|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Post/Note | Note # |
| Think of a class you have taught or would like to teach. Which form of discussion do you think would be more effective for your class: an in-person synchronous discussion, or an online asynchronous discussion. Why? |  |
| In my teaching and learning experiences, I feel that in-person synchronous discussions are more beneficial.  This is true because I prefer being able to interact with students and teachers face-to-face.  In-person synchronous discussions have the option to take many different formats.  Students and teachers can engage in whole class discussions, small group discussions, verbal responses, individual conferences, and tutorials.  This variety in learning will create enhanced participation and greater engagement and involvement.  The only thing the teacher would have to become aware of is how much think time and wait time is needed for each individual student.  Providing ample think and wait time will allow students to formulate advanced responses. |  |
| Katie, I agree with you.  I think syncronous communication can be especially beneficial for struggling or hesitant students because they gain all of the other "cues" that come with syncronous communication like facial expressions and body language.  I can think of my ACCESS students who might be a little uncomfortable with asyncronous type learning because it foces them to engage on their own terms, sometimes without the safety of the instructor.  I wouldn't completely discount asyncronous communication tools completely, though, because they can allow students to enage ata deeper level.  My access kids, for instance, might benefit from the ability to post questions about an assignment when they are working on the assignment at home or on their own.  I think it can also take the pressure off of some students who are hesitant to participate in class out of embarassment (wrng answers, slow reading, etc...) |  |
| Yes. You are right. About the students who are shy, it's better to utilize the asynchronous communication to encourage their participation of the class discussion. And maybe from this way, they would be more confident with themselves and thus be more active in synchronous communication. |  |
| Aaron- What does ACCESS stand for?  Katie |  |
| I would prefer synchronous discussion in my class room. It allows interactions among students and between students and an instructor. As an instructor, I can see my students reaction to class topics and assess if they are engage in the lesson. Moreover, in person synchronous discussion usually make learning more interesting because students have opportunity to actively contribute their thoughts instead of just sit down and listen for a lecture. Discussion often leads to new knowledge and broader perspectives of the way we look at the topic which making the academic field grow.  However, it is also beneficial to use online asynchronous after class because it allows people who are not good at expressing thought right away in class to take time and generate their idea to others later. The situation happen to me sometimes as I am an international student who speak English as a second language and experience different classroom atmosphere in Asia. It takes time to adjust my ear to receive a clear understanding of every lecture and to get myself out of passivelearning but I am working on it with my best effort. |  |
| So do you think many international students would prefer asynchronous online discussions? |  |
| Yes. At least for sometime to allow them to adjust themselves to a new learning environment. However, I am not suggesting doing asynchronous online discussion alone. It should be implemented together with traditional classroom setting to fasten their adjustment. |  |
| Hi,  Sorry, but I don't think online course is better for international student. For me, the onlie course is really a challenge for me. I have to read a lot about the course and then refresh my e-mail. Maybe it is because this is my first time to have this kind of class. I am really stressful. |  |
| I'm not an international student, but I believe a combination of both in person synchronous and online asynchronous discussions would be more beneficial to international students. I would think face to face classroom settings would help in the transfer from their foreign country to the traditional classroom here in America. It would allow them to ask questions and to receive an answer instantly, if they are confused or having trouble with something. |  |
| Pimsiri-  What you stated in your post is very much in agreement with what I believe.  As a former fourth grade teacher, synchronous communication was the only way that I could make sure that my students were engaged in the content.  At that age, I was unable to assume that they could collaborate via online communication and achieve the same content from it.  Having students engaged in the content and working collaboratively ensures that everyone is participating and learning through multiple ways.  I also think that the interactions between the students and teacher is a very important effect of synchronous communication.  This type of learning and intereaction creates a more cohesive learning environment in which the students feel safe.  Creating a community is one important aspect of any classroom. I also liked the example of how you would use asynchronous communication as an optional discussion time outside of class.  This would allow students who did not participate or engage to interact with the other students in a less intense, more personal environment.  Thanks for your thoughts!  Katie |  |
| Katie, thanks for bringing up this point. I currently teach college-age students, so I think my opinions on this topic are largely biased towards this age group. |  |
| I do agree! Student's age is one of the factor that should be taken into consideration. For this age, I think it's also too fast for them to start using online/website. Staring at computer or tablet screen for a long time does impair adult eyesight. Children's eyesight are even more sensitive and easily affected by the screen. Besides, young students learn well by exploring things by all their sense. Online course might not suitable for them in this case :)  Feeling safe in classroom is a great point, too. Conversation and discussion in th online course will flow naturally if class members know each other well or at least know each other's faces. It is because we know who we are talking to and feel that they are my friends. Therefore, we feel more comfortable talking to. Most of the online communities also bond members with face-to-face interactions, too. |  |
| But one point I  have to clarify is that we are teachers and thus it is our duty to refresh ourselves frequently. Teachers also have to follow the tides. If we cannot do this, how can we teach our students better? We cannot fully understand our students if we merely use the old technologies to educate them. I know and I can fully understand that age might be a difficulity for us to overcome, but we have to try.  I am young, but I cannot use computer very well. However, I know I have to do my best to spend time on this weakness, merely because I want to be a good and responsible teacher. |  |
| Xiaoxin- I absolutely agree with the statement that you made about changing with the times.  I think this is imperative for any teacher, especially with regards to technology.  Often times we see hesitation because it is taking someone out of their comfort zone.  I think this is where a strong professional development program can come into play.  Schools need to be prepared to offer support to teachers within the realm of technology integration.  If we can show teachers how online communication truly helps education and students, then teachers might be more apt to utilize this type of technology in the classroom. Katie |  |
| Yeah, as a teacher, there is so much for you to do. It is really stressful, but when you see all the students learn well, you will be happy and be satisfied. |  |
| Pimsiri, you raised a very interesting point here. Speaking from my own experience, I felt much more comfortable participating in asynchronous online discussion than face-to-face in-class discussion when I first came to this country. I remembered I took two online courses in my first semester in IDD&E. In those online courses, I felt I understood better my classmates’ thoughts by taking time to read their posts. I could also compose more thoughtful comments by taking time to write. I rarely spoke in my face-to-face courses in the first semester. It was not that I didn't want to participate. It was that by the time when I finished organizing my thoughts in English, the discussion had moved on to another point or another topic. Therefore, for those learners whose native language is not English, asynchronous communication does have its unique merits in an English environment.  ------  "However, it is also beneficial to use online asynchronous after class because it allows people who are not good at expressing thought right away in class to take time and generate their idea to others later. The situation happen to me sometimes as I am an international student who speak English as a second language and experience different classroom atmosphere in Asia. It takes time to adjust my ear to receive a clear understanding of every lecture and to get myself out of passivelearning but I am working on it with my best effort." |  |
| Yeah, I have to jump in here too.  You make a great point about students needing time to formulate their ideas.  Again, this could be extremely helpful to my ACCESS students who need the extra time and support to feel confident with thier thinking. Great point about international students too.  At the high school level, we do sometimes get exchange students who need the time to work through the language.  Aaron |  |
| Maybe we can try other ways to improve our listenning and oral English. I have tried some ways.  I went to the Schine Student Center to be a volunteer, which would make me meet with more native Americans and thus get more chances to talk with them and understand what they are talking about.  I also speak English with my friends, who are fron the same country with me. Merely one week later, I feel my oral English has improved.  We live in an English-spoken country, so it is a good chance for us to improve our English at a faster pace. |  |
| That's great, Xiaoxin! I wish that some of my English students were as motivated to improve their English as you! |  |
| I think it depends on the class.  If it is a math class I'd like to use an in-person synchronous discussion, because student and student or student and teacher could use other tools to present themselves, they can write on board or use other vision expression way.  If it is a literature class or history class, I'd like to combine both two ways. For in-person synchronous discussion, it is just like brainstorm, which could inspire everyone in classroom. Also online asynchronous would be a good supplement, encouraging students to keep thinking the problem discussed in classroom. For students who are not quick-reaction style or are too shy to speak in public, they can use online asynchronous discussion to present their thoughts. As a teacher, I will try to bring their thoughts into classroom, get them involved in synchronous discussion. In my opinion, without time limited, students could think deeper when they participate online asynchronous discussion. It is convenient for student to look up more materials, and organize them to support their argument. |  |
| I agree. It definitely depends on the class. I teach math to elementary school students and it is imperative that there is that in-person discussion becasue of the very nature of math. Students benefit from the use of manipulatives and visuals in math and it is more difficult to do this online. Although, many tools are now actually online, the simple human relationship influences the teaching.  The combination in other classes is a great idea. I agree that there should be a combination of the two. The very nature of the content taught in these classes lends it self to this. Students can particiapte in both ways. The class can be supplemented by what is done online. Or during the in class discussions, students can use technology to post online and it can lead to further discussions in class. This would be beneficial to almost all students. They would most likely be comfortable contributing in either way. |  |
| Hi,everyone.  If  I was a teacher now, I would like to choose different kinds of knowledge when utilizing in-person synchronous discussion and online asynchronous discussion. For the basic knowledge which has been stated clearly in the textbook or has been illustrated by the teacher, if you want to check whether the students have mastered it or not, in-person synchronous discussion is better. By this way, you can observe every reaction of students to the topic, evern his or her eye movement, and you could get a more directive and confident understanding about the whole situatuation.  However, about the topics, in which more critical thinking and inquiry-based learning are needed, online asynchronous discussion is better. By this way, you not only give students more time to prepare for it, make them deal with all the questions they might meet with all by themselves and make them to illustrate their ideas in words, which is good for their writing.  Generally speaking, I think it depends on the teaching  style of a teacher. For me, the areas, specilization of knowledge and the learning requirement for the students matter a lot. |  |
| Though asynchronous discussions do have some remarkable advantages, I still prefer a synchronous teaching because instant interaction really matters a lot. Delayed replys can easily quench your passion. Just think about that you have an excellent idea and want to share with your peers online, but don’t get any feedback until 3days later. You lose the passion to continue the discussion on it and the opportunity to learn something new by exchange of thoughts. Yes, we can implement certain strategies and methods to encourage students to actively engage in discussions on internet forums. Look at this online course, we are required to post new thread and reply to others’. All have to be done before the due date. It is a kind of teaching strategy that can involve everyone talking together, which is rare to see in a traditional face-to-face classroom teaching. At the same time, a restriction in reply time is set to come a step closer to instant interaction. In fact asynchronous teaching alone can hardly achieve a target unless it is in companion with synchronous teaching or some strategy like this is used.   Besides, we are able to read others’ facial expressions and body language in a classroom discussion or videoconference. It reduces the emotional distance. Students can see you directly or on the screen and that makes them feel comfortable and safe. And you are free to adjust your teaching strategy to students’ performance.  Anyway, I would like to deliver synchronous teaching EXCEPT:   1. Each participant has developed some technology capacity to use computer and get an Internet connection. 2. Schedule conflict exists, not all students can attend the class at a fixed time or place. 3. Proper teaching strategies to motivate students engage in asynchronous discussions so that their passion can be lasting.   Only when all three conditions are met will I think about asynchronous teaching. |  |
