1. **What is being learned? What are the underlying assumptions (explicit and implicit) about the nature of knowledge?** To properly use a digital camera in a classroom environment, collecting pictures for school newspaper and yearbook and encouraging students to become more technological savvy. Students are learning to become independent photographers, who search out and photograph activities and events for the school newspaper. Students gain a sense of independence, utilizing a technology where if they make a mistake they can go and erase the mistake without losing any other photographs and applying the technology in a business-like environment. Students are preparing themselves for work outside the classroom. The knowledge gained from using a technology common to professionals in journalism readies them for the “real-life” workforce. The underlying assumptions about the nature of knowledge are if you know how to point and shoot, or anticipate the action, you can use a digital camera and begin to use it properly in a learning environment. If you all ready have prior knowledge, using the digital camera is much easier than having no prior knowledge. But if you do not, it makes learning the technology difficult.

2. **How does learning take place? What are the underlying assumptions (explicit or implicit) about the nature of learning?** I would like you to expand on this after you define what learning is occurring with using a digital camera? Learning takes place when students practice the repetitive nature of shooting pictures over and over for a certain amount of time. If you take a strong photograph, the image will stand out. But if your photograph is lacking creativity, etc., you must go out and re-do the work. The more you do something, the better you get at it. I feel that is how learning takes place. Also, when students understand the concept of “pointing” (centering on your subject) and snapping the picture, or anticipating the action during game or activity, and practice the activity over and over. The students are looking to make the picture “stand out” and provide a story to the picture without using words, if necessary. The digital camera can be used in education to record the daily development of a plant growing in a science classroom, to showcase the artwork of an art class on the school Web site, or to capture the cast of theatre students for the production’s flyer. Students can learn the digital camera aids the learning experience by providing opportunities to showcase, illustrate, or expand classroom activities. The underlying assumptions about the nature of learning are if you know how to point and shoot a camera, you should be able to work a digital camera. Also, if you can anticipate the action, you can photograph more crisp and clear photographs. The more you shoot with the digital camera, the easier it becomes, and once you have mastered the camera, the nature of learning is much easier than if you have no prior knowledge.

3. **What role does technology play? What advantages or disadvantages does the technology hold for this role? What unique contribution does the technology in facilitating learning?** The technology behind a digital camera plays a great role in a journalism classroom, or an English classroom. One, the technology allows for pictures “now,” a student taking the picture can see the photograph on the display panel of the digital camera, not later after the film is developed. A student can see the bad shot and instantly decide he wants to remove it from the other photographs, which he may use later. A floppy disk allows a student to store the pictures and download them to a computer. Two, a digital camera may also film pictures for an mpeg, which allows students to put live action on the school Web site. By using a digital camera, students are
learning to make better use of technology in the classroom. Teachers can incorporate activities, such as “scavenger hunts” to have students go out and take repeated photographs. Again, repetition helps a student learn from previous mistakes to get better the next time he goes out and shoots an event. It is a learning tool, meaning students can use the digital camera for numerous activities and store many photographs for use later. A digital camera provides a teacher with a strong instrument in a class full of go-getters and dedicated students to seek out and take pictures of activities throughout the school district. It impacts learning because it puts students in a position to gather information, learn about different people (groups, etc.), and apply the information gained toward the class work.

4. How does it fit within existing school curriculum? (E.G., is it intended to supplement or supplant existing curriculum? Is it intended to enhance the learning of something already central to the curriculum or some new set of understandings or competencies?) A digital camera, which is used in a journalism classroom, supplements other technologies in an existing school curriculum. Instead of using a standard camera with film – that costs more to produce, a digital camera only requires a floppy disk to store images to download to a computer later. Without that feature, a picture scanner would be needed at a cost along with different speed film, which costs quite a bit, and darkroom supplies – if your school district develops its own photographs. The technology advances of a digital camera make a journalism class more cost efficient and more realistic, creating the look and feel of a “real” newsroom. Again, a digital camera may be better than a traditional camera because it provides instant feedback. You see the picture taken, and you decide if you want to use it or not. With a traditional camera, you must wait until it is developed to see if you will use the picture or not. A digital camera offers a financial advantage to a school classroom, which may lack the necessary funds to buy film and developing supplies to continue in the curriculum.

5. How does the technology fit or interact with the social context of learning? (E.G., are computers used by individuals or groups? Does the technology/activity support collaboration or individual work? What sorts of interaction does the technology facilitate or hinder?) The technology makes learning easier for students. A training day or two would be needed for students not familiar with the digital camera, but the majority of students do know how to incorporate the technology into the classroom. The digital camera is an individual tool, and individuals, who shoot and record images for the journalism classroom, only use it. The camera could create instances of interaction with two or more students, if a photo illustration was needed to make a point, or one student setting up others for a photograph while another student took the pictures. Yes, I believe a 4-person group could use the digital camera for an assignment, sharing the technology and ideas for educational purposes. The sharing of previous knowledge and experiences could enhance the learning experience for members of the 4-person group. But other than those instances, the digital camera is primary an individual tool in a technological advanced classroom.

6. How are important differences among learners taken into account? What do teachers and learners need to know? What demands are placed on teachers and other “users”? What knowledge is needed? One individual may not have an “eye” for taking pictures, but someone else may, so as a teacher, you want to have as many individuals work with the technology – digital camera – to see who is comfortable and who is not comfortable with the technology. If a teacher sees a student with superior camera skills – aiming and taking good action photographs – he may have that student work with others to help
them improve their skills as photographers. A prior knowledge of cameras is helpful, but if someone is strong around technology, he may pick up things others may not.

7. What knowledge supports does the innovation provide? (E.G., skills in using particular kinds of technology) Again, a strong background with digital technology to use a camera is a plus. Practice will make a student better. The more one practices, the better one gets, especially using technology. A digital camera is a strong tool for teaching lessons because it provides instant feedback and students see the results of their effort now, rather than later. If a student gives a strong effort, the picture will show the strengths of the young photographer. If students see the strong effort of others, it will help (or assist) them become better photographers. Also, students are more willing to experiment with shots and create images with a digital camera. A quick eye and steady hand also aid students when working with digital technology.