

I thought I would ~~not~~ take this opportunity to reflect on my journey through the MET program. ETEC 540 is my 10th & final course in the program, the light is shining brightly at the end of the tunnel & I am now confident that it isn't an onrushing freight train.

If I am being totally honest, my main motivation for entering the program was the pay raise that a Masters brings to a teacher. That being said it took me a long time to start my Masters as I wasn't sure what I wanted to study, did I want to go for an MA instead of an MEd to keep the doors open if I decided to leave teaching? In the end I decided that I wouldn't be leaving teaching any time in the near future, but what to focus on? I wasn't looking for a Masters for the sake of a Masters, what my friend who teaches elementary described so eloquently as a "Masters in glitter & gaudiness". In talking with several of the teachers at my school I learned about the MET program, I work with two MET grads & a former administrator is also a MET grad, their description of the program made it seem like what I was looking for. Interestingly two other teachers at the ~~st~~ school are also enrolled in the program now too, Simon who is also in this course and another just starting the program this semester.

When I started the program I had the hope of taking immediately applicable examples & resources & incorporating them into my practice. I was looking for real tangible ready to use strategies, technologies & programs which has not been the case. I started the program with the core courses wanting to get them out of the way and not be caught near the end & not have room in a required course. In doing it this way I did not find what I hoped to find when I started the program, no ~~strong~~ light shining from the heavens saying "Dike, this is what you need to use", what I found instead was the need to reflect on the use of technology in my practice and in teaching in general. Why do we use technology? How does our use of technology improve the learning experience & outcomes for students? The conclusion I came to was surprising to me, I had always thought of myself as a

techie teacher, I used technology almost every class, I supported staff with tech problems, etc. After learning about the SAMR model, I quickly realized I wasn't as advanced as I thought in my use of technology, very little of ~~my~~ how I was using, or having my students use, technology was modifying or redefining the learning tasks. I was feeling quite down about this until last semester when I took ETEC 524. We studied SAMR along side other frameworks for selecting technologies and how to utilize them. I was heartened to learn that ~~some~~ Dr. Puentedura acknowledged that in some cases Substitution & Augmentation are the best use of technology.

While I have learned new technologies & strategies for using new & existing technologies those aren't my greatest take aways from the program. The main takeaway I have from the MET program is the mindset behind the use of technology, whether it be high or low tech. Asking the question why am I, or asking my students to, using technology in this way? There are many different reasons for using technology for motivation, engagement, for greater efficiency, to prepare students for life after graduation, etc. Most if not all of these reasons are completely valid, but as educators we need to be honest with ourselves about the reasons behind our choices, the "why".