| Dear All, I enjoyed reading your posts here. You all contributed to the discussions nicely by sharing your experiences and thoughts. I feel that you are talking about the two different ways of communication in a traditional face-to-face classroom. Would your opinions differ in an online course? In other words, in an online course such as this one, would you prefer synchronous communications where we all get online at the same time to discuss, or asynchronous communications like what we've been doing now? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each one? |  |
| That's an interesting question!  I would say that I prefer combination of both approaches. In an online course setting, synchonous communication would make the discussion more lively and more enjoyable because we all contribute our thoughts and interact with each other at the same time. We won't lose interest in topics as Mengying has mentioned in this case. Either chat or video-conference would benefit students to convey their thoughts through talking. Sometimes it takes time to fully understand what one said in asynchronous communications. We may have to write back to each other several times until we get clear or even satisfied answer. Talking allows us to communicate faster than asynchrous communication. However, managing schedule to meet online at the time maybe hard for some people who has loads of responsibilities. They may need flexible schedule which allow them to participate class whenever they are free. Also, discussion results from synchronous may not be well-organized and provided with highly critical thinking because knowledge takes time to process and tp be analyzed in our brain. Eventhough students are well-prepared, they read all reading assignments required but they just don't fully into the topics. They need some more time to think over and over on the topic until they gain insight. |  |
| I prefer the later choice. In my opinion, the ones who enrolls this online course might not be free to communicate with others online when they are free. Some people might be part-time student here and thus they have to spare time for their study. Even the full-time studet might not have so many spare time in day. So it's better to have this course asynchronously. |  |
| Dr. Lei-  I would love having asynchronous and synchronous communication offered in an online course.  I am a people person and I love to interact with others because I feel that it improves my knowledge as a student.  I can get these benefits from asynchronous communication only at a certain level though.  I may read something, but if I am not engaged in the back and forth discourse at the current time, I have more of a tendancy to not hold onto what I read.  Katie |  |
| I write this thinking of my senior writing students who are just now gearing up for a new semester. I feel strongly that in this class, both synchronous and asynchronous discussions can be effective and beneficial to the students. In both cases however, it is incredibly important to consider purpose. In my CPW class, I frequently use asynchronous communication tools to engage learners outside of the classroom. Specifically, this year, I am using a classroom management site similar to Edmodo called Schoology which allows me to post discussions, assignments, and other resources for the students. In the case of CPW, the students really do benefit from the ability to go to the site an find class resources whenever they are needed (especially after or during long absences), as well as to participate in discussions and even complete assignments at their own leisure. It allows for many, many more enrichment activities like grammar brush ups and the like that we don't have time for in class. Other tools like e-mail, and text message reminders allows me to manage my class more efficiently, and reach more students than I would otherwise have the opportunity to without these tools. I think there is, of course, a case for synchronous communication as well because this is the type of communication we are all used to. Daily, we talk face to face with our students, colleagues, and families. Synchronous communication may be the most natural form of communication, so we can benefit our students with this method as well. Frequently, students are asked to complete group work and peer-editing projects that are made much easier with synchronous communication. Lecture, classroom discussion, and direct instruction all relay on synchronous communication to be effective. In my classroom, synchronous and asynchronous communication tools work together to create a rich learning environment that can be personalized, and customized by the students. Is it fair to say that synchronous and asynchronous communication can complement one another in the classroom? In my case, I think they can. |  |
| In my art classes from student teaching (and as a hopeful future art teacher) I would absolutely need synchronous communication. Students need to SEE how certain art techniques or projects are done. Visual communications, verbal communication, reading and writing are all crucial in the art room. If someone told you to read up on how to make a ceramic pot, then you just went right in to trying to make one yourself I could tell you right now you would fail. You need your teacher guiding you along. You need the hands on experience, and the face-to-face communication. Trying to email a professor about a problem you are having with a sculpture or painting is almost impossible. You need to be able to see what you are working on. Additional learning tools, in the asynchronous manner, can help enrich the learning experience, however it would not be the most successful way to run a studio class. Videos are very helpful, for instance. Students can go home and look up videos on professional artists, different techniques, and artwork from different cultures around the world.  This has also had me thinking about asynchronous tools for my younger students that may not know how to use a computer or are not old enough to go on the internet without a parent. Asynchronous communication can be extremely helpful for ESL or international students, just like Pim first brought up in our discussion, as well as older more tech-savy students. However, I believe Asynchronous communication could be used for the parents or gaurdians as well. A teacher website with links, an email, or additional tools to help their young ones will not only help keep them linked to their childs classroom and up to date on what they are learning, but it can help with communication between teacher and parent. The parents/gaurdians can also help guide their child along in the learning process, whether it be with homework, a project, or just enriching their learning.  Now thinking about a strictly online course... I agree with Pim once again, where a combination of both asynchronous and synchronous instruction would be beneficial, however heavier on the asynchronous side obviously due to factors such as busy schedules. I love how asynchronous instruction gives us time to think and come up with more thoughtful responses. I know personally all the time, not only in class but in the real world, I will think back on a situation and go "Aw why didn't I say ..this.. or ..that.." Immediate discussion does have a different energy, but I know many people draw blanks or stumble over words in heat of the moment discussions. Asynchronous communication can make up for that, and allows people to real think about what they are saying. Once again, however, a combination of both communications in any setting is beneficial if done right and with a purpose. I actually took an online course back in high school and the teacher was also a teacher within the school. So if we did have any questions we needed to ask face-to-face we could go to the teacher's classroom. Just like with this class, I appreciate the fact that we can set up an appointment with Dr. Jing Lei if we would like to talk in person. However, I know something like this would not be possible for people far away from their instructor. For those that live far away, programs such as Skype could help though! Being able to see and hear someone's expression rather than just in a typed form, such as a chat room or email, can make a big difference! |  |
| I am not familiar with some of the tools you mentioned above. Are they free? |  |
| I teach elementary school students and I believe that in-person classes are most certainly more effective than online discussions. Many students need that more individualized attention and the collaboration that can occur between students is amazing. However, at the same time though, I do believe that as technology is ever-changing in our society, it is essential to incorporate more and more technology into teachng. I guess I had never thought of having it in the form of an online discussion, but I believe that it is most certainly possible. Most students now have Twitters, Facebooks, blogs and you could have students use those to make contributions in online discussions. At the same time though, I think that this needs to be done with older elementary students. Younger students might have more trouble being able to navigate, contribute, and ultimately have access to these technologies. But I do believe that it is our responsibility to expose students to this in any way possible becasue chances are, they will encounter it in the future. |  |
| I think both synchronous discussion and online asynchronous discussion have their place in education.  For me it depends on myself asking, What is it I want my students to do and where do I want them to be at the end of this segment as learners in relation to this experience?  What is the purpose for choosing either one with the end in mind?  I must say based on what I teach and my experiences, synchronous discussions are what I prefer.  There is incredible power of synchronous discussions and having that face to face contact with others.  When we are communicating and interacting with students (alone and in groups) we get both verbal and non verbal cues.  Michael Grinder, an author and speaker on the subject, would say about 85% of our communication is non verbal.  So, when we are communicating with others face to face, whether adults or younger students we are able to pick up much more than just the words that someone speaks.  Also, the time between responses is quicker in a synchronous discussion than in an online asynchronous discussion so you immediately get feedback which allows more conversation in a short amount of time.  Another important advantage of synchronous discussion is the ability to learn important collaboration skills.  For example, how to pause after someone speaks, paraphrase, pose questions, etc.  I also think synchronous discussions can take us to new places based on what is being said in the conversation if the facilitator listens to what is being said and uses inquiry based questions to promote higher level thinking.  We can foster inquiry on the spot in face to face situations, that's not to say it can't be done online, but the time between contacts has a different impact on the conversation.  As for the younger students this communication face to face is key in developing their speaking, thinking, writing process.  Students must first think of an idea, articulate that idea and then write it down.  The research around how the brain functions has to be taken into consideration for the younger ones.  Asynchronous discussions has many advantages and I agree with others that time spans allow for individualizing personal learning styles in relation to the amount time one would like to work and allowing time to respond.  It's also convenient!  I go back to what I mentioned earlier...depends on the purpose for me!  What do I want to teach?  Why is that important for the students to learn?  How am I going to teach that particular skill or strategy? |  |
| I agree with what you are saying Monica, very interesting. I was thinking more about what I want to teach and my purpose and how that goes hand in hand with what type of communication I use. If i were to teach a studio art class I would definitely need that synchronous communication. However, if it was an art history class you could use asynchronous communication easier. I have taken my fair share of art history classes and they were all lecture based. However, one teacher would use blackboard to upload flashcards, notes, etc., which greatly helped with reviewing the material. However, neither of them had discussion.. you could email a teacher if you had a question, or even stop them after class, however there was no real engaging form of communication. I feel like utilizing more of both synchronous and asynchronous communications would have helped. |  |
| When I get into teaching at some point in my career, I would think that an in-person synchronous discussion would be the most effective for my class. I want to get into some type of physical education, health, or coaching; so personally I believe that a face to face classroom setting would be more appropriate. With my teaching interest, it is important to be physically there to demonstrate and to show examples & techniques to the students. It also allows more of an open classroom discussion to further add to the classroom experience. Like other people have said, it all depends on the type of course and type of professor. Online asynchronous discussion are also very effective, just not in my teaching interest. |  |
| Hi all,  This week I got a bad cold, so I join into you guys so late. I apologize.  As the topic, I think the in-person synchronous discussion is more effective than online asynchronous discussion. Because when people talk with others, the emotion will acompany with the conversation. Since there has emotion, it can stimulate people make more thoughts than there has no emotion in the conversation. So, I think in-person synchronous discussion can help people get more ideas.  In the other way, online asynchronous discussion can help people save the discussion history and make people can discuss continuous no matter where are they, what are they doing and what the time is it. So, people do not need to have idea or answer immediately, they can have enough time to thinking. |  |
| In Downes’ article on educational blogging, Will Richardson is quoted as saying: “By its very nature, assigned blogging in schools cannot be blogging. It’s contrived. No matter how much we want to spout off about the wonders of audience and readership, students who are asked to blog are blogging for an audience of one, the teacher.” (p. 24).  Do you agree with Richardson? Why or why not? |  |
