

**INTERPRETATIVE REPORTING:
A PROJECT PROFILE**

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I. INTRODUCTION:

The new Basic Education Curriculum paved the way for the inclusion of Journalism as a Makabayan subject in the secondary school. This implementation was made in cognizance of Campus Journalism Act of 1991 (R.A. No. 7079) which promotes the development and growth of campus journalism as a means of strengthening ethical values, encouraging critical and creative thinking, and developing moral character and personal discipline of the Filipino youth.

In this present day and age, Information and Communication Technology in Journalism is indispensable. The world wide web opens numerous channels to report the news at the same time provides copious news sources. Students can take advantage of these sources to help hone their research skills and develop their journalistic styles. In a writing class, technology makes the current practice more efficient and effective by using word processors, thus, making technology an amplifier of learning. It facilitates the writing process in such a way that students can see their errors and correct them easily without rewriting or retyping. More so, learning becomes relevant and meaningful because technology augments communication by expanding audience and expressive options.

II. RATIONALE

The real essence of Journalism is the search for truth and the main duty of a journalist is to report unadulterated truth to the public. Over the years, the face of journalism has evolved from just mere recounting of events into analyzing, finding significance and hypothesizing the possible consequences of these events.

This project was geared towards finding various answers to the essential question: “Why is truth significant?” As students performed the tasks in this project, they addressed the questions: “What does the truth reveal?” and “How does the truth affect human lives?”

This project was created to provide opportunity for experiential learning. It is viewed that learning can best be achieved if students participate in the learning process. Creating this project encourages students to plan, think and strategize on best ways information is achieved.

It also provides opportunity for the use of technology in learning. Since this project involves various research methods, technology plays a vital role as information source. Through ICT, students gain a broader perspective about learning. Learners are no longer constrained to the limited borders of the classroom. There is more interaction between text and the students, since the former use their wise judgment in weighing the veracity of the texts found in the internet. Given these conditions, learners become interested finding relevance to learning.

III. OBJECTIVES

This project was designed to:

1. develop students' research skills through various data gathering strategies like research, interviews and surveys.
2. hone students' writing skills as gathered data and interviews are transcribed into an interpretative report.
3. enhance lay-outing and designing skills in publishing reports in the web.
4. inculcate among students positive values like resourcefulness, diligence, creativity and teamwork. All these embody the characteristics of a good journalist.

IV. NATURE OF THE LEARNERS

This project was designed for Fourth Year High school students taking Advanced Campus Journalism. The students took Basic Campus Journalism in the previous year which enabled them to acquire knowledge and skills needed in news writing, editorial writing and lay-outing.

Majority of the students have not attended computer classes in the lower years, however, they have acquired basic computer skills in their journalism class. Journalism classes in San Isidro National High School, have always been taught using ICT.

V. PEDAGOGICAL CONCEPT

This project adheres to the philosophy that learning is an active process wherein the learner is an active participant. The learner is not a mere recipient of knowledge but also a generator of new concepts and principles derived from meaningful experiences. Learners employ various problem-solving and discovery approaches to enable them to find solutions to complex problems. They engage in continuous creation of mental models as they encounter new materials.

Knowledge is not situated in an understanding on how to follow particular rote activities but focuses on building conceptual understanding which includes a much richer and flexible array of knowledge that makes it possible for students to think deeply even without a procedure to know when and how to apply proper procedures and to interpret their results properly.

It is also believed that no student enters a class as an empty vessel. Students have formed many ideas about math, science, social studies, writing, etc. based on life and school experiences. These pre-existing ideas are called schema. These ideas are valuable bases for continued learning; although others are wrong. This problem can be addressed by making the students undergo inquiry-based methods to help students reform their ideas into more correct conceptions.

Research shows that one problem with school learning is that students often fail to connect it to what they have learned outside school. Students fail to see the connection between what is taught in school and what is there outside of

it. Thus, focusing on the creation of authentic tasks which meet students' needs and goals will help bridge this gap.

