.0 while the U.S. average was 36.7. The residents maintained a median family income of $45,465 while the median family income for the U.S. was slightly higher at $50,046. In the city, a total of 10.5% of the families were below the poverty level, which was more than the 9.2% that were below the poverty level for the U.S. According to the US Census Bureau, a family of three was considered to be below the poverty line if the household income is less than $16,537 (n.d., *Poverty*).

There were 112,989 adults ages 18 and over in the city, while 20,537 of those were 65 years and over. Meanwhile, the population under 5 years was 11,102. Male residents accounted for 73,378 of the city's residents while 77,503 are female. Caucasians, making up 72.7% of the population, dominated ethnic distribution in the city. Other races making up smaller percentages were African-American and Hispanic. The ethnic distribution is noted in Table 5.

Table 5

*Ethnic Distribution of City by Percentage*

| | Caucasian | African American | Asian | American Indian | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| City | 72.7 | 19.0 | 2.4 | 0.4 | 3.5 |
| U.S. | 74.3 | 12.3 | 4.4 | 0.8 | 5.8 |

Residents of the community who obtained a high school degree made up 77.8% of the population and 19.8% of the city's residents had a bachelor's degree or higher.

The community had 61.3% of its population in the labor force which was slightly lower that the U.S. average of 65.2%. The three occupational areas with the greatest number of workers were trade, transportation, and utilities; (n=27,700), manufacturing; (n=25,700), and education and health services (n=23,300).

Table 6

*Types of Occupations*

| Types of Occupations | Number |
|---|---|
| Mining, logging, and construction | 5,600 |
| Manufacturing | 25,700 |
| Trade, transportation, and utilities | 27,700 |
| Information | 1,900 |
| Financial activities | 5,900 |
| Professional and business services | 14,700 |
| Education and health services | 23,300 |
| Leisure and hospitality | 12,100 |
| Other services | 8,900 |
| Government | 17,200 |

The property crime index per 100,000 people was 6,271.0 in the year 2008 (City-Data.com, 2010). The state average during that year for the property crime index was 3,010.4. The violent crime index per 100,000 people was 1,405 in the year 2008. The state average during that year for the violent crime index was 540.3 (CityRating.com, 2010).

According to the city's Chamber of Commerce website (Rockford Area Convention & Visitors Bureau, 2010), the city was first settled in 1834. This area was halfway between the cities of Chicago and Galena. The settlement was incorporated as a village in 1839 and chartered as a city in 1852. By 1860, an emerging industrial base appeared. In the first half of the 20th century, this region was the second largest furniture-manufacturing center in the United States. Later 20th century industry revolved around machine tools, heavy machinery,

automotive, aerospace, fastener and cabinet hardware products, and packaging devices and concepts. The city saw a sharp decline in manufacturing and production during the last two decades of the 20th century. In 2010, the city was working to reemerge as an important regional health care hub, as well as, an entertainment venue and financial center. Recreational opportunities abounded that ranged from arts and culture, performing arts and theater, to parks and gardens, and outdoor sports and recreation.

The school building where the teacher researcher taught housed grades 6-8. Students attend schools based upon which attendance zone within they reside. The middle school where the teacher researcher taught was considered a feeder school for a local high also located within the same attendance zone. The mission statement which is found on the district website is:

> The mission of Eisenhower Middle School is to excel in the education of 6th, 7th and 8th grade students in the transition to high school. By leading a child centered partnership within its community to maximize the potential of each student for academic, emotional and social growth. (Rockford Public Schools, 2010)

There were two computer laboratories in the school, each laboratory housed approximately 30 computers. Nearly all the computers in the school were Dell models. Also, each teacher had their own laptop and desktop computer. Those teachers who completed the TEEL trainings have two additional desktop computers in their classroom. There was wireless internet throughout the school. In addition to computer access, math teachers also had access to SMART Boards and ELMOs.

**National Context of the Problem**

Since 2001, with the passage of legislation for No Child Left Behind (NCLB), there has a push for annual incremental increases for academic achievement in the areas of math and reading. In elementary schools, time previously devoted to social studies curriculum is often reduced or eliminated in favor of instruction to raise test scores in reading and mathematics (Haskvitz & Risinger, 2006, as cited in Fry & Gosky, 2007). Historically, students describe their experiences with social studies as "boring" and instructional practices as predominantly focused on reading the text and memorizing facts (Taylor & Duran, 2006). According to Devlin-Scherer and Sardone (2010), concern was expressed by curriculum supervisors about experienced teachers who do not want to try new technology strategies. Thereby, eliminating archaic instructional methodologies and infusing technology remains of eminent importance to increase achievement in social studies.

**Reflection**

When looking at the problem of poor achievement in social studies within the school, the teacher researcher noted the lack of time devoted to the subject. Reading and writing instruction comprised 102 minutes of each student's day. Meanwhile, social studies encompassed 51 minutes of the school day. Math instruction is paced and achievement is monitored with incremental tests and ISAT testing; likewise, for reading and writing. Social studies benefits from neither the devotion of time nor monitoring of achievement. Finally, both math and language arts/English have an in-house educational leader on-site. Social studies does not. When looking at the community, the teacher researcher noted the continual fluctuation in guidance and direction from central office. Social studies textbook adoption typically happens once every 10+ years. Other subject areas, conduct textbook adoption with more frequency.

This lack of frequency leaves social studies continuously behind current trends and best practices. Two years ago, there was a realignment of the curriculum for each grade level; and the district's learning standards for social studies were the last to be aligned with the state's goals. All of this contributes to the perception that social studies is an irrelevant subject which can be eliminated.

# Chapter 2

## Problem Documentation

### Evidence of the Problem

The purpose of the action research project was to increase achievement in social studies through the implementation of technology. The problem area was a lack of achievement in social studies. In the research project, participating students (n=105) were sixth grade students of the teacher researcher. The teacher researcher used three tools to document evidence: a technology survey, an attitudinal survey, and a teacher observation checklist. Documentation of the problem occurred September 6, 2011, using the technology survey and the attitudinal survey. The teacher observation checklist was used on several dates: September 7, 13, 20, 29, October 13, 19, November 9, and December 5, 2011.

#### Technology Survey.

The first tool the teacher researcher used was the Technology Survey. The purpose of the instrument was to tabulate students' prior experiences with various forms of technology. This exposure was limited to within the previous year both at home and at school. The survey was completed in class on September 6, 2011 during the pre-documentation period in a sixth grade general education social studies class. To ensure confidentially, the teacher researcher had students complete this paper survey in class and submit it to the collection tray. It was also completed at the end of documentation.

In Figure 1, the teacher researcher took all the participating students (n=105) and analyzed students' prior use of technology most often associated with the educational setting. The analysis of this data was limited to the technologies incorporated during action research. Students had nearly five times more usage with the computer (n=104; 99.0%) and Internet n=102; 97.1%) versus the clickers (n=22; 21.0%) and PowerPoint (n=61; 58.1%).

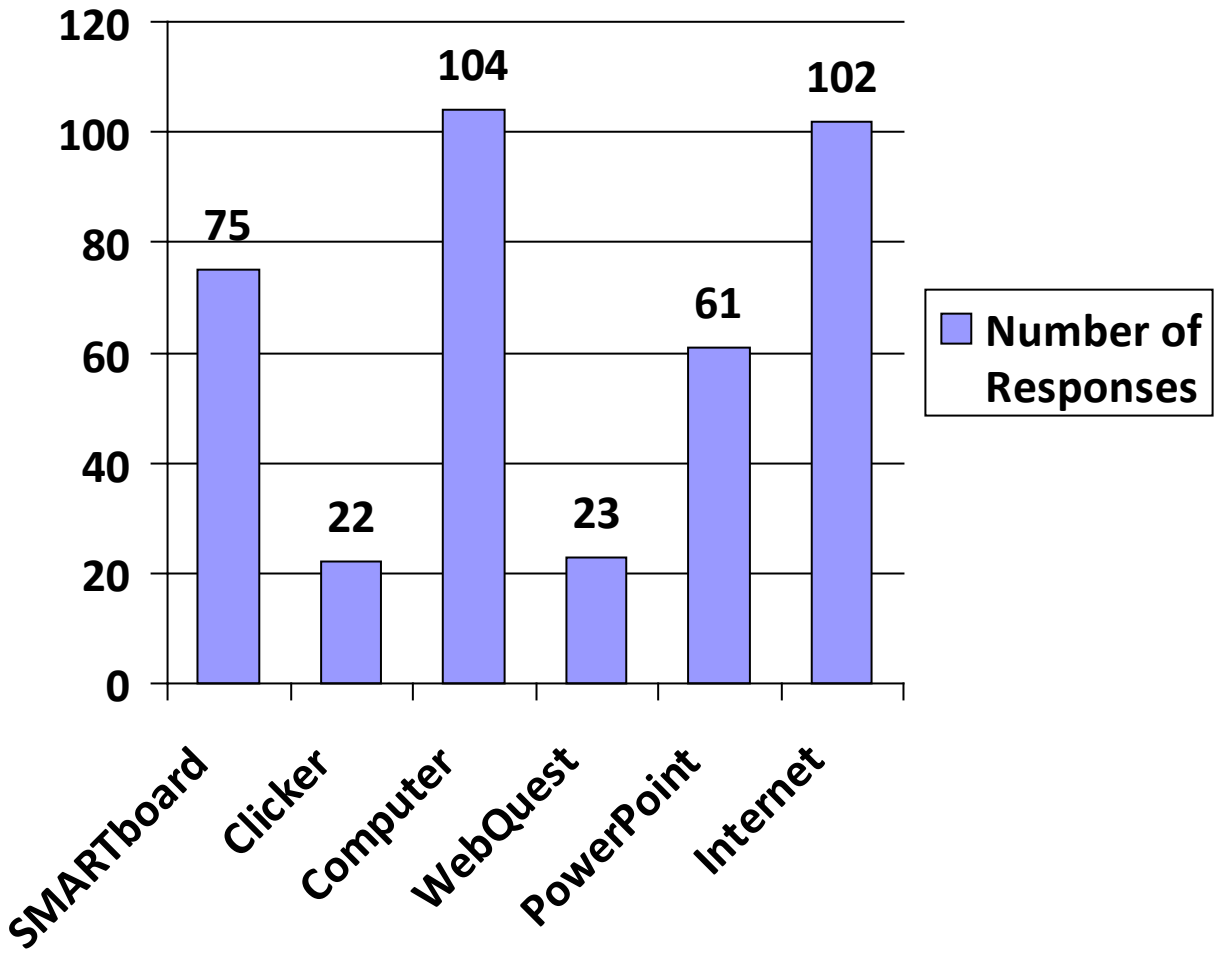


*Figure 1*: Technology Survey (n=387)

Figure 2 represents the number of students who engaged in technologically leisure pursuits during the previous year. As compared to Figure 1, these numbers are substantially greater. Students' leisure usage of technology (n=521) is approximately 25% greater than their school usage (n=387).

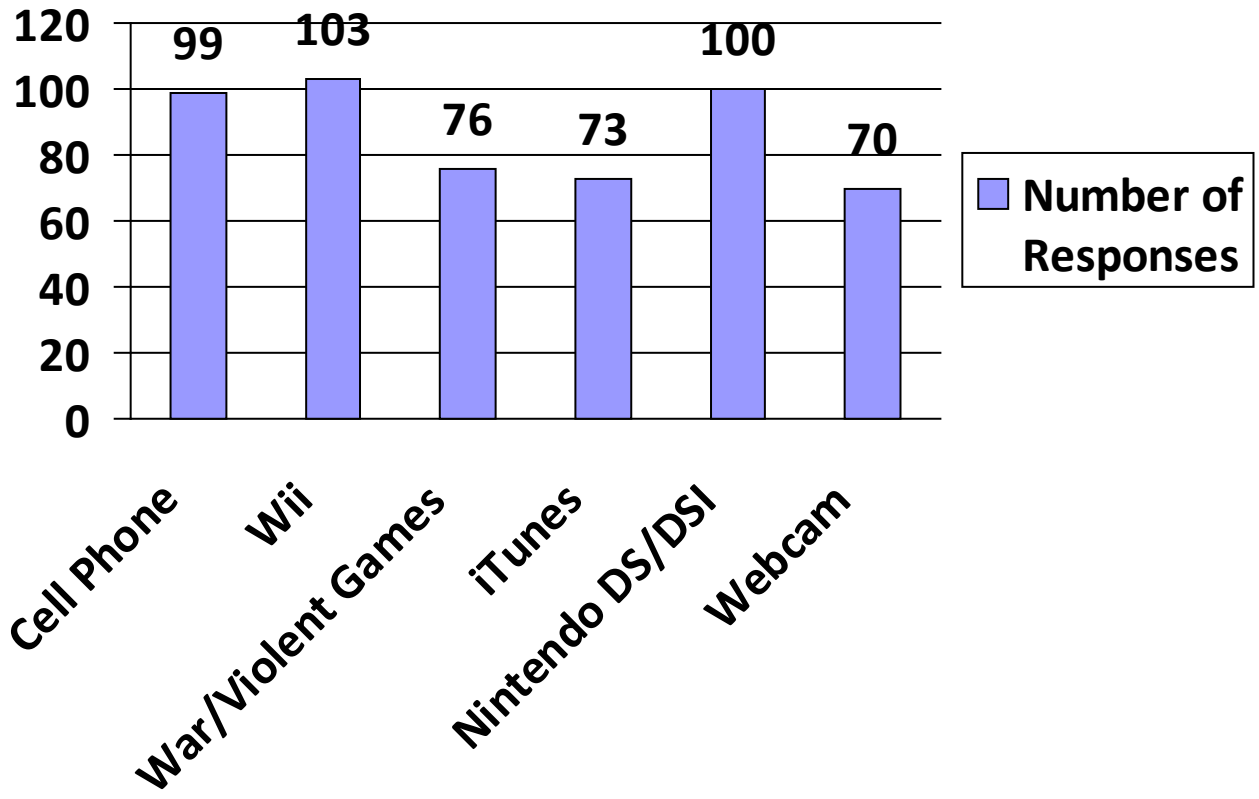


*Figure 2*: Technology Survey (n=521)

**Student Attitudinal Survey Regarding Social Studies.**

The second tool the teacher researcher used was a student survey. In the pre-documentation period, the sixth grade students (n=105) were asked to complete a student questionnaire. The original plan was for the students to take the survey anonymously online at zoomerang.com. This did not take place because the new computer lab was not completed and

ready for use at the beginning of the school year. Instead, the students took a paper version of the survey and submitted it anonymously to the collection tray. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather student views on social studies and their exposure to it in fifth grade. Two of the five questions required Likert scale responses 1-4, one of the five questions required Likert scale responses 0-4, and two questions allowed for multiple responses. The results of the questionnaire given before the intervention can be seen in Figures 3-7.

Figure 3 demonstrates the student response to the question, "Overall, how much do you enjoy social studies?" Students were asked to choose between: 1 – *Hate it*, 2 – *Don't like it*, 3 – *Like it*, and 4 – *Love it*. As Figure 3 shows, most students (n=73, 69.5%) had a response of "Like it".