| Based upon personal experience, I would have to agree with Will Richardson.  As a teacher who would want to utilize blogging, I would express that this is not what I would want blogging to be about.  In previous online classes, I have been forced to participate in blogging.  During these blogging experiences, I was required to write in response to prompts or leading questions.  As a result, I was only writing for the purpose of the teacher.  It was just a way that assignments could be completed so that the teacher could have access to them in a new and different format (not just email or word processed).  As a teacher, I would want to utilize blogging in a different manner.  I think that allowing students to write about anything would be more beneficial because it is allowing them to comment and write about what interests them.  As teachers, we know that connecting to student's interests is very important because that is how they become and stay engaged.  Some students have a hard time not being provided with a format or context to write about.  Therefore, providing prompts for those students would be more beneficial to encourage participation.  I think that these prompts would need to be voluntary and students are provided with options about participating. |  |
| Wow, your suggestion is really good. But maybe this is OK in America, because the number of students in a classs is small, in comparasion with that of China. It is very hard for Chinese teachers to have this kind of class, especially in the undeveloped cities. There were more than 100 students in my class, when I was a high school student. You know, it was hard for a teacher to teach so many students with different backgrounds at a time, not to say the online course. |  |
| Xiaoxin-  I agree with the fact that it might be hard to get to know each student at a personal level.  In large classes, it is always a challenge to create a community and get to know the interests of each student.  Sometimes it is hard in small classes too because as a teacher, you might click more with certain students because their interests mimick yours.  It is just a flaw of a human being to want to know more about one person over another because they are similar to yourself.  Is there an answer?  I am not sure!  Katie |  |
| The situation differents from country to country. But we teachers always hope our students could get the best education from ouselves, maybe we merely need to stick to our own responsibilities as a teacher, and try our best to help with the students in their study.  But if there is a possibility to arouse the attention of the government or educational organizations, we should try our best to describe the situation. |  |
| Richardson has made a good point about a flaw of educational blogging. In the case that students are assigned to respond to same topic, students who have different interest may not be motivated to participate. Their blogging content are create in the way that would satisfied the teacher and they may just do it to meet course's requirement but they may not actually learn and benefit from the course as much as they should. Two factors which make this way of blogging ineffective are low level of motivation and limited time of study suring the course. Longer study time is required to obtain knowledge in less motivated topics. Also, limited time of learning certain topic in school setting obstruct students' creativity because students need to fully understand to class topic before developing complex thinking upon the topic. If they don't understand in what they are doing, they cannot contribute creativeness to classroom. To make blogging more meaningful tool for education, students should be able to select a related topic of their own choice and do the blog passionately. By doing so, students will not only gain knowledge in the area that teacher expect but they also learn different writing style, more vocabularies, and perhaps more interrelated knowledge from doing their research. |  |
| I agree with this opinion in part.  I have to admit that it is really very hard to make a blog, which is assigned by teachers to work quite well. I had such an experience of submitting my homework and my thoughts about some phenomenoa on my blog, so that other students in my class would look at it and reflect on it. However, we talked about almost everything on it, most of which were irrelevant to the focus of the topic. As a result, in order to reshape the class, the teacher had to facilitate among us and required more details about how to use the blog.  So, I think if we hope our students learn better with blog, we have to tell them why we should use blog first, thus give them an aim of the class. Then we could choose different materials related to our teaching focus, such as the videos, pictures, to make them interested in the lesson-related prt of the blog. |  |
| This a good point. It is a bit more difficult to make a blog and it is also time consuming. If there is a purpose though, I believe that it will help students to have more of a desire to want to complete it. There should always be a purpose to everything that is done in school. Students should always be told this so they can see why they are doing it. They of course might not agree with it or want to do it, but if they can at least see why it is being done, there might be more motivation to complete it.  In addition, when possible, students should get to pick the topic that they will be blogging about. If there is an interest in what they have to research and post about, students will want to work on it. It has been proven that students benefit from have choice in what they. While this can't always be done, when possible it will lead to greater completion and success in the classroom. |  |
| Yes, you are right. I choose this online course also because I have read the syllubusand I know what I am  going to get from this course. If you have an aim, something might be not that hard,because you have to pay more attention to it and try your best to overcome all the difficuloties. |  |
| As a teacher, let the student be more creative and open with their blogging assignments. Of course you would need to assign specific assignments to compelete the curriclum requirements. But allowing your students to be more open in their assignments will hopefully lead to a change of style and direction of audience for the student (teachers, other students, or the world...). |  |
| What's more, maybe the grade and the country of the students should be took into consideration, too.  The Chinese middle or  high school students, might not have so much time to keep doing such things on their bolgs.They have to deal with all the problems they meet with in the paper-based tests and face to face classes, because they have to prepare themselves for the SAT test. However, the blogs are not be tested if they want to enter a college.  However, for the college students, they have enough spare time and could do this, and their teacher would make this into an eveluation, which is related to their GPA.. For the preliminary students in China, most of them have no way to be familiar with the computer, not to say to finish class tasks on their blogs. |  |
| Excellent responses so far, please keep it up!  I think Xiaoxin makes a good point that the appropriateness of an educational blog may vary based on culture or educational context. Does anyone else have other thoughts along these lines? |  |
| Very good discussions here. I couldn't help from thinking about the blog assignment in this very class--does it meet the requirements that you mentioned?  Well, one reason that you have a blog group is that you will have an "audience"--your group members, in addition to the instructors, to read your posts and share thoughts with you. And the reason that you were asked to pick a topic or assigned with a technology topic was for you to find a relevant topic that you are interested in and will become an expert on... Any other suggestions to making blogging meaningful and interesting? |  |
| If we want to be good teachers in the future, we should not only specilize in the fields we are interested in, we also should learn other areas. In fact, I don't like the Educational Technology, but I have to choose the online course, merely because I want to be a good teacher. Nowadays, the world is becomming interferenced by blogs or other kinds of thchonologies, teachers should open their minds and improve their ability to better educate the students to be a person with broader minds and better abillity to adapt themselves to the whole world, not limited to their own country. |  |
| How about advertising your blog by posting the blog link to your facebook, twitter, and other social networking site. By inviting your friends, classmates in other couses, and even family members to visit your blog, you will not only have larger audience for your blogging, but also "authentic" audience. By "authentic",  I mean, people outside of this class who read your blog are those who are not required to do so but choose to do because they are interested in what you are writing about.  **Author:** Jing Lei **Date:** Wednesday, September 4, 2013 10:59:56 PM EDT **Subject:** RE: Question 2  Very good discussions here. I couldn't help from thinking about the blog assignment in this very class--does it meet the requirements that you mentioned?  Well, one reason that you have a blog group is that you will have an "audience"--your group members, in addition to the instructors, to read your posts and share thoughts with you. And the reason that you were asked to pick a topic or assigned with a technology topic was for you to find a relevant topic that you are interested in and will become an expert on... Any other suggestions to making blogging meaningful and interesting? |  |
| ha, I think it really challenges us if we wanna keep friends, classmates in other areas as regular visitor for our blogs. Because you have to make it interesting to attract them and post something academic at the same time. We need to be a good designer. |  |
| Fortunately, we are in the filed of education. I remember one of my professors once said, the funny thing about education is that everyone can say something about education because almost everyone has some connection to education. I guess, no matter which fields your friends or family members are in, they can understand at least part of the topic that you talk about. In addition, most of the topics can be connected not only education, but also our daily life. Oh yes, keeping the posts interesting can definitely attract more audience. |  |
| Assigned blogging in a poor-designed instructional system cannot be blogging. Sometimes instructors try to integrate new technology into education, however in an inappropriate way. Lots of work needs to be done before introducing new technology in teaching process. You must weigh the advantages and disadvantages and apply effective strategies. So it’s about instructional design, not educational blogging itself.  When I was in college, one of my teachers asked us to comment on micro-blogs she posted every week. Contents in her microblogs were highly relevant to the course she taught. We didn’t like this task because we felt that we were forced to say something even if it didn’t interest us at all.  Most stopped this kind of academic microblogging within a month. It is a task that has nothing to do with the final grade so we don’t have pressure and motivation to keep it.  In Downes’ article, the author said, “Blogging is about, first, reading. But more important, it is about reading what is of interest to you: your culture, your community, your ideas”. Can’t agree anymore.  The purpose for introducing blogging in education is to let the learner share his reflective thoughts about a topic with peers and get “what they think when they read you”. As for an educational blogging assignment, it is instructor’s duty to offer students opportunity to explore what interests them and give good guidance when in need. |  |
| In some ways I do agree with this quote. I believe that if blogging is "assigned" it does take away from its authenticity. However, at the same time I disagree. Blogging is a way to get individuals to interact in different ways. Whether it is through additional requirements in a class or it is the class, either way students are asked to respond in a different way. Perheps a happy medium would be if there was of course discussions, but then the blogging would be a supplement to it. Instead, of students being forced to respons or blog, they could have the option to. With that though, comes the fact that most students won't since it is an option. Instead, I believe there needs to be an in the middle. Students should have the opportunity to blog for pleasure, and they should also be "required" to blog as well. If students have options about what to blog about, they might be more apt to do it. I have to admit that I hadn't thought of it in this way until I read the article. I think most of us think of it as something that is just done, not so much that it is not considered blogging. It is definitelly something that is very interesting to consider. |  |
| I agree with you. But another question comes out from your proposal. How could a teacher contral the situation and not make the blogs deviate the foucus of his/her teaching? What if students just talk about their own interests or spend more time on that, and thus pay less attention to the courses?  Maybe it is because that blogs are new, the consequences of using them are hard to contral. |  |
| Well, perhaps it is not to control their learning but provide guidance and remind them to keep in track when necessary. I think that's why instructors will visit our blogs ocassionally in our blogging assignment. |  |
| Like Katie, I have to agree with Will Richardson when he talked about blogging being contrived.  If the teacher controls the situation and assigns what is to be written then they are completing an assignment rather than blogging.  In that instance I would say it's not actually blogging.  On the other hand, I do believe it depends on how it is orchestrated.  I think if we are to teach for 21st century skills (collaboration, creativity, etc) and higher level thinking then we could have students blog based on a Constructivism and Inquiry Model of teaching.   It would also be important for the teacher "facilitator" to find ways for the students to interact with their blogs rather than write for the teacher and the content would have to be their own.  I think it would be interesting based on what you teach to see this evolve over a week, month, the school year.  Lastly, it's the teachers responsibility to set the stage and structure how this would roll out. |  |
