I am so excited to share this update about the new happenings in Room 108! This entire update has spawn off the fact that my classroom is equipped with 1:1 iPads. Over spring break I made the decision to revamp my classroom with a new model of teaching and learning. I created this model with the thinking that I have exposed all of the literacy standard to my students and I wanted to be very strategic about revisiting these standards at differentiated levels to my students. Therefore, here is an outline of the new model that I created:

DreamIT Revamped 2.0:

- I created a learning menu for students to use throughout our literacy block. This learning menu is a menu of choices of activities students can do. Students have free reign of what they do first, next, etc. The activities on the learning menu range from digital curriculum, apps, text, partner work, and integrated independent work. This learning menu is very student-centered. Students feel in control of their own learning by choosing their path throughout the day. They use the menu as a checklist to make sure they have accomplished all the tasks by the end of the day.
- We review the learning menu every day during morning meeting. Here, we demonstrate certain activities and discuss what is due and how to turn these tasks in. Students take notes on their learning menus are we review all this information so that there are minimal questions throughout the day. Students have become very self-reliant and have become very good problem solvers.
- Activities are differentiated into three levels, so that students are working at their own level, at their own pace. These tasks have been laid out in trays that are color coded for students to grab. This allowed independence and responsibility for students.
- I also created an app board in the front of the room. This is a visual reminder for students to know which apps they are allowed to visit on a particular day. They reference it in case they are unsure. If students visit apps that are off limits, there are consequences. This eliminates students being off task and wasting time away from their learning menu.
- While students are working on their learning menus, this frees up the day for me to work in small groups with students. It is a great opportunity to teach the standards in a differentiated way that meets the needs of all my students at their level. Now, I have the opportunity to reinforce for my struggling students and challenge my students who are exceeding within a intimate setting for four or five students instead of a blanket lesson to 31 students.
- Lastly, I have started using blendspace to organize the virtual activities for students. Because my students are still learning ways to efficiently navigate the iPads, a lot of time is spent getting to sites. I have eliminated a step for them by including a QR code at the bottom of their learning menus that takes them right to the blendspace for the day.

I have been implementing this model for three weeks now. I had some kinks to work out but we have been learning along the way. Overall, I am very pleased with the ways students are becoming more self-reliant, the way our classroom naturally runs smoother, and the way I am able to gauge how students understand standards because I am able to work with them in small groups. It is very rewarding to know that all our hard work, both the students' and mine, has paid off. This includes all the scafolded lessons around mastering apps, learning procedures, developing inner-motivation, and creating an expectation for students to always give their best effort.

Students have been incorporating technology into everything they are learning. From watching videos, to practicing skills on apps, and creating projects through videos and pictures. This week, students wrote I am poem for our poetry unit. Then, they had a partner take a series of pictures of them acting out their I am poems. Finally, students created a visual word cloud that included buzz words from their I am poem. All of these projects are interconnected and have brought out such a creative side in my students.

Some issues that continue to persist that I am still trying to work through are the limitations that the iPad has because of the lack of a flash player. I still have not been able to figure out how to allow students to watch Youtube videos without them searching all of Youtube. I know there is a youtube for schools but it has been blocked by the district. Also, there is a TeacherTube app, but it crashes every time I try to open it. These are some frustrations that still occur, but as a class we are working on pushing past them and continuing to learn. This experience is exactly what this DreamIT project is all about, transforming our classroom and taking a big leap into the unknown to better myself and my students. Until next time....