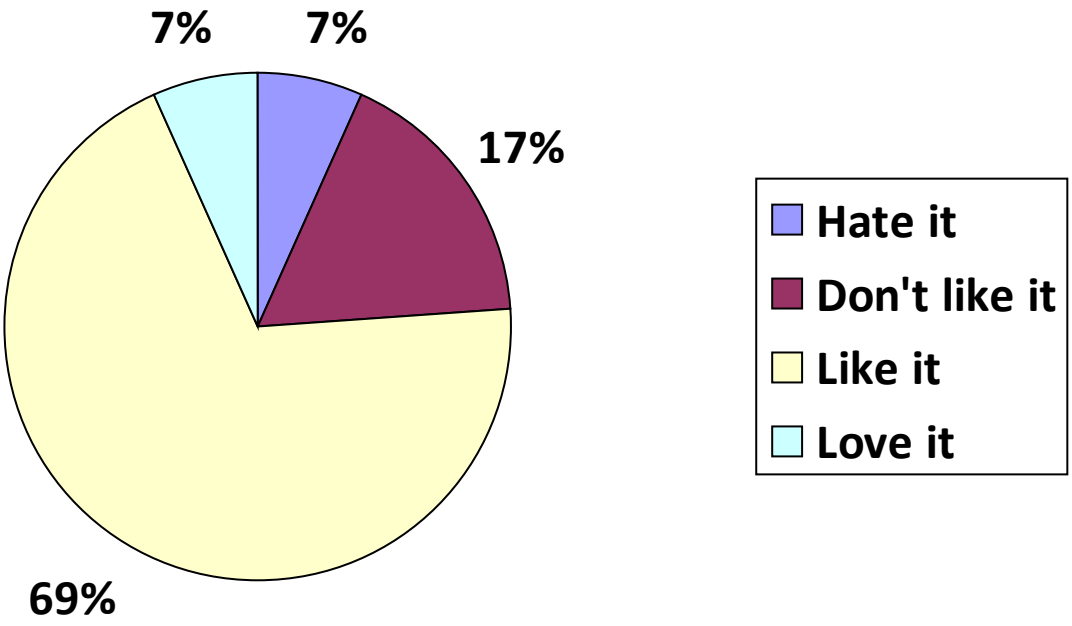


*Figure 3*: Enjoyment of Social Studies (n=105)

The second question on the survey asked students, "How often did you learn social studies last year?" Students were asked to choose between: 1 – *Never*, 2 – *1-3 times per week*, 3 – *More than 3 times per week*, and 4 – *Everyday*. As Figure 4 displays, more than half the students (n=62; 59.0%) had social studies "1-3 times per week". In questioning how to accurately complete the survey, many students vocally expressed that in fifth grade half of the school year was devoted to science and the other half to social studies.

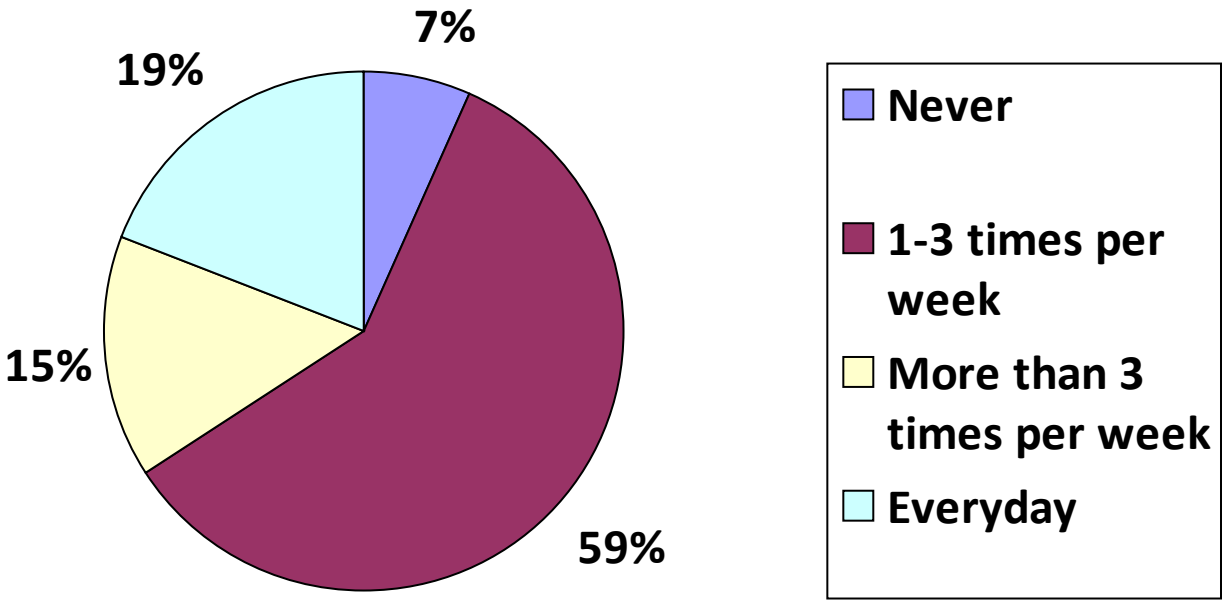


*Figure 4*: Frequency of Daily Fifth Grade Social Studies Instruction (n=105)

The third question on the student survey asked students, "In what ways to you like to learn? (Check all that apply)." Students were asked to checkmark all the ways they enjoy learning. The choices were: *Moving, Building, Reading, Writing, Listening, Discussing,* and *Investigating.* As Figure 5 demonstrates, in a more than three-to-one ratio, students prefer being kinesthetic (n=79) compared to writing (n=25). The more traditional methods of teaching ranked near the bottom of student preferences.

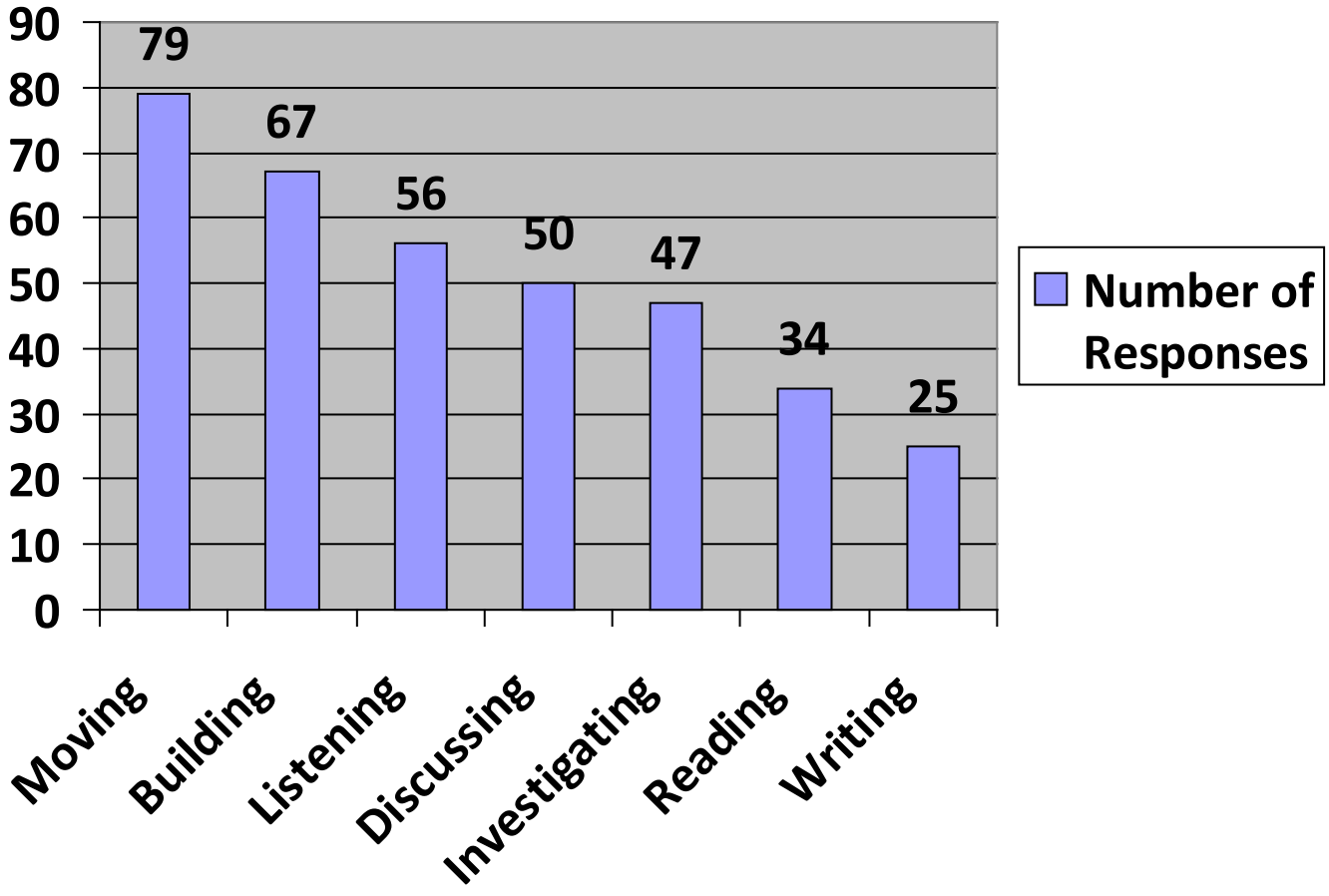


*Figure 5*: Learning Styles Preferences (n=358)

The fourth question on the student survey asks, "Which of the following cultures do you know anything about? (Check all that apply)." Students were asked to checkmark all the cultures for which they knew anything. Their choices were: *Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India, Greece, Rome, and None of the above.* The responses of the students are shown in Figure 6. Not surprising that the students did not know about Mesopotamia since it is a place which no longer exists on any modern-day map. Nearly 26% of respondents (n=27) knew nothing about any of the cultures. Less than half of the remaining respondents knew about India (n=34; 43.6%), Greece (n=36; 46.2%), and Rome (n=38; 48.7%).

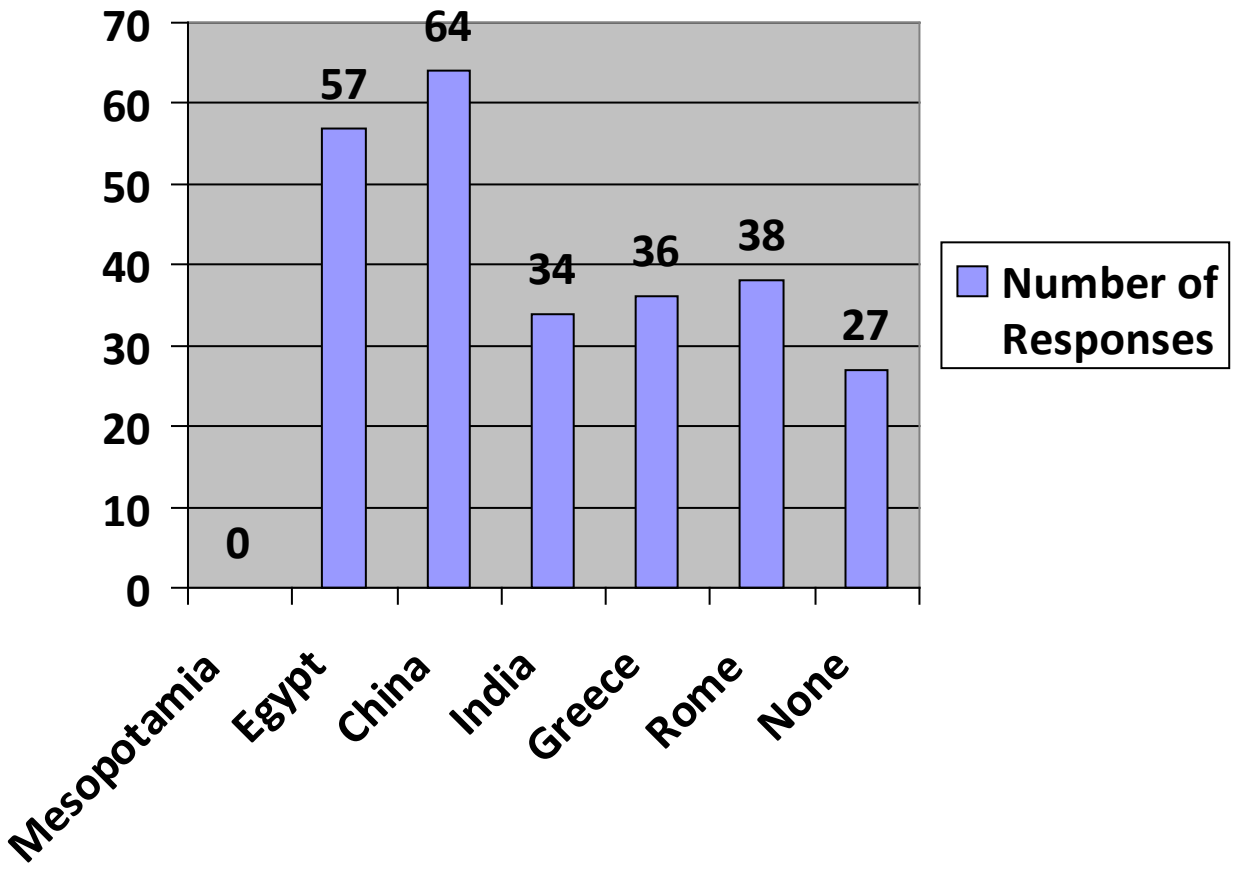


*Figure 6*: Cultures (n=256)

The final question on the student survey asked the students to circle one of five responses to answer the question. “Civic competence is the belief that someone can change how the government works. How important is civic competence to you?” Their choices were: 0 – *Don’t understand*, 1 – *Not very important*, 2 – *Not important*, 3 – *Important*, and 4 – *Very important.* The responses of the students are shown in Figure 7. One-third of the respondents (n=35) did not understand what the question was asking. Nearly a quarter ranked civic competence as not important (n=15; 14%) or not very important (n=8; 8%).