| I agree with Richardson completely. Students who are asked to blog for school are only blogging to complete an assignment and to receive a grade. They will focus their writing strategy towards only one person, their teacher. People who choose to blog for a hobby or an occupation, mostly are blogging for a wide variety of people who are interested in their blog or blog topic.  In previous courses, I've had to create a blog to share information about a specific assigned topic. Since I was essentially "forced" to begin a blog in that previous course, to a topic that I had little interest in, I was basicially posting directly towards my professor. I had to be more conservative so I didnt offend or decrease my chances of receiving a good grade. Knowing her teaching style and grading style, I had the advantage in writing directly towards her needs and style. |  |
| In “Opinion: The Importance of Being Synchronous,” Haefner argues that online courses should utilize both synchronous and asynchronous communication. Do you agree that both forms of communication are necessary for a successful online course? Why or why not? |  |
| I think that it is imperative to utilize both synchronous and asynchronous communication when teaching an online course. Synchronous communication allows the user to receive and send messages without delay. As a benefit, the student can obtain the information quickly and the student population is broadened. Asynchronous communication allows for students to exchange information in a time that allows them to have more time to formulate thoughts. As a benefit, students can do work at anytime and proceed at their own pace. Incorporating both types of communication will allow greater involvement and engagement by the students |  |
| I believe that both synchonous and asynchonous communication complement each other. According to the fact that each individual has different learning style which affect their learning efficiency. Both approaches will allow students to express and formulate their thoughts in the way their are comfortable and in the same time give them opportunity to practice the communication skills that they still need to develop. Besides, teachers are able to observe how students are dong and identify gap that they need to close as well. |  |
| Pimsiri-I like how you addressed the different learning styles of students with regards to asynchronous and synchronous communication.  I think that incorporating both types of communication does in fact reach all of the diverse learners in your classroom and makes learning more fun and enjoyable!  Katie |  |
| For those who advocate both forms of communication, can you be specific about how you would use them (i.e. discussion boards, live chats, etc.)? |  |
| Lily-  I think it depends on what type of class you are teaching and what grade level.  I would use different types of communication for different aspects of my class.  If I were teaching at the elementary level, I would use synchronous and asynchronous communication in different formats.  I would incorporate whole class discussions, video conferencing, virtual field trips, small group discussions, white board work, individual conferences, and tutorials to achieve synchronous communication.  I would also use discussion boards, blogging, websites, and email to incorporate asynchronous communication.  All of these strategies would not be used on a daily basis, but in conjunction with different activities.  Katie |  |
| I think it would be a neat idea to ask students who are working on a project outside of class to IM eachother while completing the project.  Now, even Google allows authors of papers to share thier pieces with other authors and this can become both asyncronous and syncronous way of learning about the content AND the process fo writing the piece. |  |
| This is an interesting question to consider. While I believe that there should be a balance between both forms of communication, this is often diffifult to achieve. Due to the simple fact that it is an online class, it will generally come with the notion that you have the freedom to "take" the class when you have please and it is convenient for you. This would cause the synchronous communication to be a little more difficult. But the asynchronous communication would be easy. I believe that it would be possible to have whole class discussions through live chats, it would just need to be communicated in the begining of the class that there is a time when the students will need to make themselves available to particiapte in these. If this is done, it will allow for this to occur. If it is not, it will be a little more difficult for this to occur. Careful planning would be imperative for this to be successful. |  |
| It is better that both synchronous and asynchronous communication are used to ensure the success of an online course. Nowadays, group collaboration and group thinking are attracting more people's eyesight. If we want the group progress smoothly, synchronous communication is needed to get an immediate reply and asynchronous communication is needed if a task would takes a long time to finish. Take the topic about how to improve the quality of a less plan in chemitry. You first could make everyone of the group to design a lesson plan all by themselves by using asynchronous communication and then make them talk about the shortcomings and good points of others' design by synchronous communication, during which period the members of the group could get immediate feedbacks and reburnish their designs.  By this way, both synchronous and asynchronous communication are connected to get an effecient and effective result. |  |
| It is an interesting question!  I once took a MOOC course in Courses. There is only asynchronous communication way for students to discuss homework or ask for help. I do learn something for "classmate" via that forum and do not feel any inconvenient. I'd love that if anyone reply to you in the forum, you will receive an email with the web link, so you will never miss any reply. For this course, I don't think it needs both two communication way.  But in another online course, one assignment was to evaluate other group's project. I felt very uncomfortable about the asynchronous communication. At the beginning, two groups wrote emails to each other, however, sometimes somebody forgot to cc other group members, and sometimes somebody found it was hard to clarify his/her own idea. Finally, we decided to use Skype, even it was not easy to find proper time for each member. We all felt our talk through Skype was a real discussion. At the same time, we used emails to arrange our synchronous discussion and exchange notes of discussion.  I think both two ways has its advantages, but we should not use both just because they are good. As teachers or instructional designers, we could offer tools by which students can communicate synchronously and asynchronously, yet it is not necessary to require students to use which way, let students choose the approach he/she prefers. In the second example I experienced, instructor of that course did not offer any technology tools, but we use what we can find and finish that assignment. |  |
| As per your question, Lily.  I think various kind of technology can be used at one time. Chat Application like Line, Whatsapp, Wechat, etc can also be used for further group discussion and more informal interaction. Users can choose whether to reply a chat in written words or voice. If they are in the middle of something and cannot write, they can just record their voice and send to group. Everyone in group will receive messages and voice messages automatically. Therefore, no need to worry about cc problem. Also, most of the students have smartphone that suppot these apps. It is convenient to check information or discuss among group of friends. One problem about using the apps is that sometimes only few people dominate the conversation and others are not motivated to participate.   Skype video call would also be a tool of choice to  facilitate the online discussion as well. Students feel more comfortable when talking as if they are talking to classmates in person and having a real discussion like in classroom setting. What's more, Skype talking can avoid misinterpretation from written messages. Interpretation of text is usually based on one's own experiences and perception about something. It is possible that responses in asynchonous communication be interpret in a wrong way. I think that people usually like to voice of people who they are talking to in an online course in order to figure out who she/he really is and to know more about each other. For these reasons, Skype is another alternative option to make learning in an online couse more effective. |  |
| Yes, this is a very good point. Even though we might not speak very standard spoken English, but it is a chance for us to hear our own voice. However, this kind of communication might be too limited. We have to hear all the others' voice and then answer them. It's harder than merely typing our voice. |  |
| I have to refer to my posting for question 1 to answer this.  I think I was even inspired a little by Haefner when I wrote my posting in question 1.  I think that they are both necessary in an effective online (or even classroom) course, because these two methods of communication are not, and likely cannot be mutually exclusive.  They are best when they work together for the befefit of the student.  As I said in my previous post, asyncronous tools such as edmodo and blackboard allow classroom teachers to engage their learners with enrichment activities and lessons that they never would have been able to do in a time restricted setting. My senior wiritng class will be able to learn about the rules of comma usage, for example, on their own while I spend classroom or instruction time scaffodling the paper.   As for online classess, and distance learning, I think the reverse is true.  I could easily envision myself over-using asyncronous tools like email and discussion forums, and forgetting that sometimes student need real-time interaction to bounce ideas off of one-another and test ideas.  Of course, syncronous communication also allows the instructior to fill in the gaps that a student might have due to self-guided, asyncronous, work.  So, I think I have to agree with Haefner, online course should and, maybe, must use the two modes of communication together to engage learners most effectively.  Aaron |  |
| I can also connect this to part of my response from question 1. In case those of you have not seen it yet I stated, "A combination of both asynchronous and synchronous instruction would be beneficial, however heavier on the asynchronous side obviously due to factors such as busy schedules. I love how asynchronous instruction gives us time to think and come up with more thoughtful responses. I know personally all the time, not only in class but in the real world, I will think back on a situation and go "Aw why didn't I say ..this.. or ..that.." Immediate discussion does have a different energy, but I know many people draw blanks or stumble over words in heat of the moment discussions. Asynchronous communication can make up for that, and allows people to real think about what they are saying. Once again, however, a combination of both communications in any setting is beneficial if done right and with a purpose. I actually took an online course back in high school and the teacher was also a teacher within the school. So if we did have any questions we needed to ask face-to-face we could go to the teacher's classroom. Just like with this class, I appreciate the fact that we can set up an appointment with Dr. Jing Lei if we would like to talk in person. However, I know something like this would not be possible for people far away from their instructor. For those that live far away, programs such as Skype could help though! Being able to see and hear someone's expression rather than just in a typed form, such as a chat room or email, can make a big difference!"  To add to this, first I would like to ask Pim about these chatting apps. Can you only use them on smartphones? Or can they be used on laptops as well?  In the end, I definitely agree that there needs to be a combination of both types of communication. Just solely using one kind can cause problems with miscommunication or misinterpreting something. Additionally, sometimes people can become lazy or have poor time manaegment skills and are late to discussion posts or turning in assignments. In the end it would be interesting and helpful to have a survey that the students fill out to see if there are things you can do as an instruction to improve the comminucation and tools being used. However, sometimes I have even found that instructors are poor with asynchronous communication. In past online classes (where I was not able to meet face-to-face with the instructor) I have tried to email a question or post a question on a discussion board and I will hear nothing back from the instructor, or their response will be so delayed that it does not mean anything or help anymore. It can be quite frustrating for a student that is having trouble to not be able to contact their instructor.  Does anyone have thoughts on how this can be prevented? Since I do not have a smartphone (yet) does anyone know of maybe an app that can be used to notify the teacher when there are questions waiting for them, rather than just waiting for the teacher to sign into blackboard, or wherever, to see if anyone has posted anything? |  |
| Audrey,  I have also had some frustrating experiences with slow asynchronous communication. The only suggestion I can think of would be for an instructor (or whomever) to "subscribe" to a blackboard discussion, which means they will get email updates whenever something new is posted. However, this could still be slow if the instructor does not check their email often, and could fill an inbox pretty quickly! Does anyone else have other ideas? |  |
| This would be quite overwhelming for the instructor if they constantly received an email everytime there was something new posted. Considering how many times a day or a week we post in these discussions. Their email inbox would probably crash. Maybe an application on a smart phone or tablets that gives the instructor a notification (such as a text message) everytime someone posts on Blackboard. This again could be very overwhelming. |  |
| Dear Audrey,  As far as I know, a chat application called Line can be installed in PC and Mac. I do not if there are other applications that can do the same thing.  Pim |  |
| I also agree that online courses should include both aspects of communication. I think that having these creates a good balance within the course. If you are thinking about it as if it was in a classroom, students desire and feed off of that instant reponse. Also in the classroom though, there are times where that instant feedback isn't needed. Instead, students need and require more time to think. That is why I believe that both would make an online course successful. Students are aware that it is indeed a different type of class, but they still think of it as a class. That balance between both modes of communication is desired to keep that same authenticity. However, with it being an inline class, you can see how it might be a bit more difficult to achieve this though. I believe that they should both be used as often as possible to make it an effective course. |  |
