

# How Can the Use of Technology



# Enhance the Classroom/Work Envir

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As our society becomes more technologically dependant, the use of technology in the classroom becomes an issue with both positive and negative externalities. Many educators believe integrating technology such as internet, computers, messaging and such will do more harm than good for the students. In his book, *The Flickering Mind*, researcher Todd Oppenheimer believes that technology will be of no help to students. It should be the responsibility of the teachers to keep the students engaged in the lesson (Oppenheimer, 2003). I disagree with this notion. I believe technology will not only help teachers keep students engaged in the lesson, but it will also encourage student independency and will modernize traditional lessons.

Throughout my education during my elementary to high school years, I recall my main focus was going to class, taking good notes, and completing all homework. While this was fine for me because I loved the school environment, I can recall several of my classmates who were not as engaged as I was. They claimed school was boring with the use of just books and teachers. There was no innovation. As a result, school administrators would label these students as "problem students," possibly having ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) or being BGL (Below Grade Level) students. Today, because technology is being integrated more and more in the classroom, students are not only excited to learn, but are able to

fully understand and retain the information that is being taught. Technological devices, such as overhead projectors, visualizers, computers, and smart boards are all new and interesting to students. These tools add color and animation to lessons, providing the students to make connections with what they learn in classroom to the real world. In some cases, teachers have the students take an active part in the classroom, allowing them to successfully manipulate these devices and complete various tasks.

But this does not go to say technology should completely replace the classic, hands-on approach to teaching. For instance, in Early Childhood Education, teachers may fare better with a combination of technology and classic-style teaching. With the use of smart boards, student may be able to write their names better on paper because the content appears larger and they are able to see the strokes of each letter. For older students, technology can help students search for answers to questions that may arise and complete tasks using various programs that will be forever useful (i.e., Word Processor, Powerpoint, Excel Spreadsheet, etc.). All of these activities will help enhance student critical thinking skills, inquiry skills, and problem solving. Technology and independent students' in the classroom will provide teachers with more ways to differentiate instruction and assess student performance.

Because our youth has become familiar with technology and require more interactive teaching to efficiently learn, it is imperative that educators adapt to this new way of teaching. There are many new game systems, toys, and activities that easily keep our students' attention. It is our responsibility, as educators to prepare lessons in which these games, toys, and activities are no competition! Integrating technology into the classrooms is another step toward teaching/learning perfection. Its' use will enhance the classroom/work environment by fostering student engagement, promoting student independency, modernizing traditional teachers. Some say, "Why technology?" I say, "Why not?"... It's cool!

Word Count: 545