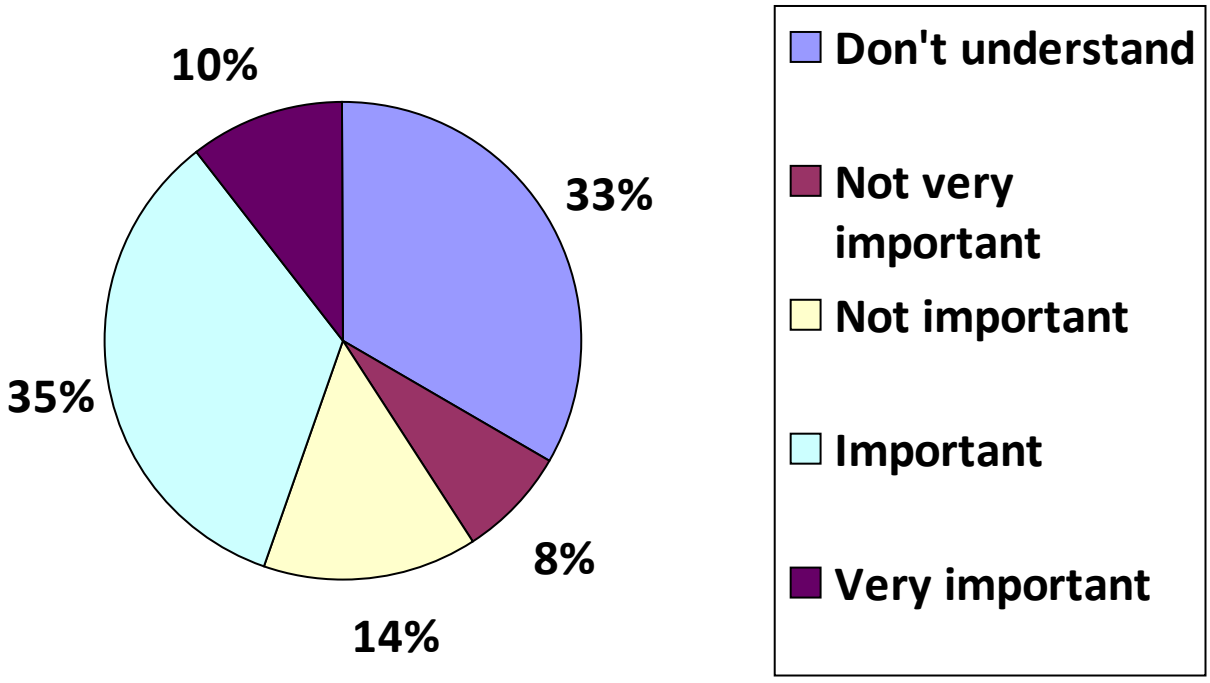


*Figure 7*: Importance of Civic Competence (n=105)

**Student Behavior Checklist.**

The third tool the teacher researcher used was a student behavior checklist. The teacher observation checklist was used on several dates: September 7, 13, 20, 29, October 13, 19, November 9, and December 5, 2011. The teacher researcher made observations during sixth hour social studies class on the students (n=20). Behaviors were grouped into five categories: "*Hyperactive*", "*Withdrawn*", "*Poor Attention/Concentration*", "*Disruptive*", and "*Uncooperative*". As this is the students' last class of the day, it was not surprising to observe markedly higher rates of hyperactivity (n=49; 27.2%), poor attention/concentration (n=64; 35.6%), and disruption (n=51; 28.3%). Generally, the students do what is asked of them and are engaged in the classroom.

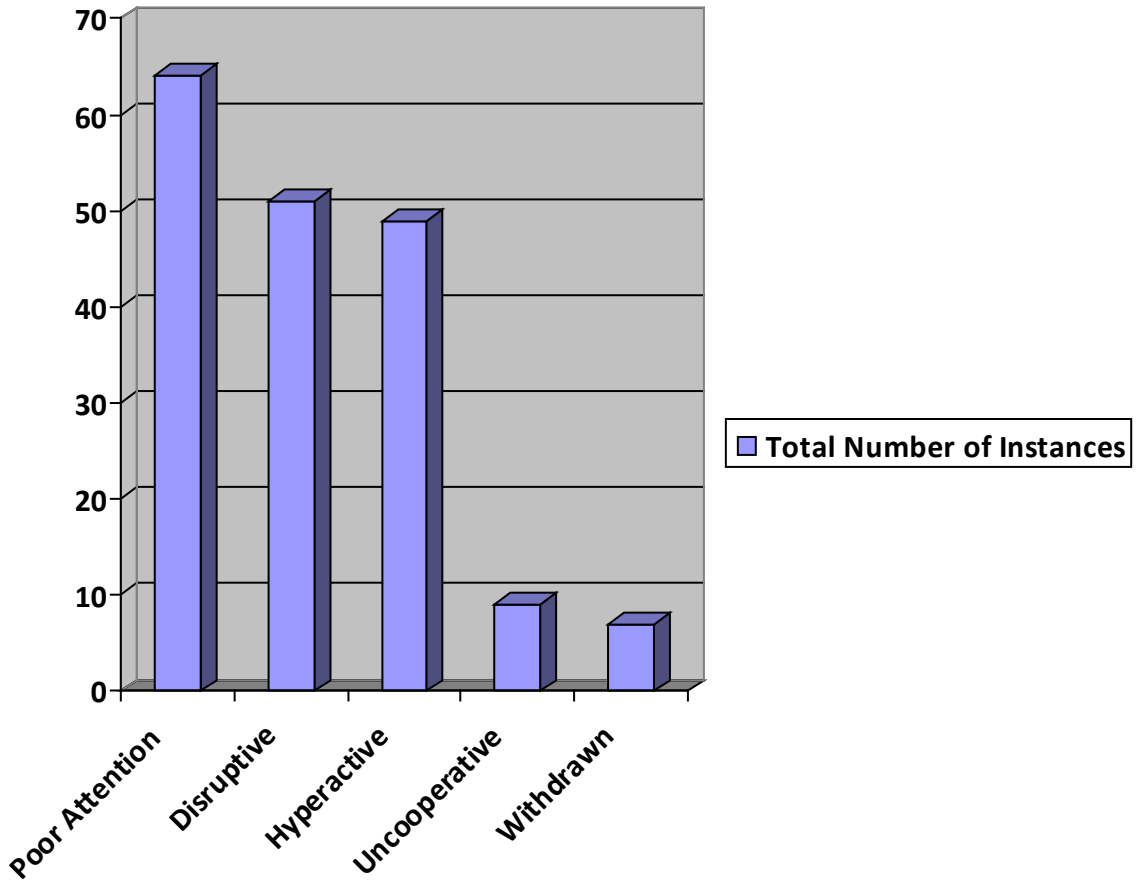


*Figure 8*: Behavior Checklist (n=180)

**Summary**

When looking at the data the teacher researcher received, a number of items stood out. First, students have a strong familiarity with technology outside of the school setting (Figures 1 & 2). In some instances, the familiarity was at a 3:1 or 4:1 ratio between educational and leisure technology. Using the student survey, the second aspect that was discovered was that students received social studies instruction infrequently during their fifth grade year (Figure 4). Finally, again using the student survey, it was learned that students do not know all that much about the

cultures studied in sixth grade (Figure 6) nor do they understand, or view as important, the idea of civic competence (Figure 7).

**Reflection**

When reflecting upon the data, I, the teacher researcher, found many interesting and valuable data points. The principle point that stood out to me was the type of learning students like to be engaged in. The top ranked learning preference indicated by students was that they liked to learn by moving. I teach in a very small classroom where movement is precluded simply by the limited square footage. When there are 30 students in any given hour, it becomes a challenge to find the space for all of them to move safely. I was not surprised to discover that students did not receive much social studies in fifth grade. The fifth grade social studies curriculum does not align with the sixth grade one but the basic tenements of quality social studies instruction are lacking as well. During this intervention, I plan to try to find technology that will motivate students and increase achievement in social studies. The level of engagement and participation will decrease the amount of off-task and disruptive behaviors. Students will come to view the use of technology as more than just a pastime.

**Probable Causes**

Many factors preclude students from attaining high academic achievement in social studies. Lack of prior exposure, during the elementary years, and lack of meaningful engagement with the material creates reticent and reluctant learners. In addition, archaic methodology contributes to students viewing social studies as lackluster and tedious. The infusion of technology in American schools has been slow due to a multitude of circumstances which has compounded the problem of low achievement in the area of social studies.

In the introduction to James W. Loewen's book, *Lies My Teacher Told Me*, Loewen writes "High school students hate history. When they list their favorite subjects, history invariably comes in last. Students consider history 'the most irrelevant' of twenty-one subjects commonly taught in high school" (1995, p.1). More than 95% of the students did not think their social studies class was relevant to their personal life (Zhao & Hoge, 2005). A typical student's attitude towards social studies can generally be described as apathetic. Many students have a pessimistic mindset towards social studies, finding it "boring and useless" (Zhao & Hoge, 2005, as cited in Tanner, 2008, p. 41). As Zhao and Hoge illustrate in their research, when a teacher fails to show students why social studies is important; fails to relate social studies skills and concepts to students' daily lives; and fails to identify resources for instruction other than textbooks, students have a negative attitude towards social studies (2005). Social studies teachers' over-reliance on textbooks implies, however, that teachers could also be responsible for students' lack of interest in social studies. All teachers in our sample acknowledged that the textbook is the most used curriculum resource (Zhao & Hoge, 2005).

Much of the distaste for social studies, particularly history, in the K–12 classroom stems from the way it is taught. The traditional way history is taught—as series of lectures, textbook reading, note memorizing, and test taking—is not only boring to students (Fertig, 2005 as cited in Waring & Robinson, 2010), it is also ineffective in garnering real historical learning (Scheuerell, 2007 as cited in Waring & Robinson, 2010). The teachers failed to convey to the students the importance of social studies and that they lose many real-life opportunities to motivate students in learning social studies. Teachers need to stress the importance of social studies, its life skills content, and its relevance to everyday decision making. Social studies teachers need to convince school administrators that students be given more time for social

studies learning. Teachers can make conscious efforts to integrate social studies into interdisciplinary areas. Students need the basic knowledge and better understanding of history, geography, economics, and current issues to survive and thrive in this increasingly diverse and interdependent society. The textbook-centered approach to social studies was driven by teachers' desires to fulfill the minimum requirements of state and local curriculum guides while saving their best instructional efforts for more highly valued subjects, such as reading and math (Zhao & Hoge, 2005).

By the time students reach middle school, their exposure to social studies has been limited. Social studies has a low priority during the teaching day falling behind reading, English, and math. In addition, a significant problem with education is the lack of integration of subjects; students often do not understand how content from one class relates to another class (Combs, 2010). Because No Child Left Behind (NCLB) places so much emphasis on reading and math testing, many schools and districts are reducing the amount of social studies education they offer (Au, 2009). Often, the time which would be devoted to the teaching of social studies is consumed by the testing mandates placed upon teachers in the areas of mathematics and reading. In addition, social studies instructional time is limited in favor of remediation for mathematics and reading. The skills of inquiry, reasoning, and perspective are not taught because there is too much time devoted to the formulaic process of mastering the Illinois Standards Achievement Test (ISAT) in order for a school to make Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP). According to Petress, too much classroom time and energy is being spent on tests that do little to measure or instill in our students the skills and knowledge needed for their later life (2006). Students view learning as a means to an end instead of as a life-long pursuit. The amount of time used to prepare for such testing and the testing itself occupies an alarming proportion of class time for

teachers and students. Testing is counterproductive due to its frequency, content and question style, and stress it places on students and teachers (Petress, 2006). These testing mandates are significantly altering how social studies is taught. Social studies teachers are feeling the pressures of high-stakes testing, and these pressures are causing social studies teachers to alter their classroom practices and curriculum (Au, 2009). High-stakes testing narrows the instructional curriculum and aligns it to the tests (Au, 2009). One nationwide survey found that 71% of the districts reported cutting at least one subject to increase time spent on reading and math as a direct response to the high-stakes testing mandated under NCLB (Renter et al., 2006, as cited in Au, 2009).

Becoming a civic minded student is getting lost in the shuffle as well. In the desire to increase the amount of time devoted to literacy instruction, school districts are slashing the time allocated to social studies instruction (Zhao & Hoge, 2005). The time, during the school day, where students typically learned civic responsibility, geography, history, economics, and politics has never been endangered as it is today (Paquette & Kaufman, 2008). Teachers have indicated that they would like to have more maps, globes, videotapes, trade books, and interactive software to make social studies more interesting. They also want to have more support and to attend workshops promoting creative ideas for how to integrate social studies with other content areas, especially language arts and math, so that they could justify giving social studies more attention.

Pedagogy is also affected due to high-stakes testing. Instructional practices have been altered. Teachers prepare students for tests with pedagogies that focus on rote memorization and lower-order thinking skills (Gayler et al., 2005, as cited in Au, 2009). One reason for failure to process information is because students are being taught with old-fashioned instructional methods (Prensky, 2001, Beck & Wade, 2006, & Klopfer, 2006, as cited in Huizenga et al.,

2009). Archaic teaching practices, including lecture, keep students from ownership of material. In many cases, students may not process the information until weeks after the lesson when they are preparing for exams (Kolikant, Drane, & Calkins, 2010). The focus becomes preparing for the test instead of engaged learning and use of the material. Students sit in the classroom acting as receptacles into which to pour vast quantities of information. Too many middle school and high school students still find their role in social studies classrooms to be a passive one (Cantu & Warren, 2003). The instructor typically transmits information while students take notes in a passive manner (Bligh, 2000, as cited in Kolikant, Drane, & Calkins, 2010). Most students are not auditory learners so the information received orally is not retained. The levels of application and synthesis are rarely achieved in Bloom's Taxonomy when teaching students with ineffective pedagogies.

Many necessary classroom learning strategies, values, and skills do not lend themselves to objective paper and pencil normative tests. Students need to be taught and allowed to demonstrate in and out of class sharpened critical thinking skills. These include evaluating what is presented to them; being appropriately skeptical, searching for deeper meaning than many initially superficial presentations; seeking additional supporting or invalidating sources, and testing out ideas (Petress, 2006). Many educators support the constructivist approach to teaching which allows students to "construct" their own understanding of the content based on their experiences. According to constructivists, "… knowledge cannot be *transmitted* directly from the teacher to the learner, but is *constructed by the learner* and, later, *reconstructed* as new information becomes available." (Ryan & Cooper, 2004, p. 286, as cited in Combs, 2010, p. 29). Traditional methodologies prevent this from occurring.

As a result, social studies is defined by many students as a noun (i.e., notes, book, tests) instead of a verb (i.e., sculpting, acting, dissecting, playing) (Cantu, 2003). The adage of an inch deep and a mile wide strongly pertains to social studies. There is so much content to cover and not enough time to accomplish this. Students are not always required to process information at a high level (Cooper & Robinson, 2000, as cited in Kolikant, Drane, & Calkins, 2010). There is little application of that which is acquired. In innovative educational programming, the objective is to teach how to find information and use it in problem solving, not just simply memorize it (Yildirim & Simsek, 2005, as cited in Acikalin, 2010).

According to the Common Core Standards, students must learn to work together, express and listen carefully to ideas, integrate information from oral, visual, quantitative, and media sources, evaluate what they hear, use media and visual displays strategically to help achieve communicative purposes, and adapt speech to context and task. Students can only hope to improve this skill if given the opportunity to practice it. Middle school aged children are not adept enough yet to understand the importance of effective communication skills. Many students do not speak up. The reasons are varied as to why students do not participate orally in class. Students are discouraged from conversing in class (due to): lack of awareness of their own difficulties, inability to pinpoint what it is they do not understand, and embarrassment to admit difficulties due to lack of awareness that other students have difficulties too (Kolikant, Drane, & Calkins, 2010).