| I mentioned in this an earlier post on a previous discussion board, but I do believe that online courses should utilize both synchronous and asynchronous communication. It allows us as students to learn directly from the professor or a speaker through video chat or in person; while allowing us to be more creative. It's important to be organized and responsible when doing an online course. Your not required to be at a specific location at a specific time. You need have to responsibility and maturity to check the online course so you do not fall behind. That is why I believe that utilizing both forms of communication for an online course will be more beneficial and effective for students. |  |
| Hi all,  In my mind, it's depends on what kind of online course is it. If it is a visual session or voice session, synchronous will be appropriate. Because most of students will online during the class time and they can discuss synchronously. And also students can discuss asynchronously after class. But if it is not a visual session or voice session, students will not required meet at the same time online. It leads to students have no prerequisite of synchronous communication. And the asynchronous communication is the most suited way of student discussing |  |
| One kind of description about the meaning of Web 2.0 is that “Like many important concepts, Web 2.0 doesn't have a hard boundary, but rather, a gravitational core.”  However, someone think that Web 2.0 is merely an extension of original ideas of the Web, and there is no definition.  Which idea do you agree with? Give your reasons from your own experience and acknowledgement. |  |
| I agree with the first statement that Web 2.0 has no hard boundary, but a gravitational core.  The definition of Web 2.0 technology is that it involves highly interactive technology services where users can read write web.  In order to write and web, users must first read.  That means that read is the gravitational core of the technology.  There has to be information out there in order for users to interact with it.  When I utilize Web 2.0 technology, I never come up with information from scratch.  Every idea a person comes up with is triggered by something they have previously read, heard, seen, or encountered.  Therefore, a core of ideas has already been established and the users are just extending that core through multiple modes.  The boundaries are endless because the web is user owned and controlled.  The openness and flow of content is endless.  Making, sharing, and consuming digital documents is ongoing and never ending.  I feel that the evolution of Web 2.0 came from Web 1.0, thus making that the gravitational core. |  |
| I merely agree with a part of what you have talked about. If you think that " the evolution of Web 2.0 came from Web 1.0, thus making that the gravitational core", how about the interactive platform set up through Web 2.0?  We know that Web 2.0 came from Web 1.0, but the most important evolution of Web 2.0 is that we can write on it, not merely read what has been published on it.  What do you think about this? |  |
| I agree with you in that you can write on Web 2.0 and not just read it like Web 1.0, but I just see it as an extension of Web 1.0 where you can do many more things. |  |
| That's OK. You should have your own opinion. lol |  |
| I tend to agree with the first statement. Although there is no hard boundary between Web 1.0 and 2.0, the highly interactive and social nature of Web 2.0 is enough to call it a new innovation, rather than simply an extension of the web. |  |
| Lily- After reading your posting, I think I understand why some people might have read my posting and taken a different perspective from it.  I agree with you.  I think that Web 2.0 is a new innovation where we can do a ton of interactive things.  I also think that Web 2.0 had to come from somewhere.  It is using the Web and the information that is found on the Web, but just letting the user interact with what is out there.  So, in some form I see it as an extension of the Web.  I guess I am kind of confused about what the question is asking.  Here is my thought process...  1st came the Web (you could only read it)  2nd came Web 2.0 (you can still read what is on the Web, but now you can interact with it too)  I don't think they got rid of Web 1.0 altogether and then started from scratch to create Web 2.0, so I see Web 1.0 as the base or core that Web 2.0 was built upon. |  |
| Yeah, Katie, you are right.  Web 2.0 doesn't get rid of Web 1.0, and it goes much further than Web 1.0. If we describe the web as a house, the Web 1.0 is the foundation of the house, and Web 2.0 is the house upper the ground. |  |
| I completely agree with both Katie and Xiaoxin. Web 2.0 does not get rid of Web 1.0; its simply a extension of the original one. Xiaoxin, I love your "house" example that you used. It's a great comparison to the differences between Web 1.0 and Web 2.0. |  |
| I am not sure about what the first statement actually means. [can anyone simplify it for me please?]  From my understanding, Web 2.0 is an attempt to develop Web 1.0 to be more flexible, engaging and interactive. It is a new generation of website that emerge to support the needs to interact more between people in online community. The idea of sharing is an important basis of Web 2.0. For example, users not only can watch an advertisements, videos, photos, but they can also share them to their circle of friends. Moreover, Users can now interact with each other under the same website, creating online- communities. |  |
| I agree with the statement that web 2.0 is like a gravitational core. I feel like that means that web 2.0 is continually growing and changing. First came web 1.0, then 2.0 grew from it and has been opening up new opportunities for the world, like you mentioned Katie. Things evolve and so is the web and technology. I remember when my teachers only wrote on chalk boards, then came a big clunky projector with transparency sheets that the teacher would write on with erasable sharipes, then some started getting Elmo's, then I started seeing smart boards and projections from laptops and the internet. Having 'web 2.0' allows for different instruction, flexibility, and opportunities to enhance a student's learning. Web 2.0 can create more of a community and reinforce learning from different lesson topics. By students being able to share their ideas they might be able to understand material better, share what they are thinking easier, and interact with the class more |  |
| I really like the analogy of using the low tech classroom as the "core" and then the more interactive smartboards and Elmo's as the evolution, allowing for more flexible and alternative ways of learning. Web 2.0 definitely has changed the way we view the internet and how we can learn and teach over the web. However, my big question would be are we better learners from this? School scores have not drastically increased since the technology reformation in the classroom, so how has the web helped our learning process? If anyone has any information concerning this I would be very interested. |  |
| Using Web 2.0 to assist traditional classroom make learning especially in math and science more tempting. Students feel more at ease and more open to learn difficult concept because the lesson are made with pleasant sound, animations, pictures, videos to help them learn. However, it does not directly associate with preparation to for test. Most of the time, incorporated technologies are used to simplify concepts but not to be used as a guide of what students should prepare for the exams and give students idea that what concepts are compulsory for them to know at their level. Positive attitude towards schools and learning is a good start that will lead to effective learning. I think teachers and educational tech producers need to concern more of how to shape them and facilitate them to the expected leaning goals |  |
| I really like this comparison to Web 1.0 and Web 2.0 and how it can be compared to technology in the classroom and I agree. As educators, it is important to think about how much technology has changed since we were in school. Then, when we can think about that we can apply it to Web 2.0 and how it changes. Instead, of just "surfing the web" we are now able to communicate and do so much more on the web. The web has evolved and built upon what was already there. Thus creating the gravitational core and then at the same time though it is an extension of what is already there. Furthermore, the analogy of Web 2.0 and technology in the classroom is a great way to think about it and relate it to something that we are familiar with. |  |
| I think you can compare the idea of chaging from Web 1.0 to Web 2.0 with the emergence of Smart phone.  Smart phone is more than just an extension of original idea of phone.  There are always needs and different aspects of use that push to new innovation.  10 or more years ago....We have regular phone that have only basic application such as text messages, calendar, call, alarm clock and games [black-white screen]  Then...Because texting cause less money,we start to text more.  And at the same time we want to share pictures. Therefore, mms came. We have developed color screen and add camera to phone models so that we can use the phone in different purposes.  Then...Online users are growing in numbers and things like blog, hi5, facebook was becoming popular. There were needs to stay update with information like friend's status, news update as quickly as we can. Eventually, these items were made into applications and put into Smart phones |  |
| You really have pointed something very interesting.  Yeah, the application of a web or software depends on so many factors, such as the money spend, the extent of convenience and so forth. And for Web 2.0, it provide us so many powerful functions, like communicating with people for free at any time any place. |  |
| I like this analogy! Very helpful. |  |
| Pim, I have to agree that Web2.0 is an evolution of ideas.  I think the interconnected nature of the web is its power, much more so than the ability to "store."  Web 2.0 exploits that interconnectedness in really cool ways.  I love that I can use things like Google Docs to encourage stuents to collaborate on projects, and that Schoolgoy, Edmodo, Ning and the like create learning communities.  This is poerful learning.  Aaron |  |
| I absolutely agree with this analogy.  That is what I think about WEb 1.0 vs. Web 2.0. |  |
| I think the first statement wants to say that there are no specific rules to stipulate what is web 2.0, but there are some core characteristics can help people know it is Web 2.0 such as highly interactive and social network. |  |
| Yeah, it is really hard to give a clear definittion of what is Web 2.0. However, we know that it comes from technology and makes the world smaller, which has never happened until Web 2.0 appears. Parents could easily have a look at their children whenever and wherever thsy are, as long as there is wire. And we could talk with our friends, teachers or anybody around the world, even though sometimes we have no idea whether it is real people or merely an robort over the other hand. |  |
| Thank you for simplifying what the statement one means. Your definition does click and clarify my understanding. |  |
| Before I read another article, I thought the second statement underestimates what web 2.0 has brought to us because some notable features such as interaction and user generated content cannot be realized in web 1.0, on which people can merely “browse” content. However, the author pointed out that “during a series of ports to other machines from the development computer, the ability to edit through the Web client was not included in order to speed up the process of adoption within CERN”. Honestly, I don’t know what SERN is, but from this quote, we can see that the “edit” function was not feasible on web 1.0 due to technology barriers. The initial purpose of Internet is connection; developments in technology enable us to approaching to it. Perhaps that’s why Tim Berners-Lee, the inventor of World Wide Web holds the opinion that web 2.0 is just an extension.  *"Totally not. Web 1.0 was all about connecting people. It was an interactive space, and I think Web 2.0 is of course a piece of jargon, nobody even knows what it means. If Web 2.0 for you is blogs and wikis, then that is people to people. But that was what the Web was supposed to be all along. And in fact, you know, this 'Web 2.0', it means using the standards which have been produced by all these people working on Web 1.0."* This is Tim Berners-Lee’s reply to the question that “whether Web 2.0 was different to what might be called Web 1.0 because the former is all about connecting people” in an interview.  Paul Anderson, the author of the article states that it is not the technology, but the outcomes of these technologies utilized on web 2.0 that have a great impact in education, business, data sharing and privacy etc., . For example, Amazon “learns” your preference in a particular item through your order and thus provides relevant recommendations to increase the chances of your next potential purchase. It of course has influenced online retail business.  It is really difficulty for me to understand Anderson’s ideas and concepts in the paper.  Here is the link:  <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/media/documents/techwatch/tsw0701b.pdf>  Can anyone give a further explanation? |  |
| There are some sentences in the paper you linked:"  This might well be why Sir Tim Berners-Lee, the creator of the World Wide Web,  maintains that Web 2.0 is really just an extension of the original ideals of the Web that does not warrant a special moniker. However, business concerns are increasingly shaping the way in which we are being led to think and potentially act on the Web and this has implications for the control of public and private data. Indeed, Tim O’Reilly’s original attempt to articulate the key ideas behind Web 2.0 was focused on a desire to be able to benchmark and therefore identify a set of new, innovative companies that were potentially ripe for investment." I hope this would help |  |
| Mengying,  This article definitely had some pretty deep concepts and ideas and I found myself rereading to gain a solid understanding of what Paul Anderson is saying.  I am wondering if the utilization of the Web 2.0 is where the impact is.   So, if Web 2.0 is there (the core) and for use, How are people using this technology to expand into new areas?  What is being created does have the ability to affect many areas listed above, "education, business, data sharing, etc."  I like your example of Amazon and yes that does have an affect on business because it puts more items at the customers fingertips. |  |
