The web 2.0 tool that I chose to reflect on is Prezi. I have used Prezi to create presentations for several purposes including: classroom presentations, job search presentations, and solicitation presentations. Using Prezi, allowed me to create excitement and keep the students engaged by having building excitement through zooming to “secret” or “hidden” pieces in the presentation. The job search presentations that I created helped viewers follow my journey and building my experiences chronologically. When trying to increase sign-ups for the summer clubs I offered last summer, I presented Prezis that allowed me to use images to bring the potential experiences to life.

I used Prezi to create classroom presentations utilizing images, YouTube videos, and information for my afterschool program called “World Travelers.” Each week, I would teach kids about a new location. I started off using physical primary sources but the kids would lose interest and it took a lot of time to move through the collection. Next, I used PowerPoint but it was not interactive or exciting and I lost their interest even faster. Finally, the last three weeks of presentations were Prezi presentations. This held their attention longer and provided me the opportunity to introduce lots of images and YouTube videos to enhance the presentation further. Because I could “hide” information, students weren’t looking ahead at the information and getting bored when it finally made it to the main stage, but also were able to see that there was more to the presentation than just the bare bones.

For the job search presentations, I have brought my resume to life and added lots of information that doesn’t have a place but that helps fill out my value as a potential employee. I was able to include scanned documents, thought bubbles, and commentary on how my journey to my classroom has evolved over time from my epiphany moment to today’s enrollment in classes at PSU. I reference my prezi in a PS for my cover letters alluding to the fact that this prezi provides an answer to the first interview question, “Tell us about you,” and providing the link. Including this does not guarantee anyone will look at it, but it does provide a real demonstration of my use of technology which can be an asset when trying to get noticed in a stack of 100’s of resumes.

I’ve also used Prezi to create solicitation presentations for all my middle school summer clubs. It helped bring the club descriptions to life for the kids and allowed me to demonstrate the choices they would be able to make if they signed up for the club. One example is my “Make It, Wear It” club. The description included “making jewelry” and I was able to show them a visual of the first project, a paper clip bracelet that really got them excited. I was then able to link to my pinterest board that showed lots of possibilities for projects that the club members would be able choose from. It was a time-saver for me to have visuals without having to make samples for all the projects myself. After the programs ran, I was able to go back into the Prezis and add pictures of process and product as well as a list of projects actually worked on during the club. These become examples of what I can as a program/activity designer and can also be used as publicity for the larger summer program.

The one thing I haven’t done with Prezi is have students create their own presentations simply because I don’t have a classroom of my own yet, but I do see how students could get very excited about using the program to create their own projects for school. Projects could be very basic or very complex based on student ability and experience and teacher direction and support. I have been lucky enough to be able to experiment more with Prezi and have gained a sense of confidence in creating presentations for all sorts of uses including school open houses. The only real drawback I’ve found is the linear nature of things. There is no way that I know of to use decision-tree logic to skip around a presentation or provide optional information on demand.

As for the example required in this assignment, I’m not in a classroom and haven’t narrowed myself to one particular grade so this is difficult for me to come up with a specific activity that students could use this for, so I will stretch beyond where I am certified (K-8) and expand on an activity that a friend of mine uses in her English 9 Foundations class. The initial activity involves students creating a 8 ½ X 11 visual that uses specific symbols to represent themselves pushing themselves beyond the obvious (instead of an ice cream cone because you love ice cream, using an image of the sunset to represent love of summer). In addition to the collage or visual, students write a paragraph that describes how each of the symbols represents them. I did this assignment myself and then extended it by scanning in the visual and creating a Prezi from that image. I copied the text for each of the symbols into frames within the symbols and ended the Prezi with the scanned visual and imported paragraph side by side. I have attached the link for the Prezi here and a screenshot at the end of the paper: <http://prezi.com/jypgbzyelnpe/?utm_campaign=share&utm_medium=copy> Of course, my visual is much more intense than those of the freshmen and my paragraph is much longer than the usual work that accompanied the freshmen visuals but it definitely shows how Prezi could be used to enhance an assignment and could be a collaborative effort between the Language Arts/English teacher and the Computer teacher if students had both teachers/classes at the same time. It also gives students another opportunity to expand on their writing and make further connections to their symbols.

Graduating from UNH before GLE’s were established and being away from professional development related to meeting GLE’s and Common Core, I am lost in this area. I look at the standards and feel like I am reading a foreign language and, while I understand the words, I can’t for the life of me figure out how to interpret what I have in terms of standards. Regardless of how often or intensely I study the standards, I can’t make sense of how to take activities and interpret how they meet the standards! I’m taking a shot at this here. For this entire project, these Common Core standards are met:

* Language arts – writing
  + W.9-10.1 write arguments to support claims (they need to support why the symbols included represent them)
  + W.9-10.2 write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas (What is more complex than trying to get people to know who you are through a paragraph and symbols?)
  + W.9-10.4 produce clear and coherent writing
  + W.9-10.5 develop and strengthen writing…trying a new approach (Prezi would definitely be a new approach!)
  + W.9-10.6 Use technology...to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing product (if the students type their paragraph, they can copy/paste into the Prezi or they can just type directly into the text boxes)
  + SL.9-10.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence
  + SL.9-10.5 Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays
  + L.9-10.1 demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking
  + L.9-10.2 demonstrate command…capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing
* NETS-S
  + Creativity and Innovation

I have found Prezi to be an innovative way to easily create an engaging multi-media presentation that can be used for students or by students. While not perfect, it is easy to use to create basic presentations and can also be used to create quite complex presentations too. I look forward to creating more presentations and expanding my skills with the software. I am also excited about having students create presentations with Prezi.

Here is the screenshot:

