Social Media In A High School English Class: A Collective Case Study

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Background

- Researchers have studied social media on the two-year college level, the four-year college level, and distance learning.
- There is very little study on the high school level, more specifically, the 11th-grade English class.

Purpose

- To determine the effects of social media use on high school students in an 11th-grade English class.
- Data collected from both students and teacher.
- The study explored how social media affected academic achievement and student engagement.

Conceptual Framework

- Social Constructivism
  - Creating meaning in the world by interacting with others in formal and informal settings.
- Connectivism
  - Addresses learning in the digital age.
  - Learning is not about what an individual knows, but about what an individual knows how to obtain (e.g., through databases, on message boards, etc.).

Methods

- Qualitative collective case study
- After six weeks, students were given a survey and teacher was interviewed by the researcher.
- Data was coded and analyzed to discover common themes and sub-themes between students and their teacher.

Results

- Overall positive affect on both the teacher and her students.
- Students determined social media was easy to access and use.
- Shy or anxious students could have discussions online without interruption or having all eyes on them.
- Students gained real-world experience, using tools that are used in college and in the business world.
- Some cited gaining academic independence, as well as learning to dialogue with others in a professional manner.
- Students reflected on and learned through discussion.
- Students could interact with others outside of normal class room period, as well as with more than one student at a time.

Notable student quotes concerning the use of social media

- "It helps me not waste time and it's everywhere I go."
- "It was easy to access at home and provided an interesting way to complete the assignment."
- "I didn't like that most of the time I was unaware of when something was posted..."
- "I can type faster than I can write and text is cleaner than my handwriting."
- "It's easier to 'type your mind' rather than speaking... in front of a class."

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