Aside from lack of verbal engagement in class, lack of participation may stem from the material itself. Novelty and pertinence of material, many times, are qualifiers for students to engage. Therefore, in the fast-paced world of the 21st century the "old" information instructed in social studies seems out-of-date. One study notes that widespread interest in game-based

learning results from students' increased disengagement from traditional instruction (van Eck, 2008, as cited in Huizenga et al, 2009). The learners of today seek immediacy of fulfillment similar to playing a video game.

Lack of availability of computers and problems with Internet access, along with lack of training, are frequently cited as barriers to implementation of technology in the classroom. In addition, there is a lack of funding and administrative issues (Acikalin, 2010). As the use of technology becomes more prevalent, the integration falls short. Social studies teachers use the Internet for personal purposes, and to gather background information for planning rather than for teaching and learning activities in the classroom (Gibson et al., as cited in Acikalin, 2010). The computer is a powerful research tool that facilitates students' work and makes the work faster and easier for the students (Acikalin, 2010). Unfortunately, the full implementation of technology does not meet its potential.

Research has shown that while students, those born after 1985, have a great familiarity and comfort level with technology, their experiences are limited. These students have been labeled as 'digital natives' while their parents and teachers are 'digital immigrants' (Prensky, 2001, as cited in Ladbrook & Prober, 2011). The assumption is that since students have grown up surrounded by technology, they are more tech savvy than their elders. Students are skillful while engaged in online communications or in downloading music. They are far less knowledgeable when searching for and using curriculum-based information (Ladbrook & Prober, 2011).

Teachers are struggling to find effective ways to integrate technology into their classroom lessons while providing students with sound academic content (Fairey, Lee, & Bennett, 2000). As teachers confront this challenge, they should consider Peter E. Doolittle and David Hicks's

(2003, p. 75) words of caution: “If integrating technology means nothing more than enhancing the traditional delivery system of social studies content, where laptops replace notebooks, where PowerPoint slides replace handwritten overheads, where e-textbooks replace hard copy textbooks, then we will be no closer to the NCSS vision of transformative, powerful social studies instruction.” Simply altering delivery by replacing paper with electricity does not result in more student engagement.

Furthermore, the authors identified several barriers to technological innovation in the classroom, including most notably: a lack of preparation time, poor technical support, outdated technologies, and the inability to sustain interest in the particular lessons and a lack of opportunities for collaboration due to the rigid structure and short time periods allocated to instruction. The authors concluded by suggesting that the path for integrating technology would eventually flourish, but that it initially would be riddled with problems caused by impediments placed upon its success by a lack of institutional infrastructure, poor training, and overly-complicated technologies (Kenny and McDaniel 2011, p. 199).

Policy makers, at the top of the pyramid, have the ability to direct funding and resources towards full technology implementation and usage. Simply spending money to bring technology into the classroom does not guarantee their productive use. Teachers are recalcitrant to implement technology without professional development and training. Any proposed classroom intervention correlates directly to the expectations and perceived value/benefit on the part of the integrating teachers, who largely control what and how their students learn (Hanusheck, Kain & Rivkin, 1998 as cited in Kenny and McDaniel 2011, p. 199). The successful adoption of any new classroom intervention is based, in larger part, on teachers’ investing in the belief that the experience is worth the effort. If a teacher sees little or no value in an intervention, or is

unfamiliar with its use, then the chances that it will be properly implemented are minimized. In other words, a teacher's adoption of any instructional strategy is directly correlated with his or her views, ideas, and expectations about what is possible, feasible, and useful (Kenny and McDaniel 2011, p. 199). Many teachers are reluctant to use technology because of a fear of failure; most teachers have been successful in the classroom; we are now asking them to do something new. There is the fear that they will not be as successful with the "new" as they were with the traditional methods (Combs, 2010).

**Summary**

Teachers are instructing an increasingly diverse and technologically savvy population of student who often view social studies as boring and as having no meaningful connection to their lives. Students receive a diminished amount of social studies instruction due to the demands of testing within No Child Left Behind as compared to math and reading. Instruction methodologies are archaic often relying upon the textbook and lecturing. These processes do not develop higher order critical thinking skills. To cultivate constructivist thinkers, researchers have suggested a myriad of technologies. Unfortunately, implementation of technology in the classroom is impeded by resources, infrastructure, and teacher bias.

# Chapter 3

## The Solution Strategy

### Review of the Literature

Incorporating technology into instruction allows for alignment of the curriculum which results in more active student engagement. The infusion of technology also gives students access to more varied resources. Access, involvement, and engagement with a wider variety of resources make students more discernible stewards of information. According to the National Council on Social Studies, "Within social studies, teachers are expected to help young people develop the ability to make informed and reasoned decisions for the public good as citizens of a culturally diverse, democratic society in an interdependent world" (1994, para 1). Social studies educators strive to bring a variety of perspectives to class. Technology readily brings this to their fingertips. With the infusion of technology in the classroom, the learning process becomes inquiry based and the teacher's role changes from instructor to guide (Bennett, 2000-2001, as cited in Bennett, 2002). While lecturing, note taking, test taking, and textbook reading certainly have an appropriate place in middle grades social studies instruction, when it comes to teaching middle grades students about historical thinking and getting them to think more critically about the information and sources they encounter, teachers must implement activities that stimulate historical inquiry (Goldenberg & Tally, 2005, as cited in Waring & Robinson, 2010).

Silk (2008) notes the content of learning activities must be targeted, precise, and narrow. Educators have to align their curricular goals with the content. When creating lessons, aligning work to goals is an important part of the design process. This includes measuring what is instructed. Teachers evaluate students' understanding through their explanations (Silk et al., 2009, 2010). Technology allows for a myriad of assessments to occur. For example, teachers

are able to customize tests and quizzes based upon the individual student. In addition, students can create a multimedia presentation or a website as a final product when concluding an instructional unit. In the process, students become more aware and responsible for their own learning.

Eggen and Kauchak (2001 as cited in Combs, 2010) note that the impact of technology is most strongly felt in the area of student motivation. Students have more control over their activities than they do in the traditional, teacher centered classroom; this increased power helps motivate students. As students became more familiar with technology, rather than the novelty wearing off, students used it more frequently and imaginatively as they became more familiar with the technology and became more competent (Dwyer, 1994, as cited in Combs, 2010). When the onus for learning rests squarely upon the students' shoulders, they become more active participants. Fukushima (2006) notes the actual production of a web site generates a high degree of motivation among the students. This learner-centered activity grants the students a considerable degree of content control. "Research suggests that pupil interest in a topic, their prior knowledge with regard to the topic and their learning preferences (i.e. learning styles) may affect their choices and persistence to learn a subject" (Clark & Feldon, 2005, Kanfer and McCombs, 2000, as cited in Huizenga et al., 2009, p. 336). Means, Blando, Olson, and Middleton (1993) write, "Used well, technology applications can support higher-order thinking by engaging students in authentic, complex tasks within collaborative learning contexts." (Combs, 2010, p. 29).

A goal of all social studies educators is to bring multiple resources to the classroom. Electronic technologies are increasingly influencing how students learn about the world (Merryfield, 2007). Access to varied sources provides new opportunities for evaluation, analysis

and synthesis of information and teachers aimed to develop strategies for furthering pupils' skills in this area (Deaney, Ruthven, & Hennessy, 2006). One example cited was the use of GIS. GIS is the acronym which stands for Geographic Information System. This is a system for storing and manipulating geographical information on a computer. "GIS thus assists in improving computer literacy, analytic thinking and communication and presentation skills as well as problem-solving and research skills" (ESRI 2006, 2007, Johansson, 2003, Kerski, 2006, Shin, 2006, as cited in Aladağ, 2010, p. 12). Students are taking this vast array of resources and utilizing them in research. The learning becomes more imbedded and pertinent. "Deep learning requires challenging students to revise deep-seated beliefs about a given subject, but initial interest alone is not sufficient to carry a student through a lengthy renovation of beliefs" (Silk et al., 2009, as cited in Silk et al., 2010, p. 22).

Introducing and effectively using web-based resources has the potential for improving classroom instruction. One thing we can do is be certain that teachers understand how technology can not only benefit students, but how it can also help teachers. For example, through the use of technology, the material that teachers present can be made much more interesting causing students to become much more active learners than they tend to be in a traditional classroom (Combs, 2010). Students can readily gather diverse perspectives which help to challenge their own thinking. The web can bring ideas, experiences, news and images from around the world directly into the classroom without the filters of publishers or politics (Merryfield, 2007). Quality social studies instruction exposes students to multiple viewpoints and then allows the students the opportunity to synthesize the information but always maintaining awareness that their perspective is not the only one. The application of technology

in instruction standards state that teachers should apply "computers and related technologies to support instruction in their grade level and subject areas." (Bennett, 2002, p. 163).

By age 21, students have spent about 10,000 hours playing video games or about 3.5 hours per day with digital media (Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005, as cited in Scheuerell, 2010). People are social creatures and there has been the pervasive thought that the use of technology will create isolated and socially inept students. In fact, many students prefer to collaborate electronically via the Internet, which suggests they are not necessarily working alone on a computer (Scheuerell, 2010). Collaborative learning takes place within the walls of the classroom. Students need to be taught how to work together to solve problems. Group techniques, strategies and tactics, leadership, building cohesion and cooperation, dealing with compromise, and reporting group results are necessary ingredients for later success and need to be taught and experienced in school (Petress, 2006). These skills are essential for life-long success.

Using the Internet, along with organized cooperative learning structures, facilitates a generation of technology-hungry students becoming more skilled at interacting with others (Scheuerell, 2010). The 21st Century Skills (Partnership for 21st Century Skills 2004) Framework identifies communication and collaboration as two key outcomes for American students (Scheuerell, 2010). Students learn more from technology when they use it to actively construct their own conceptual understanding of a topic with the computer rather than when they passively learn from a computer (Jonassen, Carr, & Yueh, 1988, as cited in Scheuerell, 2010).

In social studies instruction, a major movement has been towards the use of primary source documents. The web can provide access to primary sources that help students appreciate the "overlapping experiences of Westerners and Orientals, interdependence of cultural terrains in

which colonizer and colonized co-existed and battled each other through projections as well as rival geographies, narratives, and histories" (Said, 1993, p. xx, as cited in Merryfield, 2007 p. 258). Reflective and deliberate integration of primary source documents allow students to analyze and evaluate these source materials in a sophisticated and objective manner (Cantu, 2003). This type of authentic learning results in the cultivation of higher order and critical thinking (Cantu, 2003). Document Based Questions (DBQs) are organized in this manner. An essential question for investigation is posed to the students. Then, they analyze primary documents and organize their thoughts in order to compose an essay which answers that investigatory question. The student must defend their position by citing information and examples in their essay. History teachers must encourage students to *think historically* (Wineburg, 2001, as cited in Waring & Robinson 2010), which involves interpreting and analyzing historical artifacts and primary sources and constructing and critiquing narratives about the past. A foundation for thinking critically and historically must be developed by the time students reach the middle grades to make students more perceptive and discriminating consumers when faced with lectures, note taking, textbook reading, and other didactic modes of instruction in high school and college classrooms (Waring & Robinson, 2010). Teachers can successfully integrate a variety of primary documents to allow for both depth and breadth of coverage (Cantu, 2003). Technology makes the process of obtaining these primary sources efficient.

Essentially, a DBQ, is the integration of reading and writing strategies into the social studies curriculum. Implementing various questioning strategies and encouraging students to discuss and ask diverse questions is essential for quality content-area lessons (Paquette & Kaufman, 2008). A questioning strategy used to develop students' content knowledge and to

enhance their critical-thinking skills is called question-answer relationships or QARs. In various types of print, readers are required to identify the type of question being asked. QARs are divided into four types of questions: right there; putting it together; on my own; and writer and me. In right there questions, the answer is obvious and immediate to the reader because it is directly in the text. Putting it together questions require the reader to conjoin information from various parts of the text to arrive at the answer. On my own questions require that students use their prior knowledge. Finally, writer and me questions ask the reader to combine personal knowledge and information from the text in order to construct an inference (Paquette & Kaufman, 2008).

Another literacy strategy is the anticipation guide. This presents students with the opportunity to reflect on previous knowledge and assess new information (Vacca et al. 2006 as cited in Paquette & Kaufman, 2008). Before reading, teachers provide students with statements that they either agree or disagree with. After reading, students revisit the anticipation guide and reevaluate their original thoughts (Paquette & Kaufman, 2008). Anticipation guides encourage students to be active readers and engage with the material. Anticipation guides may also serve the purpose of identifying students' interests. This would be helpful as it could guide the teacher as to what subject matter to instruct. Teaching material in which students have no buy-in often creates recalcitrant and uninvolved learners.

Digital technologies play an important role in students' lives and students display a broad range of literacy skills when using them (Ladbrook & Probert, 2011). The American Library Association (ALA) defined information literacy this way: "To be information literate, a person must be able to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information…information literate people are those who have

learned how to learn" (1989 p. 106). In other words, there is a vast array of information easily accessible online and students must become informational literate so they may successfully navigate and use the resources at hand. Within this definition there are skills such as question formation, brainstorming, categorizing, skimming and scanning, evaluating printed material, using contents pages and indexes, note making, synthesizing information and presenting findings (Ladbrook & Probert, 2011). In addition, using online search engines and databases, and evaluating online material can be added to ALA's definition.

A number of studies showed that "Internet use" and "accessing information from the Web" were the most common use of computer in social studies education (Whitworth & Benson, 2003, as cited in Acikalin, 2010, p. 67). The Internet provides global perspectives and information to students in an instant. The computer was also frequently used as a presentation tool by both teachers and the students. Computers were used to visually supplement students' projects.

Technology is the tool for students to obtain information, participate in civic action and be an informed citizen in a global society (Bennett, 2002). The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) guidelines for technology state "the need to capitalize on many students' ubiquitous, yet social, use of such technology and demonstrate the technology's power as a tool for learning" (National Council for the Social Studies 2006, para. 7). Online and interactive tools such as blogs, wikis, and digital media-sharing enhance student involvement and accountability in the classroom. These technologies are termed as Web 2.0 tools. This differentiates them from Web 1.0 which was the early years of the World Wide Web. Web 2.0 is an umbrella term used to describe a variety of online collaborative and interactive tools designed for the user to generate content, make changes to the content, and to share the content easily and

in real time (Solomon & Schrum, 2007, as cited in Wilson, Wright, & Inman, 2011). A blog is analogous to an online journal or diary. Students are able to post their thoughts and insert links, photos, and other media. Other people may then comment or contribute to the information posted. A wiki is an open source software that enables a user to create, edit, manage, and maintain Web content. Wikis can be used for people to create, collaborate, communicate, and share content. Finally, digital media-sharing is disseminating music, video, or photographs over the Internet. All of these tools bring people together to cooperate and interact with each other on a broader scale. It is not simply just passively viewing the information, rather it is dynamic involvement.

