

Hey! Look What I Found!

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Introduction/Need for Innovation

The need to quickly locate and effectively utilize new and innovative teaching resources was evident throughout the last academic year. The COVID-19 pandemic forced teachers to instantly innovate as they had to shift to teach in environments they were not used to (Daniel, 2020). They also had to immediately locate resources and learn new technology (Bushweller, 2020).

Agricultural education teachers were among the educators scrambling to locate and implement teaching strategies to meet the educational needs of their students (Linder et al., 2020). Preservice teachers were also experiencing shifts to their own educational setting as they trained to enter a classroom and teach their own students. To prepare for the future, it is imperative preservice teachers learn how to utilize emerging technology to best educate their students (Kelly, 2019).

Teacher educators should not be the experts on all possible resources, platforms, and pedagogical tools available to educators. Exposing preservice teachers to as many educational platforms as possible is important, but also challenging. Future educators should be encouraged to seek out resources for themselves and provided the time needed to explore. They also need time to learn from their peers (i.e. colleagues) (Boss, 2018) by sharing what they discover. Developing these skills is a critical first step in meeting the professional development needs (Eck et al., 2021) of all teachers.

How it Works/Methods/Steps

Agricultural Education students in the teaching methods course at Kansas State University (KSU) were asked to explore resources, websites, and other educational tools throughout the Fall 2020 semester to build their resource library. At the end of the semester, they were allowed the opportunity to share their best resource with their peers. They were challenged to find something unique and innovative others would benefit from knowing about and using in their future classroom.

After students identified their item, they “claimed” it on a shared Google Doc so their peers could see, and no item was repeated. They each had to write a brief “white paper” and prepare a short discussion to highlight the item with their peers.

The “white paper” guidelines included: one to two pages in length, eye-appealing and easy to read. They were submitted by November 30 via Canvas. The papers were evaluated on how clearly the idea, teaching method, technology, or other resource was communicated in written form. The layout and design needed to make it easy for someone to use the resource. The presentation component was held via Zoom on December 1 and December 3. Each student signed up for their “slot” on a shared Google Doc. They were provided 10 minutes to share their resource, allow their classmates to “practice” using it, and answer questions. A rubric was shared with the students prior to the assignment deadline. Each component was worth 50 points for a total of 100 points.

Results to Date/Implications

This assignment allowed students to find educational resources on their own, share them with their peers, and evaluate what would be the most impactful in their future classrooms. The resource sharing went above expectations. Eighteen students completed the *Hey! Look What I Found!* idea-sharing during the fall 2020 semester. Their items are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

Hey! Look What I Found! Idea Sharing Topics

Kansas ORKA GIS map for legal land description	Online Jeopardy
Forever Blue Network	Owl Pellets: Tips for Ag Teachers Podcast
Germinate Professional Development	Pear Deck with Google Slides
Green and Growing Podcast	Perfectly Planned by ATD and Ag Teacher Buddies
Grow Next Gen website - GMOs: What do you know? Breakout	Plant and Soil Science e-library
Histology guide website	Small Gas Engines Book Hobart
How to share YouTube videos without ads	Trello
Idaho Grasses app	UNL Myology Interactive Lab
Journey 2050	Weed ID guide

KSU finished the Fall 2020 semester online. The Zoom sharing process was a great platform for each student to quickly share, their peers to practice (if appropriate), and questions/links to be posted in the chat.

Students indicated they appreciated the time to share what they had found and to quickly learn 17 other tools they could put into practice during the spring semester student teaching experience.

The idea sharing was such a hit, we repeated the activity in the spring 2021 semester to allow students to share what they discovered during their first few weeks in their own classrooms. During that session, students were placed in three groups. They gave a one minute “sales pitch” about their idea and then went into breakout rooms to learn more about a specific resource.

Future Plans/Advice to Others

This assignment stayed in the syllabus for the next year, Fall 2021, with small modifications in the points (decreased to 50 points) and method of sharing (in person rather than online). Like the impact of “innovative ideas” at a research conference, the *HLWIF!* assignment allowed students to share a diverse set of tools and educational practices they planned to use or had already started using. They had the freedom to select the item/resource they felt was most relevant and worthwhile to share with their peers. This freedom did yield a wide range of “usable” resources, not all being technology focused. I even learned new tools and techniques to improve my own classes and curriculum. It will remain in the course for future semesters.

Costs/Resources Needed

There is no cost associated with this assignment. Resources required include technology to demonstrate the resources and allow students to engage with relevant tools during the presentation (i.e. Zoom, Google Docs). Time during the semester or a separate professional development day is required.

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