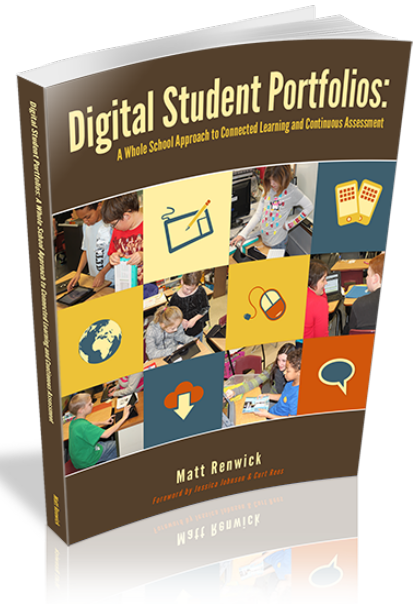


Presenter Bio

Matt Renwick is a 16-year public educator who began as a 5th and 6th grade teacher in a country school outside of Wisconsin Rapids, WI. After seven years of teaching, he served as a junior high dean of students, assistant principal and athletic director before becoming an elementary school leader in Wisconsin Rapids. Matt blogs at [Reading by Example](#), tweets [@ReadByExample](#) and also writes for *EdTech Magazine* and other publications. His book Digital Student Portfolios: A Whole School Approach to Connected Learning and Continuous Assessment was published in July. To order the book, go to:

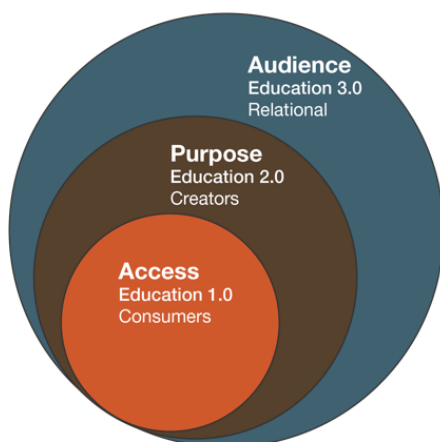
<http://shop.plpnetwork.com/digital-student-portfolios/>



Theory of Action

In our four years of bridging literacy and technology, we have found that **access** alone is not enough. Just putting a tablet or a laptop cart in a classroom does not necessarily equate to more powerful learning. Often, it becomes only about consuming information, instead of collaborating with others to create new products and innovations.

There has to be a meaningful **purpose** to the work learners are doing with these devices. This purpose can be as simple as adding a visual component to a report. It can also be as complex as students developing a multimedia presentation that highlights the conclusions found from an inquiry-based unit of study. If the learning is not possible without the technology, then including the digital tool(s) in instruction is generally worth it.



To maximize this impact, bringing in an authentic **audience** is the key. The importance of knowing someone is on the other end of what we create and share increases motivation for the work we do. Our purpose becomes two fold: For ourselves as an audience as well as for others. Social media is a great place to connect learners to the broader world. Facebook, Twitter, and blogs are three commonly-used tools for showcasing students' best efforts and mastery work.

The idea of purpose and audience as necessary elements for digitally-enhanced learning grows out of the discipline of writing. This makes sense, as helping students develop digital portfolios of their learning is really about communication.

For more information about digital portfolios and to connect with others using them, join our Google+ Community of almost 300 educators: bit.ly/digitalstudentportfolios