Learning becomes more effective if students know how to take responsibility for managing and monitoring their own thinking and learning activities. These kinds of skills, "metacognitive skills" require the students to examine their own learning practices. Students reflect on the steps they take to generate questions about a new topic, how they collect information to help focus on smaller set of questions, how they evaluate the relevance of the information, how they decide to what step to take next and how to communicate their conclusions. Students develop higher order thinking skills and process skills in accomplishing such tasks.

These concepts about teaching and learning serve as the framework for the design of this project.

VI. METHODOLOGY

The conduct of this project was based on the lesson on Interpretative Reporting. Interpretative Reporting is a special kind of writing in the sense that it tries to give meaning to bear facts. Unlike objective reporting which merely recounts events or occurrences, interpretative journalism attempts to explain them and relate events to each other.

Inquiry Approach and Project-based Learning were the approaches used in teaching the different phases of interpretative reporting. Opportunities for

hands-on learning were provided. The tasks in accomplishing this project integrated issues/problems with the real world.

The students were broken into groups. Each group underwent the first phase, the Fact-gathering phase, by doing on-line research on an issue that they chose. Students were given the freedom to choose an issue which they thought concerns the youth. This activity provided for differentiated learning. Students were also given the freedom to explore all possible resources for their research. Research materials varied from websites, books, magazines, newspapers. Interviews, on-line and personal, were also conducted to gather information and opinion about the investigated topic. Students conducted a survey, also on-line and personal, which supported the facts they gathered. These surveys were also used as bases for interpretations.

The second phase of interpretative reporting is the Prophecy phase. In this phase the reporter makes an “educated guess”. He uses his intuitive ability to anticipate effects of the events he is reporting. A more effective device is to get some authoritative people to talk about possible effects. The students, doing this project, utilized gathered data to anticipate effects of events. They personally talked to experts in the field to get credible information and interpretation. In this activity, they generated questions to probe on the possible effects of the issue.

Third, in the Interpretation Phase, the reporter makes a stand by using his knowledge about the subject. He gives his own perception of what will happen and why. The students in accomplishing this project, processed gathered

information to arrive at conclusions. Having sufficient evidences, they made their objective analysis on the issue.

The best way to determine learning is when students serve as source of learning for others. Thus, this project provided a venue where students could share what they learned. The students designed a website where they could publish their work, showcasing the tedious researches they conducted. They also provided lists of sources to aid future researchers and students like them. The inclusion of the response form provided venue for comments and feedback from site visitors.

Finally, the websites were evaluated using a rubric which explicitly describes the grading criteria. These criteria were: content, organization, technical elements and layout and design.

V. PROJECT OUTCOME

In a span of two weeks the students were able to develop their websites. They chose topics that concern the youth of today. Such issues were on juvenile delinquency, teenage pre-marital sex and homosexuality.

Supported by interviews and articles, each group presented a discussion of these issues. These discussions touched on the causes, effects and significance of these social issues. They also proposed solutions to help eradicate these problems.

The students used their journalistic skills in putting their message across. At the same time, they offered provisions for feedback. These

This project revealed various aspects about the learners. It showed how learners process information. It also revealed students' interests since they were given the freedom to choose their topics.

VI. CONCLUSION

It is the desire of every teacher for her students to learn as much as they can in every teaching –learning situation. All teaching and learning innovations should always be regarded as opportunities for better acquisition of knowledge. Computers shouldn't be viewed as teacher replacements but as aids to meet the ultimate goal of education.

Learning is best achieved if students see its relevance to the real world. Since students themselves are members of the community, providing them with similar activities would increase their level of awareness on issues that concern them. This would allow them to generate solutions to problems rather than adding to society's burden. If students are developed to be critical thinkers rather than just mere passive recipients of knowledge then we can be assured that the next posterity will be a generation of productive citizens with high regard for nationalism.

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