

Technology Integration in Today's Classroom

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The authors of these four articles focus on assisting teachers and administrators with furthering their education when it comes to integrating technology into instruction. LeMay (2011) does a great job giving the reasoning behind the purpose for evaluating the way we address the needs of our students. "We evaluate because we have goals and we want to measure how the innovation has helped us reach those goals" (LeMay, 2011, p. 19). We can't continue to teach as we've always done, because the world is changing. Our students are motivated by different factors and they learn differently. So, taking the time to evaluate what is and is not working would be helpful when planning future instruction. Using assessment to drive instruction appears to be the key focus in several of the articles. Within her article, Nussbaum-Beach (2011) states that assessment should drive how teachers organize learning experiences and how teachers think about what they want to take place in the learning environment (Nussbaum-Beach, 2011, p. 11). What we've been taught, as teachers, agrees with this statement, but the use of technology to implement success has not been a factor. So, the information presented here is very beneficial when attempting to bridge the gap between assessment and integrating technology. Burkholder (2011) agrees with this, but stresses the importance of formative and summative assessments with an emphasis on formative assessment to assist with guiding learners. "Assessment is ongoing. Teachers depend on formative assessment to inform their instruction. Because formative assessments rely on previous formative assessments, students know how or where they need to improve" (Burkholder, 2011, p. 21).

Utecht (2011) and Lemay (2011) center their articles on evaluating the actual use of technology in the classroom by both teachers and administrators. Utecht (2011) presented very valid points which are truly factors that exist in the aspect of technology integration by asking 4 important questions. "Is the technology being used just because it's there? Is the technology allowing the teacher and students to do old things in old ways? Is the technology allowing the teachers and students to do old things in new ways? Is the technology creating new and different learning experiences for the students?" (Utecht, 2011, p. 17). Asking these questions can be beneficial for administrators as they evaluate teachers, but they can benefit teachers even more so during their planning process. Referring back to them can assure them that they are truly integrating technology effectively.

Most of the information presented goes hand in hand, however Utecht doesn't stress as much of the standards based assessment structure as the other authors. He promotes the development of new curricula and structure. It appears that his prospective on the technology integration process for teachers can be used as a map when attempting to reach this goal. We can use the supporting information from the articles written as examples of doing so while staying within the parameters of an existing curriculum or aligning the curriculum use with state standards. Also, allowing the students to critique each other and receive feedback are factors that I believe will be helpful to keep in mind while planning. While doing this, they can help define quality using formative assessments such as the Two Stars and a Wish strategy. This seems as it would be a useful and feasible strategy for my third graders. I believe that if I use Nussbaum-Beach's suggestion to give students performance tasks that are "real world challenges that require thoughtful and effective use of knowledge and skill" (Nussbaum-Beach, 2011, p. 12), I can more effectively integrate technology within our existing curriculum. Within the

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framework of our district, I can't create a completely new curriculum as Utecht encourages, but I can use his suggestions and the guidance from the material from the other articles to assist in this process.

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### References

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