Today, there is an emphasis on standards, assessment, and the need for data-driven decision making. It is even more essential to utilize technology efficiently and effectively in the classroom. The Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) conceptual framework, technology integration for teaching and learning "requires a thoughtful interweaving of all three key sources of knowledge: technology, pedagogy, and content" (Mishra & Koehler, 2006, p. 1029, as cited in Wright & Wilson, 2009, p. 134). Planning for successful technology integration is vital for students' success.

Technology can also be used to level the playing field. Schools are becoming increasingly diverse; this diversity has increased the already challenging task that teachers face. Along with the increasing diversity comes a wider range of abilities. O'Connor and Brie (p. 27) found that technology can serve to level the playing field, writing that "… the worst student was capable, through the use of technology, if developing products that were equal to those of the best students." (Combs, 2010, p. 29). Technology helps to bridge academic divides sometimes becoming the great equalizer.

## Summary

Technology is ever-changing and will forever be a part of students' lives even past formal education. Aligned lessons, which mesh with the content, allow the student to guide his or her own learning making him or her more responsible and accountable. The teacher's role in the classroom becomes that of a facilitator and guide. Increasing access to information through the interactive use of technology enables students to be more participatory and collaborative. Thereby, more engagement and relevancy happens resulting in improved student achievement.

## Project Objective and Processing Statements

As a result of the implementation of technology, during the period of Tuesday, September 6, 2011, through Friday, December 16, 2011, the students of the teacher researcher were to increase engagement in social studies.

The teacher researcher performed the following tasks prior to implementing the interventions:

- Scheduled computer lab time
- Procured Acceptable Use Policy (AUP) forms and keep a hard copy on hand
- Attended professional development on SMARTboard training
- Double-checked the currency of WebQuest websites and simulations
- Re-designed lesson plans to incorporate the implementation of technology

## Project Action Plan

The purpose of the project action plan was to improve achievement in social studies through the incorporation of technology. This teacher-researcher engaged in intimate and open-ended action research which resulted in both improved instructor pedagogy and student academic success.

**August**

- August 29, 2011: Teacher sends home parent consent forms with students
- August 29, 2011: Students take a geography skills pre-test

**September**

- September 2, 2011: Teacher collects parent consent forms from students
- September 6, 2011: Students complete technology checklist confidentially in class
- September 6, 2011: Students take social studies attitudinal survey online anonymously
- September 7, 2011: Teacher completes a behavioral checklist
- September 8, 2011: Teacher presents a demonstration of GPS technology
- September 8, 2011-September 16, 2011: Students complete a GPS activity to learn map skills
- September 13, 2011: Teacher completes a behavioral checklist
- September 16, 2011: Students complete a geography skills post-test
- September 19, 2011: Students take a pre-test on Mesopotamia
- September 20, 2011: Teacher completes a behavioral checklist
- September 26, 2011-October 7, 2011: Teacher presents WebQuest directions in class and students complete a WebQuest on Mesopotamia
- September 29, 2011: Teacher completes a behavioral checklist

**October**

- October 7, 2011: Students complete a post-test on Mesopotamia
- October 11, 2011: Students take a pre-test on Ancient Egypt
- October 13, 2011: Teacher completes a behavioral checklist
- October 17, 2011-October 21, 2011: Teacher conducts in-class lessons using SMARTboard technology about Ancient Egypt
- October 19, 2011: Teacher completes a behavioral checklist
- October 24, 2011-November 4, 2011: Teacher presents simulation directions in class and students collaboratively engage in a simulation on Ancient Egypt

**November**

- November 4, 2011: Students complete a post-test on Ancient Egypt
- November 9, 2011: Teacher completes a behavioral checklist
- November 14, 2011-December 12, 2011: Teacher presents PowerPoint directions in class and students create a PowerPoint presentation

**December**

- December 5, 2011: Teacher completes a behavioral checklist
- December 7, 2011-December 16, 2011: Post-documentation
- Re-take Student Attitudinal Survey Regarding Social Studies
- Re-take Technology Checklist

**Methods of Assessment**

During the pre-documentation period of September 6$^{th}$ – 9$^{th}$, students completed two questionnaires. Again, in the post-documentation, during the week of December 12$^{th}$ – 16$^{th}$, the

6th grade students were asked to complete the same student questionnaires that they took during the pre-documentation period. The student questionnaires can be seen in Appendices A and B. The teacher researcher was able to determine if the students improved their attitudes towards social studies and increased their level of technology usage by comparing results received from the initial student questionnaires. It was important to have this information because the teacher researcher was able to determine if the technology used during the intervention increased motivation and engagement and resulted in improved achievement.

# Chapter 4

## Project Results

This action research project was conducted by one teacher researcher who taught sixth grade social studies at a public middle school. A total of 105 students participated in the study, which occurred September 6-December 16, 2011. The problem area focused on lack of achievement in social studies class. The teacher researcher used technology such as a SMARTboard, a WebQuest, clickers, and PowerPoint in an attempt to increase engagement and participation in class, which, in turn, would likely increase achievement. When attempting to document evidence of the problem, the teacher researcher used a technology checklist to determine students' familiarity with various forms of technology, an attitudinal survey regarding students' opinions about social studies, and behavioral checklists.

### Historical Description of the Intervention

#### Description.

During the first week of the intervention (August 29-September 2, 2011), I began by sending home the parent consent forms with the students. I spent a great deal of time explaining to the students the importance of getting these forms signed and returned promptly. I also made clear why some were getting the parent forms for 11-year olds and others were getting the forms for 12-year olds, which they could sign themselves. I told them what action research was and how important their participation would be. I also assured confidentiality and anonymity. One parent did phone to get further clarification as to what we would be doing and how it would impact her son's learning. The students asked questions about what college was like. I explained that I was getting my masters degree which is different than the college you go to right

after high school when you leave home. Overall, the students were excited to begin since the intervention involved technology.

During the second week of the intervention (September 6-9, 2011), the students completed the technology checklist confidentially in class. They were eager to do so and kept trying to talk to one another to brag about which gaming system they owned. I kept reminding them that they had to be quiet since this was anonymous and I would be tabulating their results. It was the perfect time for me to discuss what anonymity and confidentiality meant. The students also took a social studies attitudinal survey. My initial plan was to have students take it online in our new computer lab downstairs. Unfortunately, the computer lab was not up and running until a couple of weeks later when it was unveiled for parents at Open House. So, I printed off the survey and the students took it using pen and pencil. In compiling the results, this was much more time-consuming on my end and took hours of time I had not planned on. I concluded that technology is great when it is working AND available. I administered both surveys, the same day in class, since we did not walk all the way to the computer lab and back. It was also during this week that I gave students a paper/pencil geography pre-test covering the names of continents and oceans, and labeling the features of a map. The students were confused as to why they would be taking a test over material which they did not know and were very concerned that a poor grade would be entered into the grade book. I had to continually reassure them that this was a pre-test, and I was giving it to see what they may already know and that it would also help guide me as to what I should teach them. I explained that in a couple of weeks, after we learned the material, I would give them a post-test which would count in the grade book. Many still seemed hesitant and unsure. Finally, I stated that their goal should be improvement

from their pre- to post-test scores. The students seemed to grasp that idea. This week was also the administration of the first behavioral checklist by me during one class hour.

In the third week (September 12-16, 2011), I started implementing some of the technology into my classes. My original plan had been to do a GPS activity with the students incorporating geography skills. In 2003, each participating school, in our district, received 30 Palm Pilots for their involvement in the Technology Enhanced Engaged Learning (TEEL) professional development. At my previous school, I had been the point person for these. At the building, where I currently teach, I could find no one who knew anything about the location of the Palms. Instead, I switched some activities this week in order to use the SMARTboard, which I had not anticipated receiving when I wrote the Project Action Plan. I went to SMART Exchange and found an interactive SMARTboard activity where students had to move continents and oceans into their correct places on a globe. In addition, they had to place the correct label on each land mass and body of water. They loved coming up to the SMARTboard and manipulating the pieces. Their classmates helped out by showing their approval or disapproval at the answers. Everyone was engaged and excited. They asked to play again the next day. During this time, I also created an interactive bingo review game with the geography terms. The students really enjoyed this. It was a fantastic way for each student to prepare for the post-test. I completed a behavioral checklist as well this week now that we had technology underway. While the noise level and enthusiasm reverberated off the walls, the off-task behavior and disengagement dramatically decreased.

In the fourth week (September 19-23, 2011), the students took their geography post-test. It was given as a pencil/paper exam. Many students remarked at how easy it was and that they probably did pretty well. The pre-test average for the geography exam was 45.7%. Post-test

average was 80.2%. I informally surveyed my classes to ask what they enjoyed doing the most during our geography unit and all the positive feedback centered around both the interactive geography activity and the bingo game done with the SMARTboard. It was a tad outside of my comfort level to hear kids cheering and moving around during class. I am always cognizant there is a class next door and our rooms are separated only by a foldable wall. So, noise travels quite easily and can be disturbing. I was also worried that kids would come up to the SMARTboard, not know the answers, and be embarrassed in front of their peers. Instead, I found the students to be helpful, supportive, and encouraging of each other. At the conclusion of this week, students took a pre-test over Mesopotamia. A third behavioral checklist was filled out.

During the fifth week (September 26-30, 2011), I presented WebQuest directions in class and the students were given three days in the school's newly opened computer lab to complete the WebQuest. While the technology worked well, and the students were eager to learn about this area called Mesopotamia, which they knew nothing about, I discovered that a WebQuest takes a lot of hand holding when the students are so young. Many had never done one before and were not used to being "on their own", so to speak. The material required grade level comprehension skills and there was no way for me to suitably adapt the resources for lower level readers. Although, the assignment itself could be tweaked, especially for those with IEPs. I think once many students got into the WebQuest they decided that, overall, it was still reading and writing, just in front of a computer. I think they anticipated the adrenaline rush and animation of video games. They were not as engaged with the WebQuest as I had anticipated they would be. During this week, a fourth behavioral checklist was completed by the teacher researcher.

In the sixth week (October 3-7, 2011), the WebQuest concluded and the students were debriefed about their experience. Many complained about the amount of reading required. I commented that a number of them were off-task and elsewhere online when I was not constantly monitoring them or when I was assisting another student. Some felt they did not have enough time to complete the WebQuest. I pointed out that all the links could be accessed at home if they had the internet. Unfortunately, because of the socio-economic status of many of our students, having the internet at home is a luxury which many cannot afford. In preparation for the Mesopotamia post-test, we did a review with clickers for the SMARTboard. A couple of weeks prior, our math educational leader (MEL), conducted professional development on how to use the clickers in the classroom. For me, it was extremely complicated to set-up the student databases of names. I got the review questions keyed in but had trouble accessing the results to give immediate feedback for students. I could feel my frustration level rising. In hindsight, I should have had the MEL help me troubleshoot any problems I was having with my morning classes and then left me on my own for the afternoon.

In the seventh week (October 10-14, 2011), of the intervention, the students took a post-test on Mesopotamia. Again, the students commented on how much they felt they knew the material and they felt confident taking the test. Overall, every hour had improvement in results from pre- to post-test. The pre-test average was 44.4%. For the post-test, students averaged 82.8%. I spent a day in class complimenting them on their efforts. My principal walked in during my last hour class and got to hear the congratulations I was bestowing upon the kids and he added in his own. That felt really good! During this week, I did another behavioral checklist documenting student conduct.

During the eighth week (October 17-24, 2011), an unexpected kink turned up during the intervention. About mid-September, 6th through 12th-grade teachers across the district were told they would be implementing Document Based Questions (DBQs) in their classrooms. This caused me to evaluate my scope and sequence with regards to my curriculum. Since the DBQ was on a topic in Mesopotamia, I wanted to make sure to cover the content but knew I needed to press on and continue into Egypt. So, I did give the Egypt pre-test but we did nothing with the results for two weeks. This was upsetting and frustrating. Our DBQ "drop date" was October 27 and all had to be completed on or prior to that deadline. Therefore, my technology intervention was put on pause for two weeks since we were required to use and analyze the five primary source documents provided in order to write our five paragraph essay. A sixth behavioral checklist was done.

In the ninth week (October 24-28, 2011), the technology I utilized was projecting the documents on the SMARTboard so that I could refer to them during class. Although, the students did have a packet of the exact same documents at their desks to refer to. I used the SMARTboard markers to "write" on the documents and to highlight essential information. At this point, it felt as though I was using a glorified overhead projector. It was not interactive. Projecting the documents did not help to focus the students or keep them engaged. However, I did use the computer, attached to the SMARTboard, to record student generated responses given in class. This provided information which struggling students could incorporate into their essay writing.

During the 10th week (October 31-November 4, 2011), I began a simulation on the Ancient Egyptian economy. They absolutely loved doing this! In fact, when it was time to wrap up each day, they did not want to stop. They loved assuming roles and working on acquiring

enough trading items to keep them out of the Underworld. This simulation was a fantastic activity that went along with our DBQ for second quarter which was proving the importance of the Nile River to Ancient Egypt. I did simulations when I worked with gifted and during my first year of teaching. Although, the simulation did not have students using technology directly, I got the information to conduct it online. The internet provided a fantastic activity to bring into the classroom. Typically, a complaint about simulations is the amount of class time it takes to complete one. Personally, I think the time expenditure in class is well worth it!

In the 11th week (November 7-11, 2011), I presented students with two days of directions for how to construct PowerPoint presentations. I was quite surprised, and relieved, to find out that several students had previously made PowerPoint presentations in grade school. Personally, I have made three in my lifetime. I was glad to have student "experts" in each hour to help. I demonstrated the rudimentary basics to making one. The seventh of eight behavioral checklists was completed.

During the 12th week (November 14-18, 2011), we worked on the PowerPoint presentations. We went to the computer lab for two days. During that time, students had to make three slides covering Ancient Egypt content. For those proficient with it, they were more than happy to help out their classmates. The students were pretty proud of themselves for making something and having the license to be as creative with it as they liked. They enjoyed adding in graphics, animations, and sounds.

The 13th week (November 21-25, 2011) was rather abbreviated due to the Thanksgiving holiday. Students had the option of adding more detail to their PowerPoint presentations if they so chose.

In the 14th week (November 28-December 2, 2011), students began their PowerPoint presentations in class. I was so proud of them. While they were presenting, it was easy to grade them. For many kids, it made them feel more comfortable to speak before a crowd because they had a visual to show and all the attention was not focused on them. Students, who rarely speak in class, were so animated proudly showing their classmates what they had made. This was the first time, as a teacher, I had ever done something like this.

During the 15th week (December 5-9, 2011), I was finally able to administer the Ancient Egypt post-test. Overall, the Ancient Egypt unit took more time than I had predicted. In preparing for the future, knowing now we have to spend two weeks teaching the DBQ, my pacing for this unit will definitely have to be altered. The eighth and final behavior checklist was filled out.

The final week of the project was week 16 (December 12-16, 2011). This was the post-documentation period. Students were again given the surveys they were given in week two. This time we were able to use the computer lab for the student attitudinal survey regarding social studies which made tabulating the data much easier.

**Interventions.**

The first intervention implemented was use of the SMARTboard during our geography unit. This was chosen because it is an interactive tool and the visual presentation makes it accessible for all students. It is also a succinct way for students to be informally evaluated by the teacher. My classroom environment changed as this became a collaborative endeavor with students supporting one another. Previously, I had students do geography work independently.

