Digital Learning Isn’t "Something Else" or "Something New," It's NOW Explains New Framework from NCTE

Urbana, IL, February 5, 2013 -- Here in the 21st century, every day is "digital learning day."

The National Council of Teachers of English calls on schools and educators to take stock to ensure that they are planning, assessing, and supporting student learning in ways appropriate to the new digital landscape, using the Framework for 21st Century Curriculum and Assessment.

The Framework for 21st Century Curriculum and Assessment recognizes that to be 21st-century literate, students must learn in new and different ways. They must become proficient with the tools of technology and use them to create and manage information, build meaningful relationships with others so they can inquire and work together, reflect on their own work processes and products, critically evaluate the multimedia sources and tools they use, and use these sources and tools ethically.

Students may be "digital natives," but for the most part they still need help learning how to use technological tools for deeper, richer, more thoughtful, and critical learning.

The questions in the Framework guide educators to evaluate how students are currently learning in their classrooms and schools, to design challenges that deepen student learning, and then to assess that learning and their own teaching decisions. For example, teachers might ask themselves if their students are working independently and collaboratively to solve problems in their work, if they build on one another's thinking to gain a new understanding, if they share and publish their work in a variety of ways to meet authentic audiences, or if they use knowledge gained to create new ideas.

NCTE Executive Director Kent Williamson notes, "The new Framework from NCTE makes it clear that teachers and schools must take responsibility for 21st century learning. The document helps educators look at what's happening in their classrooms so they can build the kinds of learning opportunities that prepare students to be effective communicators, problem solvers, and creators of knowledge."

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The National Council of Teachers of English, with over 35,000 members and subscribers worldwide, is dedicated to improving the teaching and learning of English and the language arts at all levels of education.