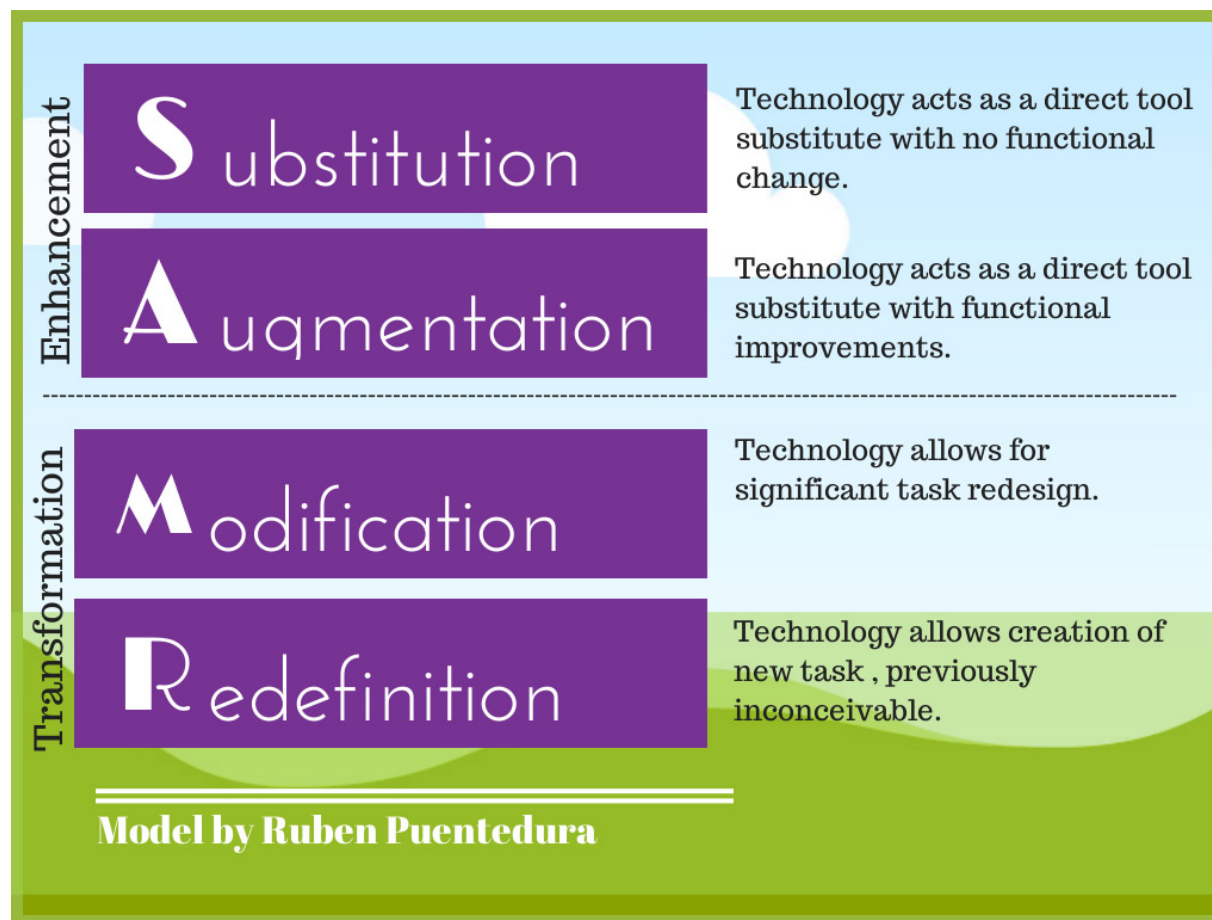


8 Examples of Transforming Lessons Through the SAMR Cycle

By **Kelly Walsh** - April 20, 2015



Examples of Applying the SAMR Model can Help Teachers Understand and Embrace it

The SAMR Model for integrating technology into teaching, developed by Dr. Ruben Puentedura, has gained a good deal of exposure in recent years. "SAMR" is an acronym that stands for Substitution, Augmentation, Modification, and Redefinition. The SAMR model provides a technique for moving through degrees of technology adoption to find more meaningful uses of technology in teaching and move away from simply using "tech for tech's sake".

