



College of Education

**“Preparing Effective, Caring and Collaborative Educators for a
Global Society”**

Essay Contest Cover Sheet

2010

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Please check: Graduate Student Undergraduate Student

“How Can the Use of Technology Enhance the Classroom/Work Environment”

Steve Ballmer, CEO of Microsoft, wrote: “The number one benefit of information technology is that it empowers people to do what they want to do. It lets people be creative. It lets people be productive. It lets people learn things they didn't think they could learn before, and so in a sense it is all about potential.”

As the world spins further and further into a virtual reality, schools and educators must follow suit and not allow themselves to be left behind. Technology can be used to enhance learning in the classroom, stimulate students and cultivate bright ideas. Not only can technology capture the attention of the current video game-obsessed generation of students, but it can bring a plethora of culture to the classroom. The use of web tools like Skype, Instant Messaging, and Email can allow partnerships between classrooms all over the world and other tools like Podcasts and Youtube can bring news and other educational information right to the desk of a student in school. Today's generation of digitally native children watch TV, play video games, and network socially during most of their free time. Lost are the days where a math lesson on the chalkboard could keep a child's attention. Instant gratification and stimulation must be provided in the classroom to excite and motivate students to learn.

Australia is no longer on the other side of the world from America, in fact, it is only an instant away. Why shouldn't students in America talk to students in Australia, or China, or Japan? In a world so closely connected, being culturally aware is extremely important. The most diverse learning environment can be found online in chatrooms, while Skyping, and watching videos on Youtube. Skype offers conference calls, instant messaging, file sharing, and screen sharing. (Eaton, 2010) Classroom partnerships through Skype can host debates, and cross-

cultural exchanges all from the comfort of the classroom.

Motivation stems from excitement, and it is exciting for students to make friends with people around the world. Using computers offers students a sense of freedom and encouragement. (Genc Ilter, 2009) What is more exciting than freedom to a 13-year-old student? Motivating students in today's classroom is a huge challenge for teachers in all schools. Virtually traveling the world opens up the minds of students and provides motivation that a traditional lecture cannot touch. (Genc Ilter, 2009)

No Child Left Behind expects students to be high performing, challenged and stimulated, and for teachers to teach the curriculum creatively and with high standards. As we move forward in this technology-driven world, classrooms should meet those expectations and strive to incorporate technology into their lesson plans. Children don't want to sit at a desk filling out a Math workbook or reading a Social Studies book. Instead, they want to reinforce their knowledge with online learning tools, chat with students all over the world, and utilize the knowledge at their fingertips. Teachers who teach through technology will have more motivated students with a more diverse knowledge base.

Works Cited

Eaton, S. (2010). Using Skype in the Second and Foreign Language Classroom. *Online Submission* .

Genc Ilter, B. (2009). Effect of Technology on Motivation in EFL Classrooms. *Online Submission* .