The second intervention implemented was a WebQuest on Mesopotamia. The rationale for choosing this intervention was to provide a way for students to learn the content and to

produce a final product using the acquired knowledge. The material from the WebQuest supplemented the information from the text and provided lots of rich visuals for students.

Another intervention used was the SMART Response Interactive Student Response System or clickers. Clickers are individual hand-held devices through which the students depress the correct answer to a question projected on the screen. The clickers provided instantaneous feedback for both teacher and student regarding correctness of response. I always do a review of content before giving a post-test. Using the clickers provided an engaging way for students to interact with the content.

Another intervention utilized was a simulation. Students were given the opportunity to act out possible real-life scenarios using the Ancient Egypt economy as a backdrop. Making learning pertinent and authentic increases the likelihood that students will retain and then apply the content. Using the simulation, enhanced student understanding and made teaching the district's Document Based Question (DBQ) on the importance of the Nile not so daunting.

Finally, students interfaced with PowerPoint software. It was selected as a tool for students to be able to graphically display information. Rather than have students create a paper/pencil document, such as a Foldable to display information, students could accomplish the same task more easily, with bells and whistles, using PowerPoint. The content remained the same, only the presentation was enhanced.

**Reflection.**

Upon the conclusion of the research collection, I was able to reflect on the 16 weeks I spent collecting data. I anticipated running into a few snafus and did. Students comment all the time that they enjoy my class and the content we are learning. Most of our curriculum is new to 6$^{th}$ graders since many do not even get social studies instruction in grade school. Many parents,

with whom I have spoken to on the phone, at parent-teacher conferences, or at Open House have remarked that social studies class was their student's favorite. The students were cooperative with my interventions and I received positive feedback from my students. Once the computer lab was functional, it became much easier to implement technology and make it personal for each student's learning. I had to overcome my reluctance to use it and my trepidation at incorporating it for all that could possibly go wrong. The most difficult part of the research was collecting and organizing the data. With having such a large number of students, it definitely increased the time I spent sorting and classifying data. To attempt to keep the behavior checklist data manageable, I consistently observed the same class of students. Overall, I was pleased with the students' performance and willingness to comply with the interventions.

The intervention during the research project was using technology to increase achievement in social studies. The goal was that by implementing more technology in social studies, student engagement and motivation to do well would increase. Initially, the idea was not mine. I wrongly assumed that I would be working with two colleagues from my school and was blindsided by the fact that I was not in their group working on their topic with them. Therefore, I was left to work with the only other unassigned person in our cohort who had already selected technology integration as her action research topic. Part way into this project, she left our group due to a change in her teaching assignment and the assumption that her new building would lack adequate technology to carry out this action research project. I was a bit reluctant to start this project knowing that our building lacked a lot of pieces of technology. However, I was willing to give it an opportunity to work. Over the summer, our school got a new computer lab, each classroom got a SMARTboard, and we received clickers to use with the SMARTboard. Students enjoy using technology and spend the majority of their day using it. The technology used was: a

SMARTboard, clickers, a WebQuest, and PowerPoint software. An example of how technology improved student achievement was using the SMART Exchange activity with the continents and oceans. The previous day, I had students do a kinesthetic activity where they had to cut out the continents and put them together to form Pangaea. They really struggled with putting the pieces together and once they were glued down, it was permanent. With the SMARTboard, students could manipulate the continent placement and did not have to "secure" an answer until they felt confident that everything was in the right place. An example of how the teacher researcher used clickers was during the unit on Mesopotamia. Rather than give students a traditional study guide, I devised a review game using content from the post-test. The students were competitively involved in completing the review activity. A final example of how the teacher researcher used technology in the intervention was when the teacher researcher required every student to make a three slide PowerPoint presentation on Ancient Egypt. The students then had to show their PowerPoint presentations to their classmates.

As a result of this action research I, the teacher researcher, have learned a number of things about my teaching, my students, and myself. As a teacher, I realized it is alright to take risks. I enjoy social studies immensely and, for the first time ever, teach only 6$^{th}$ grade social studies all day. I am also a control freak when it comes to my classroom in terms of management. I had to let go of some of the control and allow my classroom to be a noisier place while reassuring myself that, in fact, they were learning. I liked doing the research to find a WebQuest and a simulation. I learned that my students liked doing work for which they had ownership. Also, being social creatures, they loved the opportunity to work together whenever given the chance to do so. They were interested about what it took to get a masters degree and asked me quite often what I was doing in my classes. Personally, I found aspects of this project

difficult. I did enjoy reading the journal articles but I found writing about them and incorporating them into a literature review to be extremely challenging. I enjoy writing but this was a style to which I was unaccustomed. I also faced the hurdle of having to do this entire project alone. This aspect nearly ruined it all for me. I desperately wanted to collaborate with other teachers and was not afforded the opportunity to do so. I had to work past that and dig deep down and believe in myself and my talents.

**Presentation and Analysis of Results**

The purpose of the action research project was to increase achievement of students in social studies. The problem was a lack of achievement in social studies resulting in poor student performance. In the research project, participating students (n=105) were sixth grade students of the teacher researcher. The teacher researcher used three tools to document evidence: a technology checklist, a student attitudinal survey regarding social studies, and a behavioral checklist. Documentation of the problem occurred September 6-9, 2011 using the technology checklist and the student attitudinal survey regarding social studies. The behavioral checklist was used throughout the intervention (September 6-December 9, 2011) to record observable student behaviors in class.

**Technology Survey.**

The first tool the teacher researcher used was the Technology Survey. The purpose of the instrument was to tabulate students' prior experiences (n=105) with various forms of technology. This exposure was limited to within the previous year both at home and at school. The survey was completed in class during the post-documentation (December 12-16, 2011) period in a sixth grade general education social studies class. To ensure confidentially, the teacher researcher had students complete this survey anonymously and submit it to the collection tray. The tool used

included both home and school technology. For the purpose of reporting success of the intervention, only school data was tabulated. The Technology Survey can be found in Appendix A.

During the post-documentation period, the teacher researcher collected data on students' experiences with technology. As would be expected, 100% (n=105) of the students in class utilized all of the technologies used for the intervention. Figure 9 demonstrates the students' experiences with technology in the classroom setting.

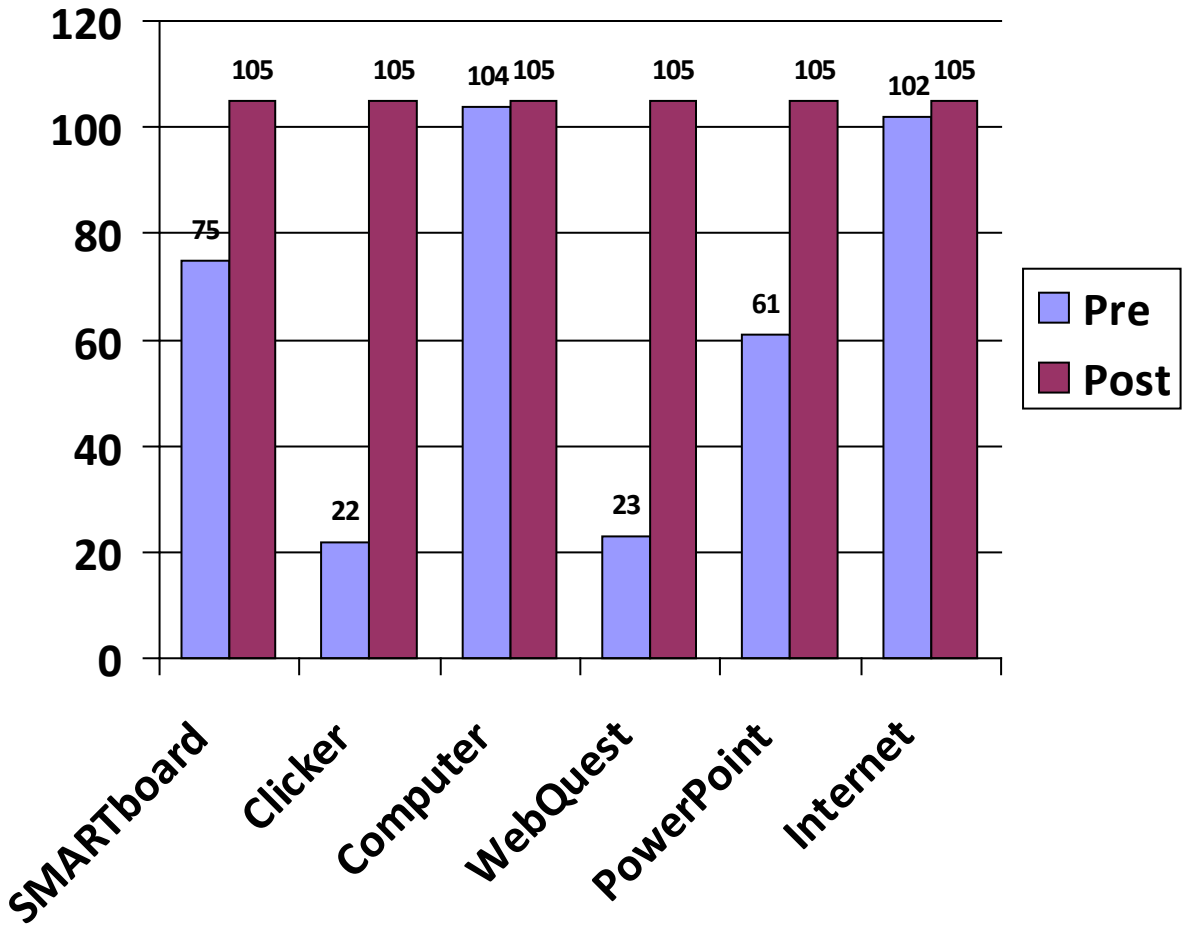


*Figure 9*: Changes in Technology Survey (n=630)

As demonstrated in Figure 9 above, the number of students who used the six technologies listed increased from 79% (n=83) in the usage of clickers and 78% (n=82) in the usage of a WebQuest to 100% (n=105) over the course of the intervention.

**Student Attitudinal Survey Regarding Social Studies.**

The second tool the teacher researcher used was a student survey. In the post-documentation period, the sixth grade students (n=105) were asked to complete this questionnaire. During the week of December 12, 2011, the students took the survey anonymously online at zoomerang.com. The purpose of the questionnaire was to gather student views on social studies (one question was only useful for pre-documentation; therefore, the data was not analyzed in post, yielding four questions for post-analysis). One of the four questions required Likert scale responses 1-4, one of the four questions required Likert scale responses 0-4, and two questions allowed for multiple responses. The results of the questionnaire given after the intervention can be seen in Figures 10-13. The Student Survey can be found in Appendix B.

Figure 10b demonstrates the student post-response to the question, "Overall, how much do you enjoy social studies?" Students were asked to choose between: 1 – *Hate it*, 2 – *Don't like it*, 3 – *Like it*, and 4 – *Love it*. Eighty-six percent of students like (n=80, 76%) or love (n=11, 10%) social studies.

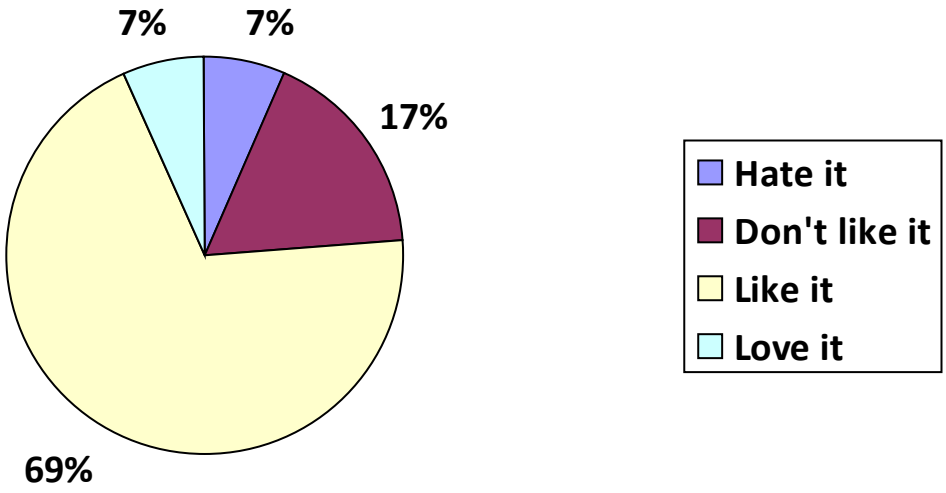


*Figure 10a*: Enjoyment of Social Studies (n=105 pre)

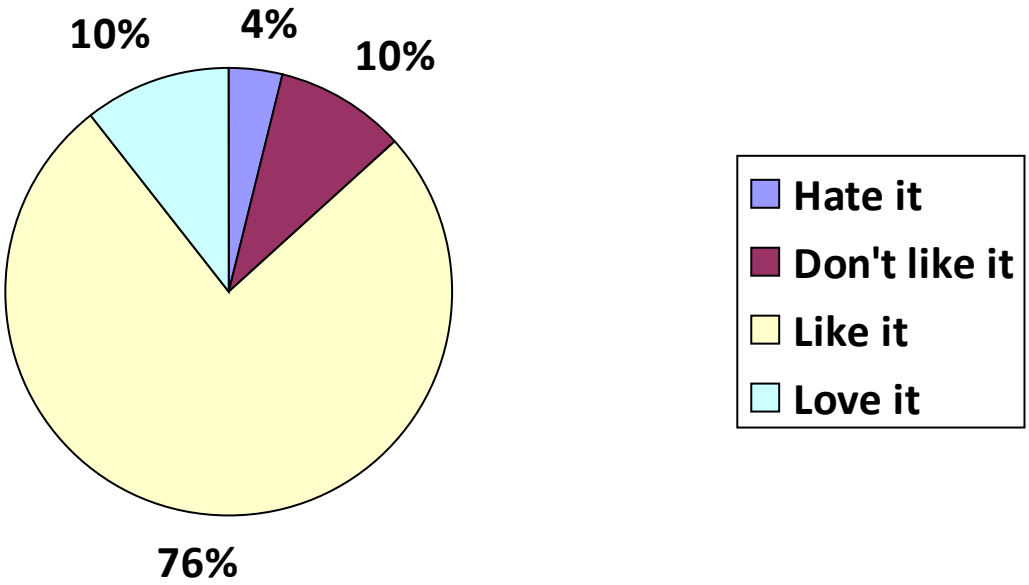


*Figure 10b*: Enjoyment of Social Studies (n=105 post)

As demonstrated when Figure 10a is compared to Figure 10b, the overall favorable rankings of *Like it* (69% pre, 76% post) *and Love it* (7% pre, 10% post) increased.

Figure 11b demonstrates the student post-response to the question, "In what ways do you like to learn? (Check all that apply)." The choices were: *Moving, Building, Reading, Writing, Listening, Discussing,* and *Investigating.* Ninety-three of 400 responses (23%) cited building as their most preferred method for learning.