We recently discussed the SAMR model during an Academic Technology Work Group meeting at [The College of Westchester](#). We examined the video, [SAMR in 120 Seconds](#). One thing that really struck me is how much the example helped, so I made it a point to gather and/or create some more examples.

Following are 8 examples of the SAMR process, each taking an example of a typical classroom exercise that does not use technology and walking it through each phase of SAMR. For half of these, I searched and borrowed from examples that teachers had written about online (*original sources are provided – in some cases I tweaked the example a bit*). I also created examples of my own. In working through this, it became apparent to me that while Substitution and Augmentation can be relatively straightforward conceptually, there is even more room for interpretation when it comes to Modification and Redefinition.

The goal of this exercise was to help me (and readers) better understand the SAMR model, and to really see how lessons and assessments can be transformed while considering the benefits of evolving them through these stages. I find it particularly interesting to see the vast difference in between the original lesson and the redefined lesson ... there is often a much wider range of skills required in the latter stages, and lessons can become much more engaging and collaborative when modified or redefined.

Lesson: Writing a Short Paper

Taken from: <http://www.educatorstechnology.com/2013/08/samr-model-explained-through-examples.html>.

Original Assignment: A hand written paper.

- **Substitution:** A Word Processor replaces a Pen/Pencil in a Writing Assignment.
- **Augmentation:** A Word Processor and text-to-speech function are used to improve the writing process.
- **Modification:** The document created using the Word Processor and text-to-speech function is shared on a blog where feedback can be received and incorporated to help improve the quality of writing.
- **Redefinition:** Instead of a written assignment, students convey analytic thought using multimedia tools.

Lesson: Geography & Travel

A modification of an idea found at <https://edofict.wikispaces.com/SAMR+Examples>.

Original Assignment: An overview of a location consisting of hand written content supplemented with compiled cut-and-pasted magazine clippings.

- **Substitution:** Use presentation software (like Powerpoint or Prezi) to construct a presentation providing information about a selected locale.
- **Augmentation:** Incorporate interactive multimedia – audio, video, hyperlinks – in the presentation to give more depth and provide more engaging presentation.
- **Modification:** Create a digital travel brochure that incorporates multimedia and student created video.
- **Redefinition:** Explore the locale with Google Earth; seek out and include interviews with people who have visited the local.

Lesson: Understanding Shakespeare

Taken from: <https://edofict.wikispaces.com/SAMR+Examples> and modified.

Original Assignment: Read a Shakespeare play in traditional printed format.

- **Substitution:** Read Shakespeare texts online.
- **Augmentation:** Use online dictionaries, study guides, history sites, to supplement reading.
- **Modification:** Use multimedia resources like text, audio, and video tools to jointly construct knowledge, learning, and understanding of a portion of a play, or a character, as a group project.
- **Redefinition:** Answer the Question, "What did the culture of the time have on the writing of Shakespeare's plays" by using a Concept Mapping tool and constructing a mind map demonstrating key elements through words and images.

An Assessment Exercise

Idea taken from: <https://sites.google.com/a/msad60.org/technology-is-learning/samr-model> and slightly modified. In this example, we take a simple form of assessment and evolve it into a collaborative group project.

Original Assignment: Take a quiz, answers handwritten in a printed form.

- **Substitution:** Distribute the quiz in a Word Processor file format and have student fill in answers on a computer.
- **Augmentation:** Use a Google Form to deliver and complete the quiz. "There is some functional benefit here in that paper is being saved, students and teacher can receive almost immediate feedback on student level of understanding of material. This level starts to move along the teacher / student centric continuum. The impact of immediate feedback is that students may begin to become more engaged in learning."
- **Modification:** As an alternative form of assessment, students could be asked to write an essay around a relevant theme. The written essay could then be narrated and captured as vocal recording.
- **Redefinition:** "A classroom is asked to create a documentary video answering an essential question related to important concepts. Teams of students take on different subtopics and collaborate to create one final product. Teams are expected to contact outside sources for information."

