

# My Future Endeavors

By: Jason Simpson

## The Plan

When I think of graduating from Michigan State University with my Masters of Art in Educational Technology, I can't believe it's almost over. I began my master's program only two months after graduating with my Bachelor's degree. So much has changed in my academic, professional and personal life that has changed the way I think, learn, and teach. Looking forward to the road ahead of me in regards to continuing my education after graduation, I see many opportunities for myself to grow through many valuable resources. There are three paths in which I plan on taking in order to further and broaden my educational experience, first keep up with the ever changing technologies and resources available to teachers through social media (Twitter, blogging etc.), second to read the continually growing list of educational literature I have bookmarked to read in order to build my teaching skills, and lastly I plan on taking a few more college courses focusing on the area of teaching I feel I need more information about, such as literacy. Although before jumping straight into serious study again I plan to break for a small intermission.

## The Intermission

I mention the "intermission" because I have been going to school for approximately eight years consecutively. I am working full time for Wyandotte public schools as a first year resource room teacher; I have 18 students on my caseload at two separate buildings. I also have two children at home, a thirteen year old boy and a nine year old girl. Within the first two months of graduating with my masters these two areas are going to be my main focus. I really want to

implement some of the ideas and strategies that I have learned throughout my educational career into my classrooms more intensely. There are also a few technology grants I am currently applying for on behalf of my students to increase their access to beneficial technologies, such as tablets, and an online reading program. After the first two months I plan to balance my focus back out between family, work and schooling.

## **Social Media**

One of the first things I learned from my Master's courses was that technology offers learning opportunities and gives access to people and information that can be beneficial. My main goal in using social media in regards to my educational path is to stay updated on what my classmates, colleagues and other educators around the world are doing in education and technology. A few of the social media sites that I follow to stay updated are: Pinterest, Twitter, Google blog sites, and Facebook. However, the two main social media sites I use most are twitter because it provides me with constant updates and news on my phone, computer and tablet in the specific areas I choose to follow and Pinterest for all the amazing teaching ideas, strategies, techniques and activities I find (approximately 400 + pins and growing!)

## **Educational Literacy**

The concept of continuing my education through literacy is one that excites me. I have been an avid reader for many years. I consider reading a passion that I have gained through hard work. I grew up a struggling reader that had to attend tutoring and special reading classes in order to keep up with my grade level standards, as do many of my own students. I have found so many teaching strategies, good advice, teaching ideas and adventures through reading, so it a constant determined goal to increase and share my educational library with friends and

colleagues.

Here are lists of books that I have already explored to gain knowledge from:

*Fostering the Use of Educational Technology: Elements of a National Strategy*

“The report considers three major areas: (1) current use of educational technology in elementary and secondary education, including effectiveness, equity, and costs; (2) elements of a national strategy to expand the use of technology in education; and (3) the federal role in fostering effective use of educational technology.”

*The evolution of American educational technology*

“Active, persistent, and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends, constitutes reflective thought”( Saettler, 2004).

*Literacy for the 21st century: A balanced approach*

Based on four contemporary theories of literacy learning-constructivist, sociolinguistic, interactive, reader response-and advocates a balanced approach to teaching reading.

*Envisioning Literature: Literary Understanding and Literature Instruction. Language and Literacy Series*

The book, focusing on literature instruction, offers a way to rethink the contribution of literature to intelligent thinking as well as its role in schooling.

## **Educational Classes**

Lastly, teaching literacy skills to my students is one area of teaching that I feel I could use some further education. The path I plan to take in order to further my teaching literacy skills and reading through educational classes will begin again at Michigan State University. I feel that one thing every teacher knows or will come to understand that as a teacher; we are also always a student. We need to learn with the changing curriculum, students and technologies. When I was considering implementing some educational classes into my future action plan I took a step back and thought about this question?, what is the weakest area in teaching. After examining the different possibilities I have concluded that teaching literacy is my biggest challenge. I do not plan on adding any endorsements or degrees to my certificate just yet but would like to attend a few hand-selected literacy courses to improve my teaching skills and techniques. Some of the courses I am considering that I feel would benefit and help me grow are as follows:

- TE 842 Advanced Methods of Elementary School Reading
  
- TE 853 Corrective and Remedial Literacy Instruction in the Classroom
  
- TE 854 Clinical Literacy Instruction
  
- TE 849 Methods and Materials for Teaching Children's and Adolescent Literature