Forth Reading: New Media Literacy

Questions:
1. What do they mean by New Media Literacy? Give several examples and why they are new.
2. How should new media be used by students?
3. How do teachers assess new media created by their students?
4. What are the authors bias?
5. What do they recommend?

1. What is mean by New Media Literacy is the use of technology the students are engaged in. What is meant by “new” is how students use these tools for learning. Technology constantly evolving and changing as time goes on. At one time students relied on the library for research now students can surf the web to find information. As stated in the book, “…new media can support the values and habits of inquiry learning… support students in shaping meaning out of their experiences, expressing meaning in different forms and languages, reflecting on and assessing the value of their work, and sharing it with different audiences. As conversational; tools, new media can link students in dialogue with peers and adults in and beyond the school, and promote the democratic value of communication.” It is in these changes in the way student’s gain and acquire information that is what makes this a new media. This then give challenges to the teacher in assessing the students and how to guide them into this new frontier. This also would change the schools culture and challenges how to administer this new media.

2. New media should be used by the students as tools for student’s research, tools for student production and tools for public conversations. The tools for student’s research is through the internet, online classroom research, computer based laboratories, media tools, and applications. The book states that students need to be guided in how to research through the internet by someone. Just like the library were you have someone to guide you in your search so to, you need rules and guide lines in your search. The intern also has some research that is not fact based. The online classroom research is a good way for students to interact with their peers to have peer tutoring, this is also true through the computer based laboratories where students are interacting out side their classroom and seeing real world applications. Media tools are another form of students reaching outside themselves in being creative and trying to express themselves through a given project. Students must also learn the basic applications of important programs such as spreadsheets, databases and image processing programs to be able to utilize their higher level thinking.

New media as a student’s production tool is explained by the book as, a product that can be shared with multiple audiences, not just the teacher. This is done through web based authoring, publishing tools, multimedia, hypertext, graphics, and videos. Using these multimedia students can create independent documentary and curriculum based projects. This also gives students opportunities to create multiple drafts and have critically reviewed by their peers.

The tools for public conversations are network technologies and communication media. The network technologies are mediums such as the internet. This medium breaks away of the isolationism of the classroom and open new doors of exploration if guided by
the teacher. The communication media as best seen through public conversations, this is where students interact with their peers, parents, and teachers. As stated in the book, “Public conversations are common in the democratic information age school….it is through such conversation that thinking becomes manifest, that reflective and critical habits of mind becomes routine….second, conversations are common because through them students learn democratic habits that are crucial in a pluralistic school and a pluralistic society in which people are allowed to come to very different conclusions about the world.”

3. Teachers should assess new media created by their students by how was this constructed, what values underlie this, what are the conventions used in this, who is the intended audience for this, who owns this and benefits from it. How was this constructed is described by the book as, “rather than mirroring reality, it represents a specific aspect of reality from a particular perspective. The media convey values both through the content they present and through the form these presentations take.” What are the conventions used in this, is stated in the book, “…recognize their importance in shaping the way the media text is interpreted, whether they are adhered to or disregarded.” Who is the intended audience for this is how they interpret the project and assumptions they might have. Who owns this and who benefits from it is the person bias one might have and the goal of the presenter. It is in these general questions that give a guide line in how the teacher should assess this new media.

4. The author bias is how the use of technology is implemented by the teacher, students, and administrators. Also how the use of technology will affect the students lives down the road. As stated in the book, “The vision is not ours alone, but is broadly shared by reform minded educators nationwide; and it is not pure bias, but is based on a large amount of developmental and educational research into how children learn will in a variety of disciplines. First, however, we should explain why it is important to be clear about educational visions, goals, and biases when talking about the use of technologies in schools.” The author later states that students are gaining skills they will need to be successful in a technology infused workplace. Another bias by the author is that… technological literacy in addition to the subject matter knowledge they gain, should stand them in good stead in an economy where technologies are a common feature of the workplace.

5. What is recommended by the author is that, “educators and technologist including the authors of this book are arguing that technologies need to be integrated into schools in service of inquiry based pedagogies and need to be supported by a changed organization of schooling. As a result academics and practitioners have sought to align the goals of school reform with the functions and capabilities of new technologies.” To help accommodate these new technologies is that teacher and students alike need a greater trust. Teachers need to be more flexible with the curriculum and students need to take more responsibility in their learning. Another is small class sizes. Having a small class size will help with students from fall between the cracks in the system. Teachers can help students easily and give rise to cooperative learning. Having a flexible and block scheduling suggested by the book will help with students completing projects. Technology takes time in learning, using and applying this resource. Having alternative assessments is critical with technology because you can’t assess students with a simple test. Student need to be assessed as what they produce. Having peer, parietal and teacher
input is the way to make the learning process as a team effort, teacher then become a supporter in education then just a facilitator. Media and technology support is another critical component in incorporating technology in the school system. Having both media specialist and a computer coordinator would help the educational staff. The last crucial element in the integration of technology is having an ongoing faculty development because at any given school there is always a turn around with teachers. Teachers need to be well qualified with using technology and up to date in the applications that are available to the students and teachers.