Following are some example lessons, evolved through the SAMR model, that I have tried my hand at creating. It's easy to get caught up in worrying about how effectively an approach constitutes "modification" or "redefinition", but that's not the point of the exercise. To my way of thinking, it's more about understanding the

difference between a just replacing or augmenting a “paper” lesson with a “digital” one and actually evolving it in a beneficial way and exploring new possibilities.

Lesson: Art/Painting

Original Assignment: Drawing a picture using traditional brush, paint, paper. Of course, there is a big difference between doing this “by hand” in the traditional manner and doing it digitally – digitally is by no means “better”, it is just different and opens up some interesting possibilities.

- **Substitution:** Use a digital drawing/painting program (like MS Paint) to draw/paint a picture.
- **Augmentation:** Use a tool that allows the creation of your masterpiece to be “played back” (like Educreations, for example).
- **Modification:** Pull a background image to use as a “canvas” – you could even scan something hand drawn and use that.
- **Redefinition:** Create Artwork Collaboratively using a Collaborative Online Whiteboard (like [Twiddla](#) or one of [these other tools](#)).

Lesson: Email Etiquette

Original lesson: Review printed copies of Email Etiquette concepts and guidelines.

- **Substitution:** Students read an online article discussing Email Etiquette concepts and guidelines.
- **Augmentation:** Student read an online article discussing Email Etiquette concepts and guidelines that includes links to examples, and offer comments online indicating their top 5 favorite tips.
- **Modification:** Student watch a video discussing Email Etiquette concepts and guidelines and after reviewing the guidelines, they create a Twitter account and Tweet their top 5 tips.
- **Redefinition:** Student watch the guidelines video, then assess examples of Email Etiquette ‘violations’ and indicate which guidelines should be applied to correct/improve on the examples.

Lesson: Learning Fractions

Original Assignment: *Show understanding of fractions on a worksheet by coloring in blocks.*

- **Substitution:** Use an Excel Worksheet to let students “color in” the blocks.
- **Augmentation:** Use Google Sheet to let students “color in” the blocks, where the teacher can offer feedback directly on Google Sheet.
- **Modification:** Use Google Sheet and direct students to online examples and supplementary learning materials for areas that they might struggle with.
- **Redefinition:** Use a Fractions App instead (here’s a handful of [examples](#) for iOS devices).

Lesson: Phys Ed – Learning To Hit a Baseball Well

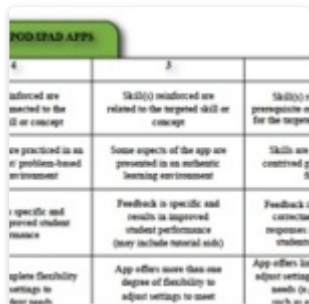
Original Assignment: Learning how to hit a baseball by watching and listening to a Coach or Phys Ed instructor show you and then trying it yourself.

- **Substitution:** The coach/teacher videos the training exercise and uses this as the lesson.
- **Augmentation:** The coach/teacher videos the training exercise and provides links to other training content (videos and articles from other coaches, etc).
- **Modification:** The coach/teacher videos the training exercise and “flips” the lesson, having students watch it as homework, and using class time to practice and reinforce techniques.
- **Redefinition:** Students watch video examples and practice the techniques, then the coach/teacher videos them hitting balls and provides feedback about their technique.

Hopefully these example of lessons modified through the SAMR cycle help to encourage you to think about how you leverage technology to make some of your lessons more interactive, collaborative, and engaging with some of the many great technology tools available today! Here’s a set of tools that may be helpful when working to evolve your lessons: [10 of the Most Engaging Uses of Instructional Technology \(with Dozens of Resources and Tools\)](#).

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