eLearning

Quick Check for Elementary Practices

METIRI *Group*

Activities
Communication
Organization
Online Meetings

Activities

Key Questions to Consider

Are you stating goals for the work you are sharing?

Are you stating time limits or are you stating expectations for contributions?

Are you limiting choice (being directive) about tools that students use?

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Design

As you design your learning experiences for home consider these tips as you curate and plan your materials.

Leveraging Design Process in eLearning

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PROBLEM

- Have students use tools they have access to and document problems that they observe.
- Go over the problems as a group or individually.
- Focus on big questions: why is this problem important, how will a solution make life better/easier/etc.

BRAINSTORM

- Have students work in groups (chat, video, etc.) and brainstorm solutions to the problem.
- Do a quick primer in how to brainstorm (rules like: big different ideas are good! Can be helpful!).
- Have students present/document their initial ideas.

PROTOTYPE

- Have students walk through and decide which possible solution they want to go after and design.
- Review their documentation and provide feedback
- Introduce the idea of prototyping.
- Have students share their initial design and get feedback.

REFLECT

- Students mock up their prototype after feedback and get feedback from others (questions, ideas, suggestions).
- Students reflect on what they like and don't like about their mock up.
- Work is reviewed to identify standards addressed.

Inquiry

Think about how you can use inquiry as a basis for your eLearning experiences. Consider the following as simple guidance for developing activities that are grounded in inquiry.

Leveraging Inquiry in eLearning

ENGAGE

- Find quality media (articles, video, etc.) for your students to interact with and share those links.
- Capture student questions and "wonders" in a shared document, environment, video, or live in a chat/conference.

REFLECT

- Review with students all the questions and wonders with students.
- Lead students through identifying areas that they want to investigate more deeply.
- Meet one on one with students either via phone or video to focus student work.

INVESTIGATE

- Once students have their individual focus, help students make a plan for how they will answer their questions.
- Have students document (in writing, audio, video, etc.) what they are finding.
- Prompt & respond to deepen student work.

DOCUMENT

- Students document their findings and answers to their questions.
- Students share findings with peers and others.
- Documentation is reviewed across student work to identify connections.
- Work is reviewed to identify standards addressed.

Communication

Key Questions to Consider

Will everyone understand what they are doing and why?

Are you clearly stating how review/feedback will happen?

Are you clarifying expectations for grading or assessment?

Are you making any assumptions on access (printers, devices, time availability, etc.)?

Your why

We all have our reasons for doing things with our students. See how you can clarify your "why" for your kids and their families. Try identifying goals, next steps, and connecting the learning experiences to something bigger than "just because."

Feedback

Remember that effective feedback is essential for kids. Remember the key parts of feedback are: timely, useful, directly helps students achieve goal, and multi-functional (skill, understanding, task completion, process, and the capacity of kids to be self-directed).

Good Feedback

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TIMELY

- Make sure teacher knowledge and expertise is present (students can't just get feedback from peers).
- Use technology and video as much as possible when giving feedback (remember this is not just about grading but helping students continually improve).

USEFUL

- Make sure feedback is tied to learning goals (not just task completion).
- Help students see the value in feedback and try to encourage self-reflection by students that can add to your understanding (get students to think about the learning not the task).

PROCESS

- Give students the opportunity to give feedback on the process (how can your work improve as a teacher).
- Think about how the student could use their own key skills (critical thinking problem solving, etc.) to improve the process.

SELF DIRECTION

Teachers need to be goal based not task based to help students see past the immediate. Give students feedback on the following:

- Improving their own work after receiving feedback.
- Meeting deadlines and timelines.
- Use of tools to help them manage and organize work.

Grading

During eLearning (especially during unexpected closures) there may be limitations on grading. With eLearning you can really do three types of grading/assessment: Completion, Rubric-based, or Self-scoring.

Grading and Assessment

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COMPLETION

- This is low level assessment practice.
- Keep in mind that this is for work that typically has no deep learning and is more often than not for practice or developing routines.
- Make sure that you are always stating the purpose so that there is meaning for students.

RUBRIC

- This allows you to think about multiple components of student work.
- You can use a list or a grid rubric (grids typically help this become more than task completion and show student competence).
- Make the rubric available before and after, and reference progress during the entire learning experience.

SELF SCORING

- These are best in short chunks that test for understanding this is best for checking on how you can support additional skill mastery of kids.
- Don't use these just for summative but also formative opportunities to direct individual instruction.

Checking Assumptions

During eLearning (especially during unexpected closures) we can get really used to seeing things through our own world. It is important to think through the assumptions you are making as you design learning experiences for students.