| I agree with description one. I think things which are based on internet should be divergent because internet is a unfettered field. People develope things based on web 2.0 only need to consider whether things are highly interactive and sociality. So I agree that interactive and sociality are core characteristics of Web 2.0. |  |
| Hi, Siyuan  You said that "People develope things based on web 2.0 only need to consider whether things are highly interactive and sociality.‘  Would you mind to explain that to us more clearly? |  |
| I would have to agree that Web 2.0 has a gravitational core, but at the same time I have to agree with what many people have said that it does extend itself from the original Web 1.0. Web 2.0 has allowed us to interact and trade information and ideas at a rate that has never before been seen. I believe that Web 1.0 was a sharp increase in the information communication, giving users the ability to reach huge international audiences and voice their words. So pre Web 1.0 era to Web 1.0 era was the largest previous jump in information trade, Web 2.0 effectively doubled this information trade by allowing the user AND the reader to input information |  |
| I think I have to agree with the notion that Web 2.0 is an extension of the natural web.  When I first heard the term web 2.0 in a technology workshop, I had this notion that it was some "separate" web that had to be accessed in a different way.  It was always discussed as an entity in and of itself that seemed "secret" or hard to access in some way.  Now that I have done these readings, and used Web2.0 tools in my classroom, I am beginning to realize that it is not really anything separate.  Intead, it is an extension of the tools that already exist on the web.  I like the comment in "Web 2.0 - I didn't know there was a 1.0?" that web 2.0 extends the web from a read-only web to a read-write web.  Just like PIM mentioned in his post, things evolve and change as the needs and ideas of the users change.  In this case, web 2.0 is an evolution of the old way of the web which was simply a library that would be accessed and used.  Web 2.0 now allows us to use the interconnectedness for our benefit, and really awsome thigs have been developed because of it.  Social Education Platforms, dynamic/live notetaking, and many, many others have drastically changed what classroom pedagogy looks and acts like.  aaron |  |
| Yeah, Aaron,  I have the same feeling with you about the Web 2.0. I never heard about, not to say learn baout it before this week's reading. I also aksed some friends who major in computer engineering about Web 2.0 when I knew that my assment this week was about it. But they told me they didn't know. Wow. I cannot believe it! Then I cannot stop thinking baout what is Web 2.0 and what is the Web. Originally, I merely mistook Web 2.0 with Web1.0.  But now I understand how are these things going on, and I am happy I could it to facilitate my teaching |  |
| I agree with the first. For me the core of web 2.0 is interaction, there is no pure viewer or pure editor, everybody could create and share their ideas.  While for the original web, in my opinion, it just put newspaper or tv station on the internet, something like that, and the resource of information is limited, just big cooperation etc.  Web 2.0 gives people chances to express themselves, at the same time, it means that we should learn to tell the truth as people can post anything on the internet. It is wise that don't believe in anyone immediately, comparing with other information and using the technic we learn last week |  |
| Jiaming-  I agree with you. The chance to express themselves is perhaps the core feature of web 2.0 I think. No wonder someone says that we are living in a time of we-media.It has a profound impact on mass communication such as the journalism. As you said, when we enjoy the process of being a master of contents online, we should always be cautious with the credibility and validity |  |
| I have to agree with the first point that "Web 2.0 doesn't have a hard boundary, but rather, a gravitational core."  That core is the aspect of what 2.0 has to offer it's users.  The ability to collaborate and share content across platforms is the core.  Then, from there, many other pieces of software and ideas can be created which wouldn't be possible without Web 2.0.  My own experiences with this is using social media.  For example, when I bounce around Pinterest I am instantly able to access content from so many areas.  I can access content about education and at the click of a button move into a new area of fitness.  Web 2.0 makes it all possible and opens new doors to how people communicate and access content. |  |
| I think I agree with both parts of the definition. The points that have been brought up in discussions about comparing Web 2.0 to the evolution of the Smart Phone and technology in the classroom are also what I believe Web 2.0 to be. It is an evolution of the traditional web and it is also does not have a hard boundary. This means that Web 2.0 is constantly changing. I learned in an undergraduate online class that Web 2.0 involves communication and social networking on the web as well as reading and using it how we use it today. We are in a Web 2.0 world. Therefore, it is our job as educators to be able to bring this web and change in technology into our classrooms. We have all seen through our educational careers the technology that we use change in so many ways. It is now our responsibility as educators to incorporate these changes into our instruction and make our students aware of the changes that occur. One of these changes of course being the change in the web. Web 2.0 is an extension of the traditional web and it is also something that does not have a hard boundary. It has a gravitational core that is constantly changing as new technologies, ways of communication, and new resources are being developed and incorporated into it. So I guess I would say that similar to others, my definition of Web 2.0 evolves like Web 2.0 evolves |  |
| Hi, Tyler.  You have given a more general idea about this question. Yeah, both of some part of the two different idea is right. |  |
| I see the arguments to both definitions of Web 2.0. I personally believe that the second idea is more accurate. Web 2.0 is essentially the second generation of the World Wide Web, which focuses on the ability for people to communicate and share information online. It’s the transition from the static HTML web pages to a more dynamic web that is more organized. From this definition based on “Webopedia”, it clearly shows that Web 2.0 is more of an extension of original ideas of the Web. However I do see the other side of the argument as well |  |
| Tyler, I like what you said about your definition evolving as well. It is difficult to find one exact definition, just as it is to define 'learning' for example. People's opinions and practice evolve and change over time. |  |
| Both Wiki and Google are technologies of Web 2.0, we can use them to express our own ideas and edit on them, which make them quick ways to reach the wisdom of a group. However, most of the messages are from one’s own experience, not professional.  How to identify the information on them and use them to facilitate your teaching? |  |
| Wikis and Google are both great ways to encourage collaboration within and beyond the classroom walls.  Wikis are a great way to share class projects, information, and important dates.  Wikis allow teachers to connect with students and parents outside of the classroom.  It also allows for collaboration between students and teachers around the world.  Wikis allow anyone to see the content, so students who are writing have an audience.  This is beneficial because the students need to become more conscientious about their writing.  They also need to be closely monitored for content because posting can take any form and any direction.  This website provides an ample amount of suggestions about how to use wikis in the classroom.  I like how the site is broken down into 7 major areas and the wiki examples that fit into that area.  http://www.smartteaching.org/blog/2008/08/50-ways-to-use-wikis-for-a-more-collaborative-and-interactive-classroom/  One area of Google that I think would be beneficial in the classroom would be Google Docs.  In Google Docs, assignments can be shared through files and students have the ability to fill them out and return without worrying about a paper in hand.  Google Docs also promotes organizational skills because everything is in one place.  For example with writing, all drafts can be saved and referenced.  Finally, both teachers and parents can comment and question on the work being done.  This promotes student accountability. |  |
| I agree with you about the utlization of Googls and Wikis, and I also had an experience of editing my own wikis pages on a course called educational technology. But after that learning experience, I came to think that what has been published on Wikis was really unbeliable, because I coulc not identify whether the information I read was professional or merely individuals' opinion.  Do you have this kind of experience? |  |
| It's always important to see where the information is coming from. Most Wikipedia pages can be edited by anyone; so it's crucial to double check if the information is correct by looking at the resources on the bottom of the page. Wikipedia is helpful in getting information in a timely manner, yet it's important to make sure the information you are reviewing is accurate. Same goes to Google websites. It's important to use websites that a professional and academically acceptable. For the most part, blogs and other personal websites can not be used as sources in the academia world. |  |
| Xiaoxin, I think this is a difficult question. It made think of Wikipedia, because many students (and sometmes teachers, too) get their information there. Personally, I require my students to use professional sources in their citations, but I don't mind if they consult Wikipedia to get some background information, as long as they exercise caution in trusting what they see there. In my opinion, this is the most useful function of these user-generated sites, to be able to ground oneself in the topic and figure out what else to look for or think about. |  |
| Yeah, I know this is really a tough problem. However, it is really a problem. A coin has two sides. Web 2.0 has provided us so many advantages, it also bring us lots of problems.  In the world crowded with information, we have to learn how to pick up the useful ones effectively |  |
| I agree with how you do make it clear that Web 2.0 provides great amount of information, but not necessarily 100% accurate. Cites like Wikipedia are frequently used and for the most part pretty accurate, but not necessarily all the time. Whenever something is stated worth value in a Wikipedia page I always make sure to click on the reference citation to see if it's a reliable site. So many of those urban myths from the internet are cited from bad source to another bad source and therefore somehow become legitimized. Avoiding this bad information chain is crucial in accurate information sharing and gathering |  |
| For wiki, I always check the reference if it has been offered. If it would be used for academic uses, in most cases, I would like to quote the original source, such as books or papers. I think wiki is a useful tool for teaching, which could provide a general idea for something you are teaching or learning. We should not depend on it, even for books and papers, we should keep ciritical when we reading. For teaching, I think, we might not quote the content from wiki, but we could ues the way that how each term in wiki has been constucted to organize the instruction, by which we mean, when we teach new knowledge, we could let students to creat "a class wiki" of what they have learned. In my opinion, it is a good way to let students work with each other and learn from each other, also think deeper.  For Google, when I use it to look for answers, I'd like to double-check the first several webpages it presents, comparing them and decide whether or not I should believe it. A lot of Google products could be used in classroom, for example, Google earth for geography class, [art project](http://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/project/art-project) for art class or history class, Google groups for asynchronous communication, Google site for the "class wiki" I mentioned above. I love Google! |  |
| Jiaming- I also agree with the fact that wikis are a great way to start your knowledge base.  I think that it is a way to get background information, but then you must also supplement that information with research based information.  I love your idea about a class wiki.  It reminds me of a graffiti board where students can write down all their knowledge about a specific topic or content area.  I also think the students would be more apt to read it because it is something new and different that they created.  Do you know of any class wiki sites?  I see that you mentioned Google sites.  How does this type of page operate?   I have never heard of it before?  Katie |  |
| I feel like on this topic there are many different things to think about. When you are reasearching you are usually told not to use Wikipedia because it can be edited by anyone. However, like Katie said, it is a great place to start and get background information to really start your research. I also look to see the references on that page, then I will go to those different pages- which may actually be reliable, educational sources. However, one must also make sure someone didn't cite a hoax site! Use those skills to determine credible sources!  However, if there is a group project for school and students are creating a wiki it's really more for them to talk about what they have learned and interact with their class. It's kind of like a classroom discussion. I'm sure there will be responses that other students or even the teacher disagree with, but that's how you learn and discuss and throw out new ideas.  By the way, Katie thanks for the great link! |  |
| Yeah, Audrey, you got the point.  When I was pursuing my Bachelor's degree in China, Ii also met with the problm you talked about. Most of the classmates in my class didn't like the courses related to educational technology, because they thought making students thinking actively through Web 2.0 was impossible. But in fact, when they really calmed themselves down and had a look at what they had learned from communicating online, they realized that this kind of study made sense to them |  |