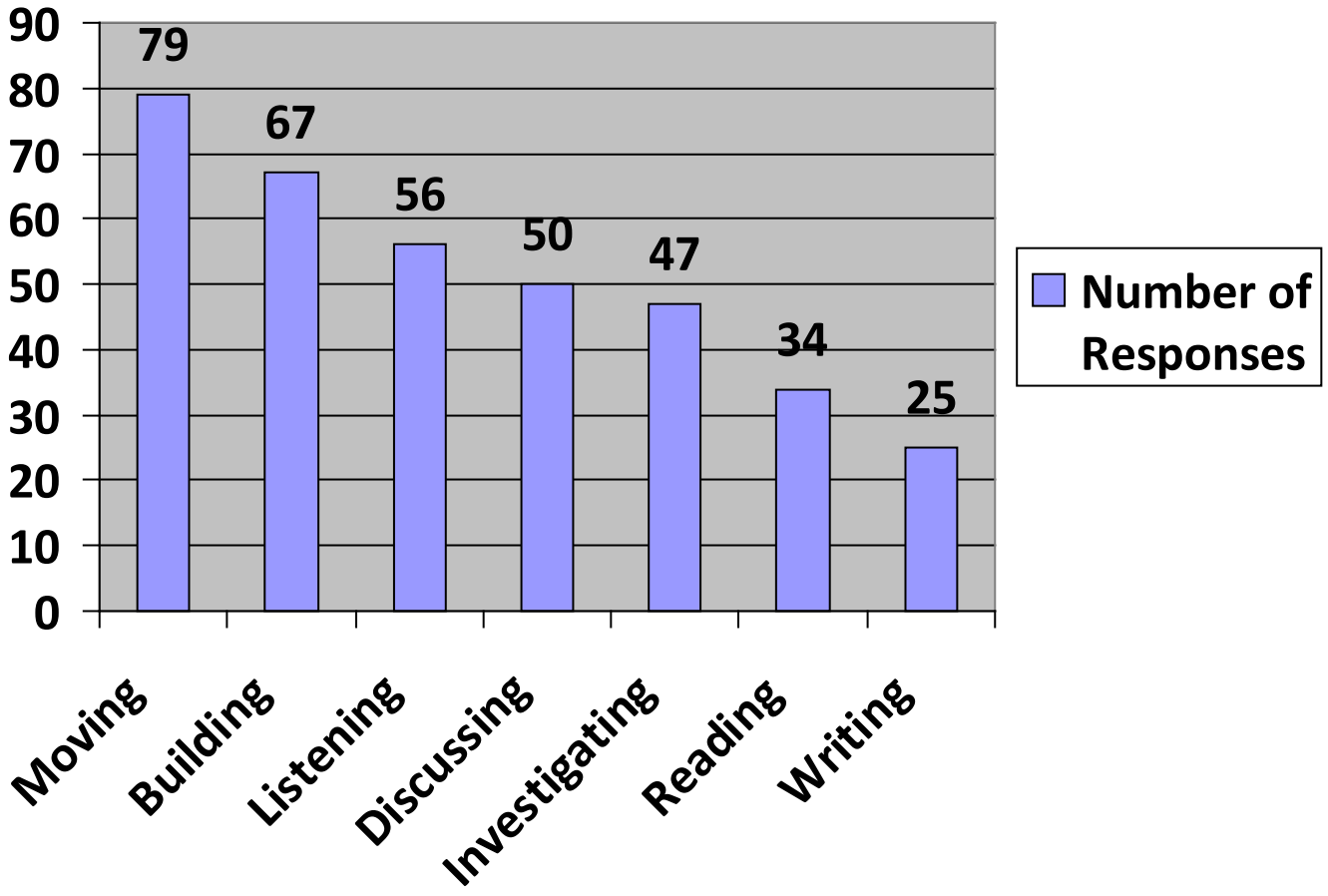


*Figure 11a:* Learning Styles Preferences (n=358 pre)

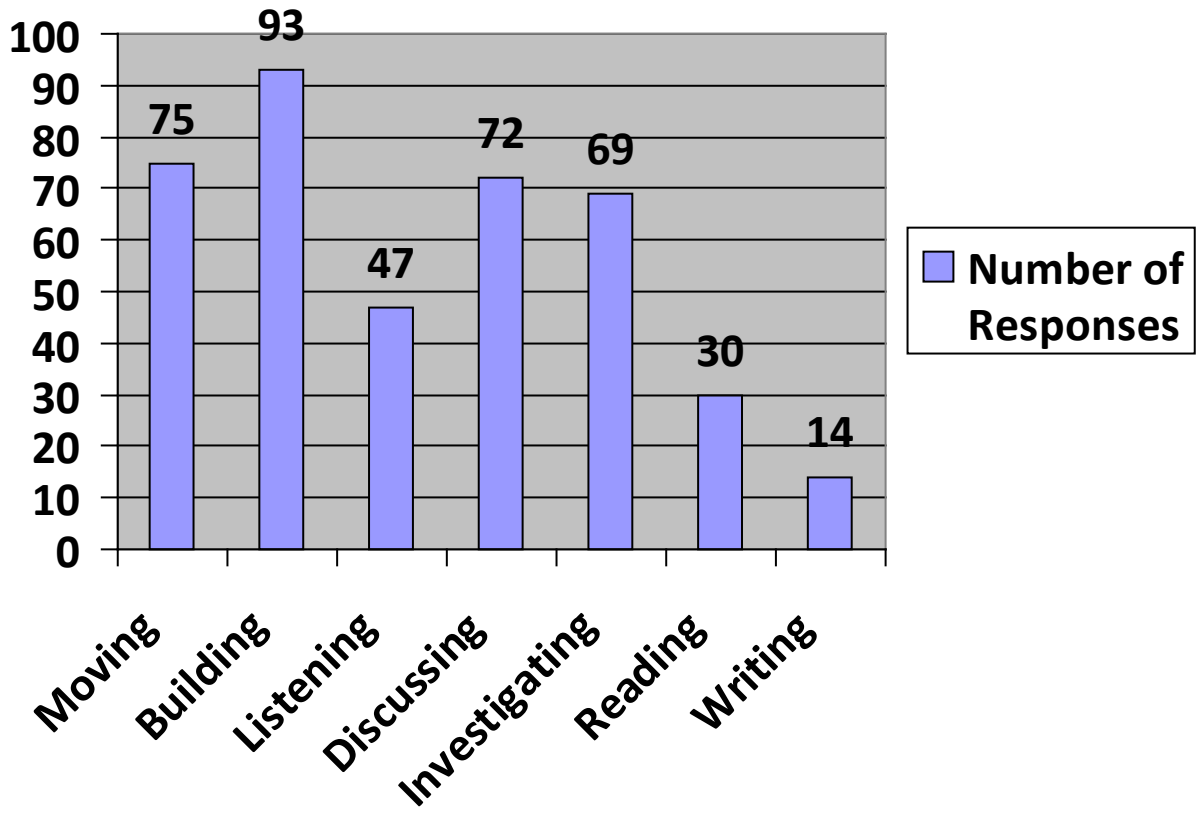


*Figure 11b:* Learning Styles Preferences (n=400 post)

As demonstrated when Figure 11a is compared to Figure 11b, the learning preferences of discussing (n=50 pre, n=72 post) and investigating (n=47 pre, n=69 post) increased.

The fourth question on the student survey asks, "Which of the following cultures do you know anything about? (Check all that apply)." Their choices were: *Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India, Greece, Rome, and None of the above.* The responses of the students are shown in Figure 12b. One hundred percent of respondents now know about the cultures of Mesopotamia (n=105) and Egypt (n=105).

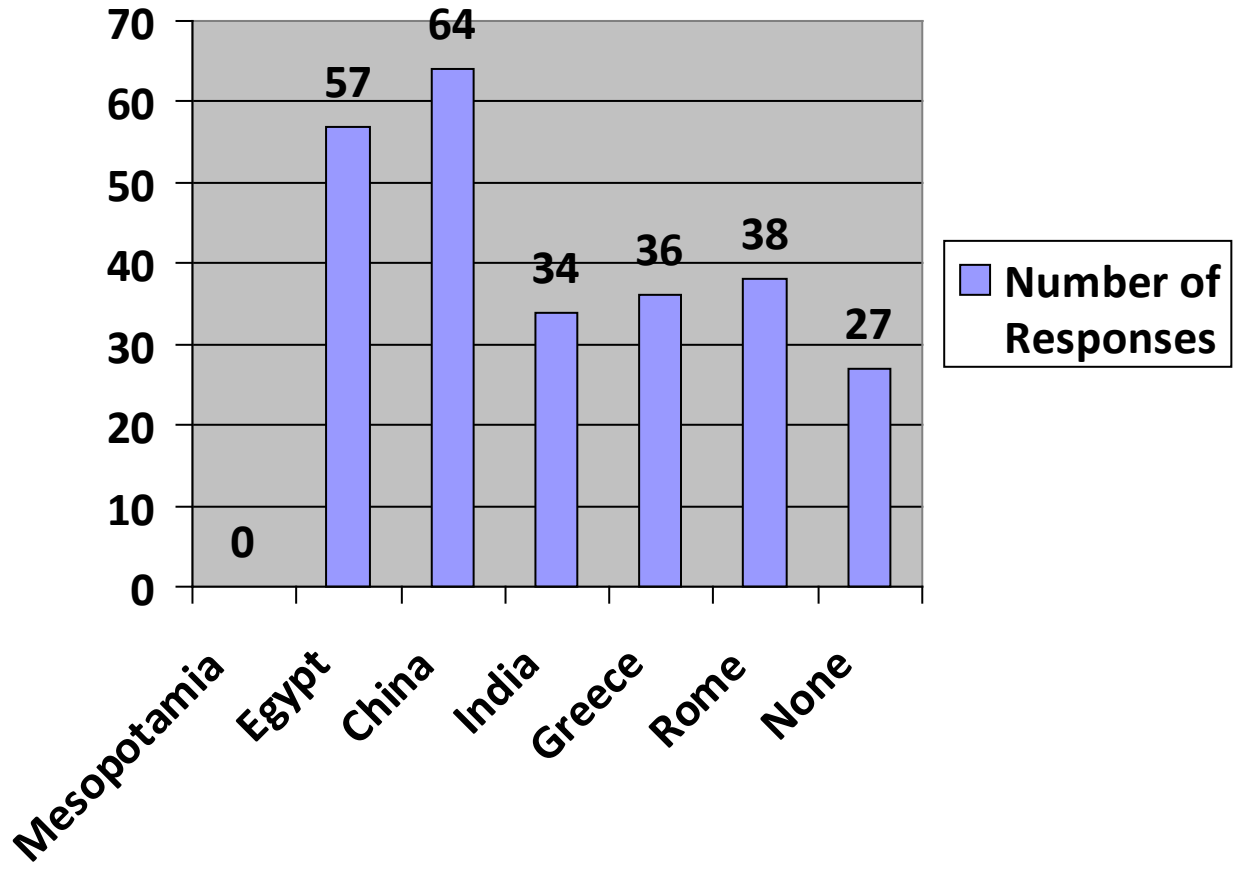


*Figure 12a*: Cultures (n=256 pre)

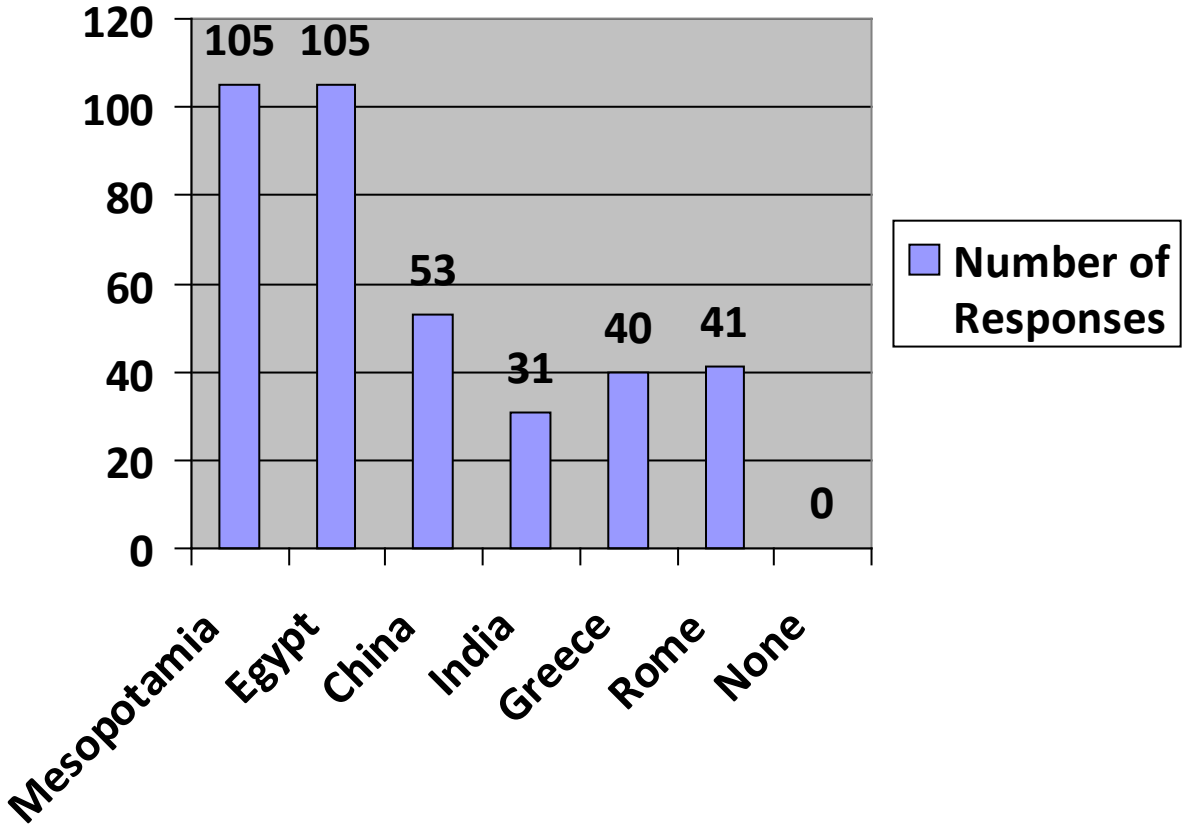


*Figure 12b*: Cultures (n=375 post)

As demonstrated when Figure 12a is compared to Figure 12b, knowledge of Mesopotamia (n=0 pre, n=105 post) and Egypt (n=57, pre, n=105 post) increased markedly.

The final question on the student survey asked the students to circle one of five responses to answer the question. "Civic competence is the belief that someone can change how the government works. How important is civic competence to you?" Their choices were: 0 – *Don't understand*, 1 – *Not very important*, 2 – *Not important*, 3 – *Important*, and 4 – *Very important.* The post-responses of the students are shown in Figure 13b. Eighty-two percent of students believed civic competence was important (n=20, 19%) or very important (n=66, 63%).

