OLTD 502 - Reflection on Powtoon Video

Before I started the OLTD program, I had not really stopped to think what is it that makes online education so powerful and beneficial. I had a sense that it made materials more accessible and provided more flexibility, but I didn't have a chance to digest the similarities and differences between face-to-face, blended and online teaching models. As I stopped to think critically about my own practice, it dawned on me that I have been using a blended model since the beginning of my practice; besides seeing me in the classroom, students are able to follow assignments at their own pace through an online webpage, and are able to submit materials from anywhere, as well as contact me whenever they need. That was the most interesting realization I have had so far in this course: my attempt to make my course more flexible and student-focused had invariably brought me to the use of online tools and a blended model. This is why I picked our video about the differences in teaching models as my first evidence piece for OLTD 502.

This evidence supports the learning outcomes: **Become familiar with common terms, definitions and elements related to blended and online learning environments**, as well as **Develop practical and technical skills in all phases of concept, development, design, implementation, etc. for blended and online learning environments.**

This video discusses the differences between the three models, and was made in conjunction with two other students. Upon receiving our initial question, *"Does Learning Take Place Differently in Online and Blended Learning Environments,"* we met several times over Skype to brainstorm and discuss what the question meant, and how to respond to it. We organized our brainstorming sessions in a table, which allowed us to visualize the differences and similarities between the blended, online and face-to-face teaching models. The best thing about this process was seeing all the possible similarities, and how much these similarities depended on the teacher's

methods. In effect, we concluded that a face-to-face environment can be just as effective as an online-only environment, as long as the teacher uses creativity and keeps the student as the main focus in their practice. My greatest contributions to the video, besides the actual voiceover and design, derived from my realization that good education can be found anywhere, as long as it teaches the student skills that will last a lifetime. I love the concept of 21st century skills, and wanted to drive home the idea that the subject you teach is never as important as teaching children how to be curious and enjoy learning.

My favourite part of creating the video was coming up with different ways to visually illustrate the voice-over, and I do want to try making more of these videos. One thing I noticed about this video was how much content I was able to cram in seven minutes; in fact, I could have easily made it shorter, but I wanted to reiterate some important things in order to make them "stick" with different types of learners -- that is something I do often when I am teaching. But because I had sound, text and visuals happening at the same time, this reinforcement was seamless and compact, and the length of the video made it very easy to watch. This type of video is an engaging way to bring learning material to students, and the little bits of humour keep their attention throughout the presentation. This would be a wonderful tool to open a unit, as well as to close a unit, as a means to recap. In five short minutes or so, we could review everything we taught the children. I am looking forward to using this in my own classroom.