| First, you can creat a google site, it is easy and convenient. There are a lot of templates for you to choose, including wiki type, then you can set users(your students) who "can edit" or who "is owner". Now they can use the site just like wiki uesers. They can create, edit or delete pages for the wiki item you want your class to create.  Or if you think you do not need a site to create wiki, you can choose to use google doc, first you sign in Google Drive, then create a document or mindmap(recommend), then click the sharing button on the right top, now you can set who can view and edit this page by listing their email address.  Do I make it clear to you? It is a little hard to explain, bu believe me it is very easy to operate. And the help pages of Google really helps! :)  As I never been a teacher, so I never have a chance to use it myself with my own students. But I have used Google code in one of my college class to finish a teamwork, it is very convenient, every team member can write or revise code wherever they are, if only they have a computer which could access the Internte. There might be some problems when you use it in your class. If you decided to use it, let me know. I am really looking forward to it. |  |
| Wow. I didn't know that if you are the "owner" , you could delete the pages or items.  I have to admit that I am bad at using technologies to teach and to study, but I will try my best to change this situation and I will try this. |  |
| Wikis is good just for the first glimpse of the title and general information.   To me, Wikis is unreliable source of information because users can always make change in the content. You have to double-checked with other creditable sites before using the information written in the site. Sometimes, the information is rather opion than facts which is considered bias. Yet, In case we dont know anything about what we are searching,  it is a good source for getting rough idea and then we can dig deeper in content from other sources. I may utilize it to teach my students how to look for creditable websites and why wikis is not a website that they should be using in their report. I also encourage them to use library website to search for researchs and papers and to cite works appropreately.  Comparing to Wikis, Google's applications are more useful. I like that I can explore my studies through things that google has offer. Websites, pictures, research documents, books, maps, upload files in storage[google drive], create a group between teacher and students just like this discussion board, etc. |  |
| I agree with all above in considering Wikipedia a good start to get some background information of something new. It is not so reliable for academic use because anyone can edit it. Even though the references listed are reliable, there might be misinterpretations. So the best option is to check the references and read them. Wikipedia is merely a most well-known form of wikis. As Jiaming says, “class wiki” can be used to construct knowledge, a kind of “the wisdom of crowds”. I also read about things like “wiki diary”, a collaborative tool that instructors can use in group work, instructional design plans for instance.  As for Google, I like its applications, Google Map, Google Scholar and Google Plus, and they have been integrated into education for particular purposes, but I doubt whether they can be defined as “web 2.0” |  |
| Yeah, good idea!  For some links and citations in Wiki, if they are papers, you can search on Google Scholar or on the library website.  For Google, we could compare the information of it and other sources that also provide the same or related information. If you information contradict with each other, you have to make a choice by your self or ask some one professional in that field |  |
| It is so difficult that indentify which information are professional and which are just own experience. I think if people use both Wiki and Google to search background information, it is a good way and people can get them quickly and overall. Without background information,  search professional literatures is the best way in my mind.  In the other hand, sometimes view some personal experiences on Wiki and Google is a good way to get stimulus to have more ideas. |  |
| Has anyone ever tried some methods to identify whether the information you utilized is true or not??  Share you ideas with us, please. |  |
| Actually, I don't think I do this enough! After learning more about how to detect hoaxes last week, I think I will apply more of these techniques in the future. |  |
| Yeah, Lily. We really have to apply these standards into our teaching process. We are teachers, we have to give students the true knowledge, no matter what it is. |  |
| Xiaoxin,  That is absolutely correct.  We have to be able to articulate what that knowledge is (accurate and inaccurate) and hold ourselves accountable to understanding how different web technologies operate.  So, if we know it's easy to have inaccurate information then it's our responsibility to put something in place to help assure accurate information and standards would be a great place to start! |  |
| Xiaoxin,  When I say that is absolutely correct...in my opinion. |  |
| I have utilized Wikis and google search technologies in so many different classes, and focused on so many different nuances of both services that true mastery of these tools seems daunting. There are so many different, small functions that can be utilized with proper input on the computer. Teaching the ability to utilize these tools is a full time lesson. Half-way understanding these services provide enough support to facilitate adaquate useage for classroom use. Knowing which citations on Wiki's are reliable, and using google scholar can both be good solutions for finding reliable information. |  |
| I really think I have to make a careful consideration about how to use Wikis. I tutored a student and tried to make him search study by Wikis. However, what surprised me was that some answers he found on Wikis were wrong. That's really a shame.  I have to look for other professional ways to make students learn better. And maybe MOOC is a good platform for my students, so I will try it |  |
| Xiaoxin-  Your student's story really alerts us. We should think twice before taking wikis as the information resource. Did he correct the answer on wikis after that?  BTW I don't consider MOOC a good alternative. In most cases, student turn to Wikipedia for help because they don't know the meaning of a term, theory or other factual event. They want to obtain the credible information easily , not through onerous search work. MOOCs do provide information of high quality, but no advanced navigation offered to direct you to some particular knowledge. Besides, MOOCs can not cover every domain in study |  |
| I think you have to have some sort of standards in place and actually teach our students about plagiarism, inaccurate information, how to cite works by another author etc.  We build awareness, examples and counter examples |  |
| Yeah, Monica.  We teachers are the educators and we should make students believe in us. If we give t he students wrong answers or unprofessional knowledge, how to make them be scientific and be critical about what they have learned ? We have aware this situation |  |
| As you said that it is user responsibility to make sure that information he/she use is reliable, it is really important to start with building concerns in academic integrity through teaching about plagiarism,why is it wrong to copy and paste without citation, how to cite properly, how to find creditable source of information, etc. |  |
| This is a great question that all teachers need to consider. When you do "google" something, usually the first site to pop up after your search is Wikipedia. Many of us click on that site and use it as our research. Most of the time, you can hope that the information posted is some what accurate. However, we all know that is usually not the case. We do have to consider that with the evolution of Web 2.0 anyone can post to Wikipedia. This means that the information is not always valid. We need to teach and inform our students that they can use Wikipedia to get them started, however they must then use reliable sources to be able to support what they may have found on Wikipedia. Or students need to be shown that there are other ways to research instead of just google. While it is of course easier to just "google" something, there needs to be limitations set as well. If students are told to use Wikipedia with caution and are taught other ways to research their reliance on Wikipedia will hopefully decrease.  When it comes to google, one particular resource that I use is Google Docs. This is an area of the website through their email or gmail where documents, surveys, presentations, and such can be created. Then, once they are created by one student, as long as it is shared with others, they can  all view it and edit it. It is a great way to have a fluid document that is online (using Web 2.0) that many can use. Teachers can use this to post assignments and even have students collaborate on assignments. It is a great way to use the web in the classroom. |  |
| Hi,Tyler.  You have really raised an effective way to make a fluid document online to make it utilized by many students. It is really helpful fo our teaching with technology |  |
| I personally love Wikipedia for background information. Sometimes when I’m bored, I find myself on Wikipedia searching around aimlessly. Academically, I find Wikipedia very useful when beginning a paper or when completing an assignment. I understand that the information can be edited from people around the world. For the most part, it’s helpful in the beginning stages of a research paper. You also have the ability to utilize the resources at the bottom of the Wikipedia pages. From a teaching perspective, I would encourage my students to stay away from quoting and referencing Wikipedia, yet I would have no problem with them utilizing Wiki pages as a source to gain background information.  Google, on the other hand, is a different story. You have the ability to search for sources in academic articles by using Google Scholar. These sources are way more reliable and more professional compared to Wikipedia pages. It’s important to stay away from blogs and personal websites, when gaining information for school. Most of those websites are biased and for the most part are not academically acceptable. |  |
| Good point Richard,  While searching on Google you need to be able to determine credible sources vs non credible. Google brings up scholarly articles which can be great to use. Sometimes I still find better results from databases, however.  Some young students are so used to seeing blogs and personal websites that they do not take into consideration biased thoughts. They also need to learn to cross check and look at other sources to back up information you have found to make sure it is correct. |  |
| Have you ever used other technologies of Web 2.0, except for Wiki and Blogs? Make a brief description of it.  If you haven’t, please try your best to get a better understanding of anyone you are interested in, and make a brief description of it |  |
| The only other Web 2.0 technology I have used is creating podcasts.  I have created digital media files for my students in school.  When I taught my students multiplication, I would teach the facts through songs.  At that time, I controlled a teacher webpage and I thought it would be helpful to post the songs on the webpage so that the parents would know what their students were learning and be able to use it as reference.  Therefore, I created podcasts of every song.  I remember when I created them it was easy to record, but then I had to transfer the recording to the appropriate file type inorder to upload it.  This involved downloading a free version of a transferring system.  Ultimately, it took longer to transfer and upload than to create.  I did not feel that this process was very easy, so I did not continue to create podcasts.  If I had more education about using and integrating these different technologies, I would utilize them more. |  |
| Yeah, that's really a problem. More time is spent on transfering and uploading than creating, and this is really countless for a teacher, who is busy for all the students stuffs.  Have you sought other ways to solve this problem? Does your solution works? |  |
| It's too bad this didn't work out for you- it's a very cool idea! |  |
| Katie,  That is very cool and I am glad you said that if you had more education about using and integrating these different technologies you would utilize them more.  You mentioned Podcasts, but are there other technologies that teachers would also like to learn about and use in their classroom?  I ask not only you but the group.  I am looking for what technologies teachers might want to learn to use, for use in their classrooms. |  |
| I agree with you that music is a great resource to use in teaching. As I posted in my post, I also use music in my teaching. It is a huge part of connecting to students and helping them to learn the material. I have to admit though that I never thought to make podcasts of the songs for students. I usually use YouTube and tell my students they can go on and view them. But I can see how if they were in a podcast it would be easier to access them. Either way though, music and technology is a huge part of teaching. It is important to incorporate the web and Web 2.0 into everything that we do. It is the gateway to our students and even the world today. |  |
| Sometimes, we might use videos or even the advertisement on line to make students interested in what you are going to teach. By this way you could make knowledge more interesting and make students pay more attention to what you will explain to them.  I hope this would be helpful for you! |  |
| I have my students submit weekly journal entries through BB, and I read and comment on them. The journals are private (only I can see them). I'm not sure if this qualifies as Web 2.0- what do you guys think? |  |
| Can you communicate with them through BB?  Would you mind to explain it to us in details? |  |
| Lily- I think that weekly journals are great because it gets the students in the mindset of writing.  The school that I worked at didn't utilize blackboard, so I could not have done it that way.  I could think about using blogs as a way for students to create pieces of written work.  I think that if I provided them with a prompt, the students would love writing online.  I also think that with using a blog with elementary students, they will be more conscientious about their writing and look for spelling and grammatical errors.  The only thing that I worry about is that using a blog would be open to the public so everything that the students wrote could be seen.  I would need to make sure they were following the prompts and not including information that does not relate to the topics at hand.  I wonder if there are blogs that could be individually held by a student, but then their teacher has to approve the post before it is posted?  Does anyone know of such a tool?  Katie |  |
