Learning Environment and Desktop Publishing Assignments

These are the first two assignments in the course and lay the foundation for all the other projects. The Learning Environment assignment is a descriptive essay of the instructional environment within your classroom and school, and how that environment supports the use of instructional technology for teaching and learning. You should research a selected school district to find out as much as you can about it and then write your essay. The Desktop Publishing assignment should graphically represent that instructional environment in a form that can be shared with others.

Background and Purpose: The successful application of instructional tools requires an understanding of the context in which learning activities are carried out. This assignment will give you the opportunity to think about a learning environment that you will be able to use as the context for other tasks in this course.

Research a school or school district Web site where you would like to work (or your school district). Write a description of the learning environment you envision (or the one you attended) for the development of the instructional tasks you will create for this class. Provide detailed information about the elements that define the context for your class. The list below will help you identify those elements. Try to address as many of the following questions in your description. This DOES NOT mean to copy and paste district materials! Instead, consider how these elements impact the learning environment you will create and how technology may be used within your classroom.

1. What is the school’s or school district’s mission statement, learning goals, beliefs about student learning, and/or vision?
2. What are the demographics of the school, the student population, and class size? [describe students’ social/economic background (urban, suburban, rural) and students ethnic/cultural background (native language/culture)]
3. What grade level will you teach? What content area(s)?
4. Are there curriculum standards posted? If so, cite the Web address.
5. What technology is available at your school or school district?
6. What is the acceptable use policy (AUP) for the Internet or the guidelines for using the Internet?
7. What kind of "links" are provided for students or parents?
8. Describe your teaching philosophy based on your life experience and what you have learned so far in teacher education courses.
Writing Guidelines

• Use a word processing program
• Give your essay/report a relevant title
• Include your full name
• Cite your sources
  • Please proofread your work! Spelling and grammar does count

Next

Create a desktop publishing document (DTP) that illustrates the learning environment you have previously described. You might consider the creation of a document (poster, newsletter, brochure, etc.) that uses graphics and text to introduce or describe the learning environment within your school and classroom.

Grading

This assignment is worth 60 points (30 for the learning environment and 30 for the DTP artifact). To achieve the maximum score possible your assignment should clearly show:

• The learning environment should be more then a restatement of your teaching philosophy. It should thoroughly describe the access and resources you would have, and your current perspectives regarding teaching, learning, and the role of technology to support instructional objectives.

• The desktop publishing document should be a reflection of the learning environment within your school and classroom, and clearly articulate your conceptions about the role of technology to support teaching and learning.

• careful consideration of the learning environment you describe

• an understanding and application of these instructions

• integration of information (please cite your sources)