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Since I have one computer in my classroom and access to the computer lab once a week, I decided to use learning centers to help students complete a recent project on water. I divided the students into five groups and created five learning centers. Groups worked at each center for 90 minutes. We completed two centers each day. To begin, I assigned the groups as follows:

- Group 1 read a fiction book with a water theme, wrote daily reflections, and then created their own story.
- Group 2 conducted various experiments on water pollution, collected data, and wrote a lab report.
- Group 3 created a skit, song, or display about a water issue.
- Group 4 created survey questions on water use, collected data from other classrooms, and then organized, analyzed, and summarized their results.
- Group 5 researched causes of water pollution, took notes, and drafted a position paper.

Students then prepared a persuasive article for our class blog trying to convince people to use water wisely.

My one computer became the research center for Group 5. I created a wiki to house the directions, tasks, initial resources to get students started, and a start page for student work.

Before using the research center, I spent time helping students learn how to filter information and evaluate Web sites. We used graphic organizers to illustrate and discuss why different sources may yield different information.

When the class went to the computer lab, they learned how to use a social bookmarking site so individual group members could tag, add notes and highlights, and send information to one another about their research. They could also post notes, have discussions, and look at each other's work on the wiki.

To keep everyone on track, each center had clear directions outlining the tasks that needed to be completed. I provided time at the end of each 3-hour project time segment for students to fill out daily progress logs and reflect on their learning. A chart posted on the wall indicated the centers each group would visit each day.

Additional management strategies I use whenever I integrate my limited technology into projects include:

- Emphasizing the importance of preplanning so computer time is efficiently used
- Designing projects to be completed in small parts, so directions do not become too complex and students can work on different sections
- Creating templates to enable independent work
- Asking students to create tutorials for their classmates to use at the computer