Guidance on Checking Assumptions

DEVICES

Ask all of your students...

- Do you have access to the internet?
- Do you have access to a printer and paper?
- Do you need any supplies (paper, pens, books, etc.)?

TIME

Ask all of your students...

- What time of day is best for your family to help you connect to your teacher or class?
- What is your routine at home? When are you working on school work?
- How are you doing on completing work for school?

SUPPORT

Ask all of your students...

- Do you have anyone at home that can help you when you get stuck?
- How can I help you when you are stuck on something you are doing for school?
- What is the best way for us to work together? (phone, video, chat)

Organization

Key Questions to Consider

Are the objectives for completion clear?

Are expected materials organized in a way that makes sense?

Have you oriented your families and students to the tools you will use?

Is it clear what is assigned and when it needs to be submitted?

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Completion

During eLearning (especially during unexpected closures) it is more important than ever that every teacher, school, and district reiterate the expectations for completion. Think about the grading notes in the previous section of this document and communicate your expectations for managing and documenting completion. It helps students and families manage time and know what truly is priority one for eLearning.

Organization

One of the best things we can do is get eyes on our materials that will give us great feedback. Sometimes when we design eLearning experiences and environments what makes sense to us, doesn't necessarily make sense to the masses. Consider sending materials to a friend who is not in education, a parent that will give honest and constructive feedback, and see what can be improved. If your materials aren't organized (with goal, assessment type, expectations) you might have some work to do.

Orientation

As you and your students navigate eLearning, it is important to help orient your students to whatever environments or tools you use. When planning for orientation think about what support resources you, your school, or your district have in place. Things like call-in lines for support, how to videos, etc.

There are a few ways to go about that.

Options for Orientation

SYNCHRONOUS

- These can take place via video where teachers help students/families navigate new tools.
- Teacher Librarians can do online, live training via video to help students and families understand how systems can be navigated.
- District or school-based technical support teams can do live video meetings at regular scheduled times.

ASYNCHRONOUS

- These are either PDF, video, or audio updates that orient students and families to learning tools.
- Items should be tagged for specific tools.
- Training materials should be tied to grade levels and include examples from grade levels (elementary, middle, high) so that families and students can have an idea of what they might see.

STUDENT LED

- Your students may know more about some tools than you do that's okay because this is a great opportunity to let them lead. Provide students the opportunity to shine, be a support for their peers, do walkthroughs, and even do training videos (with some global guidance).
- Think about how students can be "tech support" for their peers and find ways to connect students with their peers.

Online Meetings

Key Questions to Consider

Do you have the skills and resources needed to facilitate online meetings?

Do your students have the skills and resources to facilitate online meetings?

What is your goal (academic or otherwise of online meetings)?

Who needs to be at online meetings?

Readiness

Remember that it takes time to get used to facilitating online meetings with students. Use available time to practice facilitating online with colleagues and coaches. During practice sessions don't just focus on the technical components, but discuss strategies for facilitation.

Are you talking? Is everyone talking? Are you asking questions? (Make sure to keep a list of names so you can include everyone and check in with students who are not participating) Are you sharing slides? Are you sharing links?

Student Readiness

Before students join any online meeting make sure they know the purpose. Will it be an informal check in? Will it be time for students to ask questions? Will it be time for you do direct live instruction on new content or review content? Will they be expected to participate? Will they be expected to share something? Make sure students know WHY the meeting is being held, HOW they are expected to participate, and WHAT they will do during the meeting. Also be sure that students know they can opt-out and what the plan is if they need help during the online meeting (i.e., technical support).

Generating Goals

So many times we as adults have meetings just to say we had a meeting! For kids in online meetings (and even adults) it is important to recognize and state your goals when inviting others. For elementary aged students these might be purely social emotional (checking in with friends, seeing one another, sharing, etc.). At the same time you may have different goals for your time together. It will help students and families be successful if you take the time to state your goal. They will know why they are there, what to expect, and how they should anticipate interacting. Keep it simple, but always include your goals!

Audience

Sometimes group meetings at the elementary age can get frustrating for everyone. Think about how you use your time with students. Is it best to invite all students? Is it best to do 1:1 check-ins with students to focus in on specific areas? Is it best to invite families so that they can see/hear/experience what their students are experiencing? If you are only doing teacher centered meetings think about why they have to be synchronous! If you are actually teaching consider how you are differentiating! Think through your audience and make sure your audience aligns with your goals!

Learn more about Metiri eLearning coaching and the ISTE - Metiri Digital Learning pathways to help you empower students and develop all students as digital citizens.

metiri.com/eLearning

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