

Technology into Teaching Becomes an Imperative

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'We should always opt for Excellence!'

Today, most teachers and students have been exposed to the Internet at school or at home. As a result, teachers should take advantage of this technology in their teaching. The following statement is crucial to teachers who fear the negative side of using the Internet: 'Traditionally, education has been impeded by the security and other potential dangers of employing social networking technologies. These concerns should not be ignored; however, neither should these tools due to these concerns. Advances in these technologies continue to afford us new ways to manage the potential dangers.' (2009, Klopfer E. et al.)

While I was doing my practicum, I observed a teacher using **mini-laptops** in his class; students had to alternate turns depending on the subjects and the genres. The teacher incorporated the use of the mini-laptops into Math or Language Arts lessons to reinforce an idea or a concept that needed more understanding. I remember initially when I took the opportunity to incorporate the mini laptops into my teaching; it was a challenge to monitor the students while they were on the Internet. However, the school had a website on which students could go directly to find the appropriate site needed for the specific lesson. I asked the students to go directly to the school's website and I directed them to the right page. I had to check the screen of each group of students to make sure that they were following the process. I also asked the students to use the laptops for projects that needed to be done the same day. The mini laptops were stored in locked cupboards and had to be well-maintained by the students. This taught them to be responsible.

I am also surprised to see how students were involved by giving feedbacks to their teacher through the use of **Google docs**. The teacher created an e-mail in Gmail for each student and they were all connected to the teacher's e-mail. The teacher then used these accounts to request direct feedback from the students. They were also able to chat online with the teacher and give feedback about the previous day. I used this secure site to monitor my students who had to write a book of thirty pages so that I could check their progress on a regular basis. Another convenience of this service is that I could monitor the students work from my home! They could see my corrections whenever they wanted to. Overall, it facilitated quicker feedback from both the teacher and the students.

Smart Boards provide another useful tool that all schools should invest in. This interactive device that combines teaching and technology allows the learners to be engaged instead of being mere spectators. Students are spectators and actors at the same time. Interactive boards are expensive, but their advantages are outstanding. Many students in our school can benefit, particularly those from different nationalities who do not speak the same languages. As a French teacher, I definitely see the advantages of using a smart board in a classroom. 'The SMART Board is easy to use and it enhances teaching concepts that are often difficult with other strategies. It keeps the students on

task and focused and it reduces anxiety of special needs students which in turn leads in improvement for them in a regular classroom.' (2007, Salinitri G. et al.).

As we opt for excellence, let us support learning with technology!

Resources:

Klopfer E., Osterweil S., Groff J., Haas J., *Using the Technology today in the Classroom: The Instructional Power of Digital Games, Social Networking Simulations, and How Teachers Can Leverage Them*. The Education Arcade, Massachusetts: 2009, from http://education.mit.edu/papers/GamesSimsSocNets_EdArcade.pdf

Salinitri, G., Smith, K., & Clovis, C. (Winter 2002). *The Aural Enabler: Creating a Way for Special Needs Kids to Participate in the Classroom Lesson*. Retrieved May 1, 2007, from <http://smarterkids.org/research/paper12.asp>