Using Technology with Heart

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During my time in Critical Media Literacy, I have learned a tremendous amount of information about how to integrate technology into the classroom. I believe that I am capable of incorporating technology in a future classroom, because of the assignments and projects I've completed. All of the new information that I have learned is located in my Eportfolio, which was created on my first day of class on the website, weebly.com. The increased need of technology has caused teachers to take on the task of keeping up with   is best for their classroom, and that has proven to be technology. Textbooks are becoming outdated, and the use of iPads and chromebooks are becoming more popular.

It is important for teachers to be up to date with technology in today's society. Technology can benefit students learning if it is incorporated the right way. Children in the 21st century are becoming tech-savvy at younger ages, so staying knowledgeable with technology will keep children engaged with learning. Through technology, students can use"an abundance of materials including text, voice, music, graphics, photos, animation, and video" (Mishra, 201, p.2). Being able to adapt and change from using old teaching habits of pen and paper to incorporating technology will provide more learning opportunities for children.

Incorporating technology in the classroom has been seen to "improve students' learning processes and outcomes" (Why Do We Need Technology Integration, 2007). This is a key idea for teachers to pay attention to because students are more engaged with technology and while it is something the students are familiar with , they are still able to be challenged with certain tasks. Technology is also a great way to help English Language Learners, as well as students with disabilities. There are a multitude of opportunities that allow for translation and

communication to occur through different applications and websites, which is beneficial for those who need it.

An educator's number one priority is to help support and promote the success of his/her students. The need to be fluent in technology: helps students learning, allows for different forms of assessments, supports the learning of students, and strengthens home and school connections as well as parent teacher communications (Donohue & Schomburg, 2015). However, it is very important to make sure that the technology use is developmentally appropriate for every student in the classroom. A great resources to find appropriate applications for technology in the classroom, is Bloom's Taxonomy wheel (Carrington, 2015). Educators can turn to this model to guide them and show them appropriate uses of technology depending on the age and development. Educators need to find appropriate and useful technology.

There are thousands of applications that can help teachers differentiate lessons and activities that support each child in the classroom. When the correct forms of technology are implemented in a useful way, children will have the ability to reach the same level of comprehension, which creates an equal environment. For those students who may struggle with reading, there are computers, chromebooks, and/or iPads. These different forms of technology are useful for the student because he/she is able to follow along with the words while he/she is hearing what is being read. There are many applications that can be downloaded on the iPads or chromebooks such as: talk to text, translators, reading help, and more. All of these applications are tools that will help support students in their learning. There is nothing wrong with allowing a student to use the iPad or chromebook to help support them, as long as it is developmentally appropriate.

The simplest way an educator can incorporate technology into the classroom is through Google. Google offers many great tools to be utilized by schools: such as Google Classroom, Google Docs, Google Forms. An educator can easily go through online training and become Google Educator Certified as well. Through this, educators are trained on the many different tools Google has. This makes it easy to become familiar with the tools and think of ways to apply them to your own classroom.

Students who are engaged in their learning through the use of technology tools can "become creators and critics instead of just consumers" (Edutopia, 2007). Encouraging students to become creators and critics is important because... Having students go from sitting and listening to a teacher lecture, to allowing them to utilize a variety of different tools through technology causes them to grow as a learner. In today's society, most children are very involved with technology, so by incorporating it into the classroom the children will become more eager to learn because it pertains to their everyday life.

The use of SmartBoards or ENO boards allow students to see educational videos and take part in interactive educational games. Teachers can also use an ELMO projector to share worksheets, books and artifacts with students. All of these tools are a great way to use a small amount of technology. All of these tools can be used in any grade because they allow for all students to view what is being shared instead of having to walk around and show each student.

As a future educator, I plan to use different forms of technology in my classroom. There will be numerous opportunities where I can use technology to enhance my students' learning.. I can only hope that my future classroom has the chance to be equipped with either chromebooks or iPads for the students to use. A form of technology I would be sure to use is Google

Classroom, or Class Dojo. This application allows an educator to keep track of students' work, as well as communicate with parents as needed. I am very fond of the ELMO projectors and find them quite useful. an ENO board would be extremely useful to go along with the ELMO projector. . My students' desks/tables will all be oriented around the board because I will use it often to share information to the whole class. By having my students' desks oriented towards the board I can demonstrate different activities or share videos with the class and know that all of the students can see. My host teacher at my practicum now uses the ELMO projector every day, and its easily viewed from every seat. The ELMO keeps the students engaged and helps their understanding of what is expected of them.

While I have many plans for how to use technology in my future classroom, I need to remember that there are always malfunctions occuring at the most inconvenient times. I need to be prepared with backups incase something occurs out of my control. It's always good to be extra prepared with a back up lesson or hard copies of what the students are to do.

The use of technology with heart and planning can help aid students learning. Technology in the classroom creates a positive learning environment while developing students skills. In today's society, technology is not going away, and it is always advancing. I plan to, as a future educator, remain on top of the advances that are constantly being made to the various forms of technology to make sure I am current on ways to implement it in my classroom, and I encourage any other educators to do the same!

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