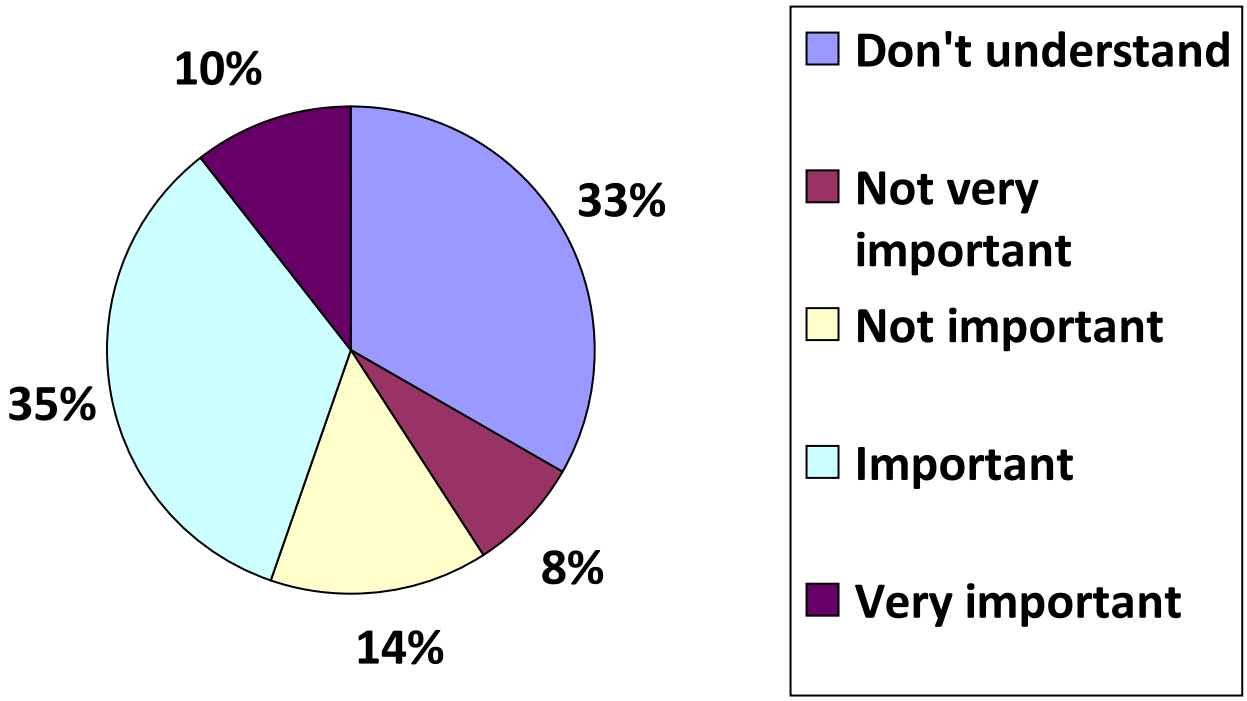


*Figure 13a:* Importance of Civic Competence (n=105 pre)

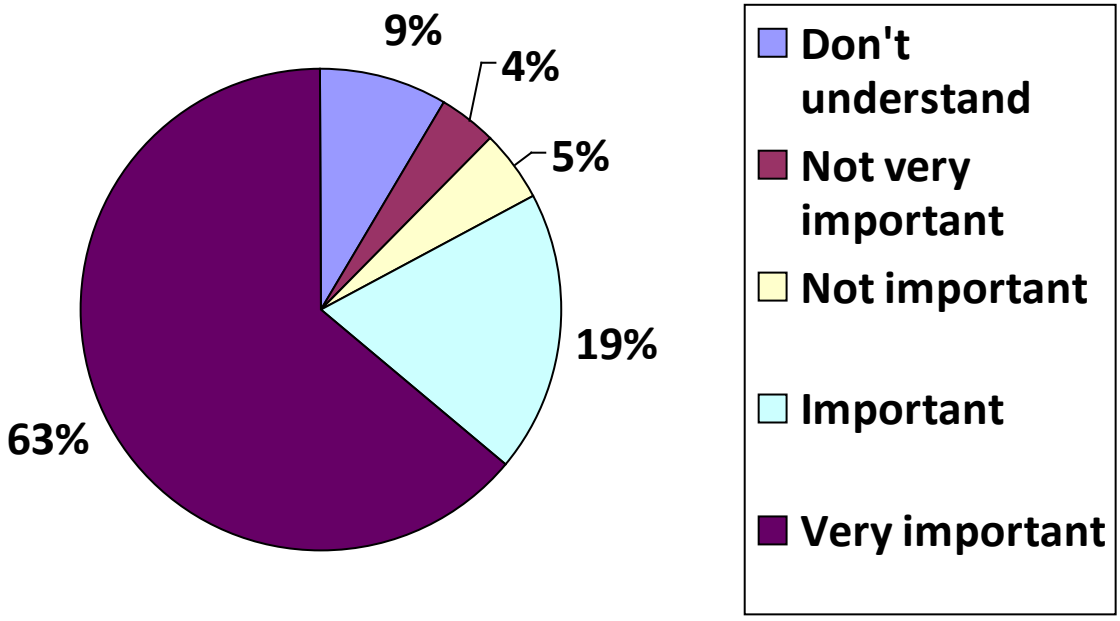


*Figure 13b:* Importance of Civic Competence (n=105 post)

As demonstrated when Figure 13a is compared to Figure 13b, the overall favorable rankings of *Important and Very Important* combined increased from 45% to 82%.

**Student Behavior Checklist.**

The third tool the teacher researcher used was a student behavior checklist. The teacher observation checklist was used on several dates: September 7, 13, 20, 29, October 13, 19, November 9, and December 5, 2011. The teacher researcher made observations during sixth hour social studies class with the students (n=20). Behaviors were grouped into five categories: *Hyperactive*, *Withdrawn*, *Poor Attention/Concentration*, *Disruptive*, and *Uncooperative*. The Student Behavior Checklist used can be found in Appendix C.

For post-documentation, the eight days that the student behavior checklist was used has been divided into four days of traditional pedagogy and four days when technology was the primary pedagogical method used.

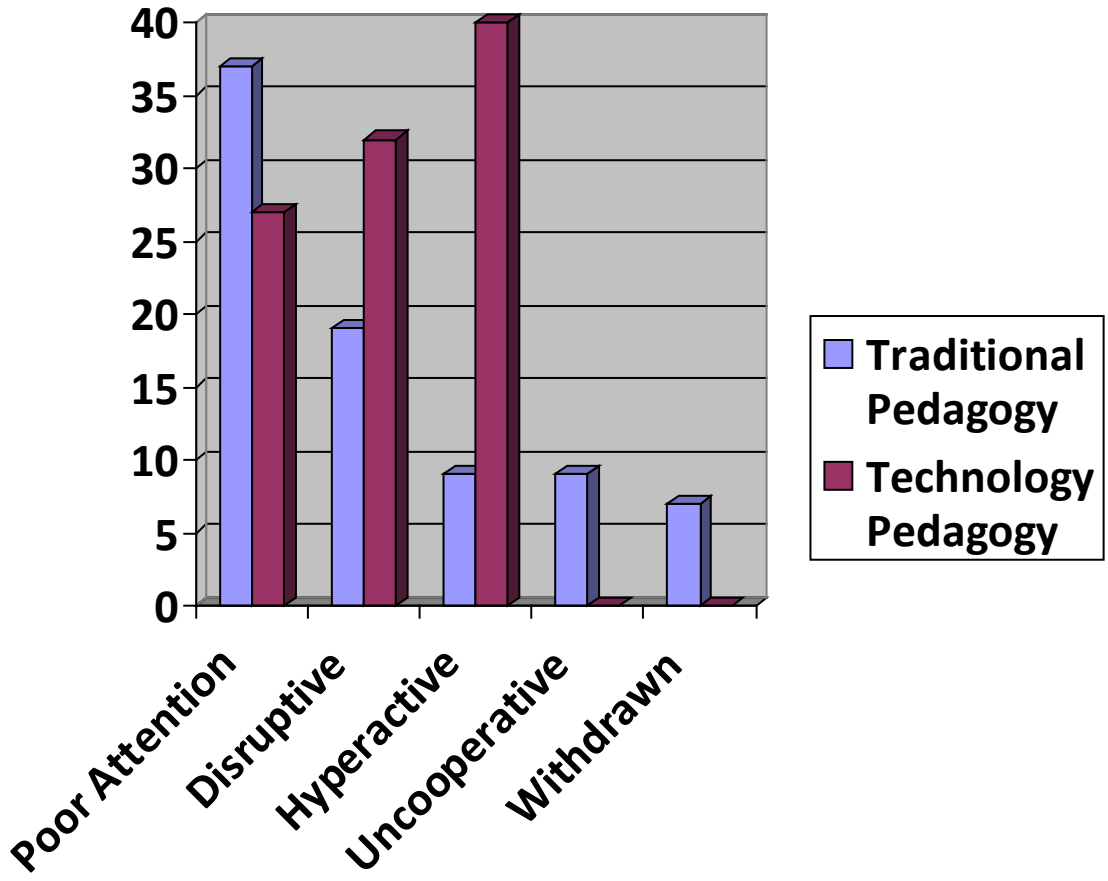


*Figure 14*: Behavior Checklist (n=180)

As demonstrated in Figure 14 above, the number of instances of poor attention (n=37 pre, n=27 post), uncooperative (n=9 pre, n=0 post), and withdrawn (n=7 pre, n=0 post) behaviors declined.

**Summary.**

When examining the technology survey data, obviously the intervention accounted for 100% usage of those specific pieces of technology. Most students had previously worked with the internet and a computer but using a SMARTboard, clickers, PowerPoint software, and a

WebQuest would be technologies more suitable for a school setting. If a student's grade school did not utilize these technologies, it is safe to say that students did not have prior exposure.

One of the more interesting pieces of data I collected was the students' favorable opinions regarding social studies. I believe many students do not have prior experience with social studies but they already have pre-conceived notions of what it might be like. When students completed the attitudinal survey during pre-documentation, many based their opinions on their experiences from fifth grade not having had social studies at the middle school level. Many elementary teachers do not actually teach social studies as a separate subject. Instead, they just embed some of the content into their reading time. So, students negatively associate social studies with only reading. When surveying the students during post-documentation, the number of favorable opinions increased dramatically. This result was not surprising to me since many students comment that social studies is their favorite class. Perhaps, because it is a subject which is not ISAT tested so students do not feel the constant pressure of preparing for a test. Often, they remark to me that they enjoy what we are learning.

Analyzing data regarding student behaviors was interesting. I took behavioral data for only my last class of the day those eight times. When I set-up this action research project, I did not know that this hour would be my highest academically. During the intervention, the checklists I completed on various days took place while a variety of different activities were happening. Some of the days consisted of more traditional instruction while others had the technology component. Not surprising, student behaviors were definitely more animated on the days when technology was used.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

### Conclusions.

Based upon the results of the action research project, the teacher researcher concludes that students enjoyed using the technology and were more actively engaged in learning. Overall, student behavior was more animated and excitable. These technology interventions did improve student achievement in social studies. Test scores for the geography test improved 34.5% and Mesopotamia test scores improved 38.4%.

### Recommendations.

After completing the intervention, I plan to continue to incorporate a number of technologies that I utilized during my intervention. I have already begun to look at instruction differently. Now, I am constantly on the lookout for ways to use technology as an alternative means of instruction since it can make it more personalized and meet student needs better. Not to mention, students simply enjoyed using technology as it made learning more fun. The other social studies teacher and I have made multiple Jeopardy review games for the SMARTboard We have looked for more WebQuests to do online with students. I find the amount of information, which exists for teachers to use online to be limitless. In fact, the students have often given me information regarding viable sites which I have then put to use in my classroom.

If there were another person willing to create a similar research project, I would recommend replicating some of the interventions. For example, I did the clickers review for only one unit of study with my students. Possibly, there would be more post-test gains made if a clickers review was done for every unit as opposed to a traditional review type of activity. I cannot say that technology alone raised test scores since many other activities were done also.

I think this research project showed the constructive benefits to using technology. Technology has a way of involving students of various abilities. I found that even struggling learners were engaged. Technology is so much a part of current students' lives.

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# APPENDICES

Name: _____

Dear Student:

Thank-you for completing this survey to help me with my research using technology in social studies. This survey is confidential, and I will use the information you provide me and combine it with other students' information to find out what kinds of technology you have used before. Please put your name on the survey and return the survey to the student work turn-in basket. When you complete the survey, you are telling me that you agree for me to use your information.

Thank-you.

Please indicate which of the following technologies you have used at home or school, in the last year, by placing a checkmark on the line next to each item.

_____ SMARTboard

_____ Clicker

_____ GPS

_____ Computer

_____ Cell Phone

_____ Playstation 3

_____ Digital Camera

_____ Wii

_____ WebQuest

_____ Simulation

_____ GIS

_____ Internet

_____ PowerPoint

_____ Microsoft Word

_____ E-mail

_____ War/Violent Games

_____ X-Box Kinect

_____ PSP

_____ Nintendo DS/DSI

____ Nook/Kindle

____ Dancing Games

____ Fitness/Sports Games

____ iTunes

____ Webcam

Student Attitudinal Survey Regarding Social Studies

Date: September 6, 2011

Dear Student:

Thank-you for completing this survey to help me with my research using technology in social studies. This survey is anonymous; and I will use the information you provide me, and combine it with the other students' information, to find out students' opinions about social studies. Please let me know when you have completed answering the survey questions on zoomerang.com. When you complete the survey and hit send, you are telling me that you agree for me to use your information.

Thank-you.

Ms. Goodin is very interested in your opinions about social studies. Please take this brief survey by answering the following questions. Your responses will remain anonymous

Overall, how much do you enjoy social studies?

1

| Hate it | Don't like it | Like it | Love it |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

How often did you learn social studies last year?

2

| Never | 1-3 times per week | More than 3 times per week | Everyday |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

In what ways do you like to learn? (Check all that apply).

3

- Moving
- Building
- Reading
- Writing
- Listening
- Discussing
- Investigating

Which of the following cultures do you know anything about? (Check all that apply).

4

- Mesopotamia
- Egypt
- China
- India
- Greece
- Rome
- None of the above

Civic competence is the belief that someone can change how the government works. How important is civic competence to you?

5

| Don't Understand | Not very important | Not important | Important | Very Important |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |

# Behavior Checklist

**Date: _____** **Class Hour: _____**

| Hyperactive | Withdrawn | Poor Attention | Disruptive | Uncooperative |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |
| | | | | |
| | | | | |

- ✓ Hyperactive: out of seat, constant movement, distracts self
- ✓ Withdrawn: stares blankly into space, does not ask for help, listless
- ✓ Poor Attention: does not follow oral and/or visual lessons, rarely completes assignments, easily distracted by classroom stimuli
- ✓ Disruptive: demands attention, does not follow rules, interrupts lesson
- ✓ Uncooperative: blames others, defiant of teacher requests, works only when threatened