| I have not actually had the chance to really utilize web 2.0 in my past student teaching. However, one of my professors had us make a blog, and the students the following semester had to make a tumblr, and we used these as journals/newsletters. We would reflect on learning going on in our classroom's, inform parents on what their students were working on, thoughts on future lessons, and we would upload pictures to go along with our text. I don't know if this counts as web 2.0, but also when we would sumbit lesson plans for our professor to grade he would send them back in a Word document, annotated and highlighted. It was great because he would highlight specific lines in my lesson plan and they would direct me to a box with comments he made about it. I would like to be able to utilize things like these as a real world teacher. I also find Black Board very useful and interesting, and I think Lily's use for journaling is such a great idea. How do you comment back on their journals? Is it more of a message or can you annotate them with comments? |  |
| ... and Katie, I am not sure about a teacher being able to review a blog before it is posted, but that would be really helpful! I want to know now too! |  |
| BB gives me several ways to comment on their journals. Usually, I just use the "feedback" section of the grading box, but there is a separate comments section that I could use as well.  So this way, they see my comments when they check their grade. The purpose of this assignment is simply for my students to write without worrying about grammar or structure, so my comments are usually just words of encouragement, or sometimes I try to relate to my students by saying things like "I think so, too" or "I have also been to that place"... etc. |  |
| I would say Blackboard is a source of Web 2.0. It's clearly a site that allows the users; in this case students and teachers; to interact with each other in a discussion format. The discussion board is essentially a blog in a way. Students have the ability to post their own opinions and questions which begins a discussion among other users. |  |
| Hi, Katie,  You have showed us a very important problem we have to solve during the application of Web 2.0. Yes, we have to make sure what we have published online be safe both to ourselves and others, even though sometimes, what we have published is safe to all others, there would be someone makes us sink into dangerous situations. Therfore, as a teacher, when we conduct students how to use Google, Wikis and so on, we have to teach them how to protect themselves and if something unhappy happens, how to solve it.  I think maybe you can first choose a relatively safe website, and require your students to communicate on the |  |
| Sorry, I clicked the wrong place just now, and submit an answer without ending it. I willl continue the answer.  You may require your students communicate with each other on a fixed area, and if there is someone not in your group go there, you could know that and take some measures to prevent the dangerous factors. |  |
| Good idea about slowly acclamating students into the web using process safely. |  |
| In China, I have uesd a blog, the owner could set a code to each blog, so the blogger can choose which one is okay to public, which is better to keep privacy.For those privacy blog, only people who enter the write code could see the content. I think there must be other blog website in US have the same function. |  |
| Hi, Katie.  I don't know whether there is tool like that, bu may be you can try to be the owner of the bolg and make the students to write on it and it is your turn to decide whether their posts shoule be deleted or not.  There are also some educational games which could be used to help elementary students with their spelling and make learning interesting to them. You could have a try. |  |
| I would definitely argue that Blackboard communication is an element of Web 2.0. Interactive communication is very viable through this server and in no way would I say that Blackboard is a "static" webpage. Furthermore, I think the ability to have users submit a journal and you be able to view it privately is awesome and a great tool to use. |  |
| I assigned my students to write a blog diary each day in English and Thai so they can practice using grammar and structure in English language writing and practice their minds and brians in constructing translation in Thai. Apart from that I used Youtube video links to corporate my teaching sometimes to make the session more interesting. |  |
| Pimsiri, I think diary blog is a great way to prove your students English ability. Also write blog is a interesting thing for students if you do not limited the topic. I guess most of them should like this assignment. |  |
| Siyuan,  That's right. It is fascinating that diary writing really works for all level of English competency. They really enjoy telling their friends what have they done, where have they been. Sometimes, they writing me a reflection about their other classes which I think is very useful. They use blog to summarize their knowledge and feeling afterward....like we write in Dr.Tiffany's class notebook. |  |
| You can add tags to your pictures in some online picture-sharing services such as Instagram. It’s an example of Folksonomy I think. By typing a word in the search bar, you can get numerous pictures which are tagged with it. What’s more, you have an access to people that share the same interest as you through these tags; social interactions are realized! |  |
| I have YouTube.  YouTube is a  vedio-sharing website. On this website, people can upload vedios and common with others videos. |  |
| I have used many different technologies that are representative of Web 2.0. Obviously I have utilized various and multiple forms of wikis and blogs, but I also have utilized podcasts, ebooks and online forums just to name a few. I enjoy being able to utilize more than simply text in my online works. Audio and video are awesome tools and provide so much ability for interaction due to the technologies that we possess. I believe that since we have so many different types of learners in this world, these tools are very good for catering to the different learning types of people. |  |
| I think most social media website are web 2.0. One I always used is a website that users can post their review of books, music and film under the item page, users could also add item(new book, music and movie) to the website. I have added several books and documentary to the website. When I recieve the letter for the webstie telling me adding is successful, I felt so happy! But I am a lazy person, even I have accounts in different social media website, I rarely contribute to their content, instead I just consume the content. Tongue out |  |
| One Web 2.0 technology use often is Pinterest.  It's social in a quiet sense, you communicate in an abstract way.  For example you can pin items onto your boards, usually people categories their boards.  The ability to follow other peoples pins and boards is part of the technology and they can follow your.  One could also utilize FB, Twitter, etc by posting their pins in those areas.  Which gets us back to the first question about Web 2.0's fluid nature!  And, is web 2.0 a gravitational core?  I have also searched for web 2.0 technologies and was surprised as to what is available.  It's amazing really!  Now, getting back to the article we read.  Although web 2.0 is there, the opportunities for new technologies is continuously evolving. |  |
| As a new teacher, I try and incorporate new technology as much into my classroom as I can. As I have said before, teachers need to be able to adapt to the new technology of the world and expose our students to this because it is what they use. If this is done, we can relate to them and make school interesting and concepts easier to understand. One way that i do this in my classroom is I use a lot of educational websites for videos and online lessons. Doing this, gives students an alternative way to hear the information and also can provides them with a different perspective. One website I use is called LearnZillion. This is a website that has lessons posted in the form of videos. You can also communicate with other teachers and even find other resources that may help you. This is a way to show students the information in a different to hopefully better help them to understand the concepts in addition to my teaching.  I have also learned that students enjoy songs and ways to be able to relate what we are learning to songs. I use YouTube and a website called Flocabulary. Each of these site has songs related to most of the math topics I teach. I show these to my students and they not only enjoy them, but it also makes learning math fun. Being able to be incorporate Web 2.0 into the classroom is essential! |  |
| Hi, Tyler  Thank you for your proposal of using LearnZillion and Flocabulary as sources to teach.  Xiaoxin |  |
| This is interesting! As a learner, I also found that songs work for most of the school subjects, at least for myself. And they also help students to remember content easily. There was some song that my elementary science teacher used to incorpate her lesson about land/sea breeze that I still recall nowadays. Songs really simplify concepts of the contents and make learning sounds promising. I will try corporate it if I have a chance to teach here some day.   Thanks for recommending these two websites. I'll defnitely check them out! |  |
| Social Media and other social networking sites are other clear examples of Web 2.0. Myself along with a majority of my classmates have all used social media in some way, shape, or form; probably on a daily basis. I frequently use Facebook, Twitter, Foursquare, Instagram, and LinkedIn; which are all sources of Web 2.0. All of these sites are utilized to interact and collaborate with others around the world. |  |
| Thanks Lily, that sounds like a great tool on blackboard, and Jiaming I didn't know you could do that with blogs, will definitely have to keep that in mind!  Monica, you bring up a good point as well that connects to my blog on Pinterest and social bookmarking. Social sites can be quite frightening at first but it seems like teachers have good opportunities to respond to students and keep things private at the same time. |  |
| In the article titled, "Safety and Social Networking" there are many "social networks worth exploring".  After you review them, identify 2 that you think would be the best to use in an educational setting.  Why?  What might they offer teachers and students?  Please feel free to venture outside of the article listed above to find social networking sites that might be beneficial for educators to use with students |  |
| Hi, Monica.  I like these two educational settings.  1.Ning www.ning.com Flexible platform for building your own social network.  I like the front page of this Website.I can easily get a clear idea about this Web site and easier for me to find out the area I am interested in.Both social communication and private rights are provided, which make it safer to log in and communicate with others.  2.Classroom 2.0 http://classroom20.ning.com Social networking site focused on Web 2.0 technologies in education.  On this Web site, you can create your own account, build your own forum and talk with other members freely.  What's more, you can also find out the information about the upcoming free conference, through which you can meet with and communicate with more teachers. Meeting with and communicate with teachers from other schools could help teachers to get a general understanding about how is the same topic going in different areas and thus broaden our eyesight, make us more competive and learn mor ways to improve our teaching skills or change our teaching ideas. |  |
| Yes, the collaboration part of the social network is what helps people construct knowledge and of course safety is key.  I like that 2.0 also offers free courses.  I am not familiar with classroom 2.0, is there a place to build a classroom social network that is also private? |  |
| I think so. There is a place to build a forum and another place to set up your own profile, and bu this way you could write your recent ideas and keep it privately and talk with others in the forum. |  |
| I will have to check that site out, thank you.  Right now most teachers in my building are using Edmodo as a social network. |  |
| Edmodo is very helpful and interesting website. It is free and provides teachers with a way to set up classes, assignments, and places to submit assignments as well. It has a look that is similar to Facebook so many students often take a liking to it. It even has the ability for teachers and students to communicate with one another. While I have not personally used Edmodo, I know teachers that use it religiously and swear by it. They say it has made a huge difference in their teaching. It is my hope to use Edmodo one day as I have seen first hand how beneficial it is to both teachers and students. |  |
| I checked out Edmoto, based on Monica's comment, and it seems really useful! I'm curious to hear from those of you who are familiar with it. How do its functions compare to something like Blackboard?  Another site I personally like is a language-learning website called Busuu.com. Similar to the site mentioned in our weekly materials, this site connects native speakers and learners of a variety of languages.The neat thing about the site is it creates 2-way exhange. For example, you could be an English-speaking learner of Spanish, and you could connect with a Spanish-speaking learner of English. However, I would caution against using this site with younger learners, as there are no filters on who can contact you, and no way to verify the identity of users. With that said, I think this could be a very effective tool in a college-level foreign language class. |  |
| Thanks for adding the approximate age of the students that this might social networking site might be appropriate for.  That allows us to categorize the types of social networks into age groups, which is so appropriate.  You wouldn't necessarily use some social networks with older students and vice versa, as I am sure there are some that we wouldn't choose to use in education at all.  Great points Lily! Is there anyone else that might be familiar with Edmodo that can answer Lily's question above?  For those that are not familiar you might want to check it out as well. |  |
| The first website I really liked was netsmartz.org  This site is great for children and teens and allows children to have fun while still learning about safety on the internet. Their main goals are to education children on how to recognize potential internet risks, engage children and adults in a two-way conversation about on and offline risks, and empower children to help prevent themselves from being exploited and to report victimization to a trusted adult. There are different topics, interactive games, and great graphics and visuals to engage the learner.  And as Xiaoxin stated, I also liked ning.com It gives you the tools to build your own network, and opens up for many opportunities to communicate with other teachers.  To add one more, I also believe that blogs could be useful. I've had professors that had each of us use blogs as a way to comment on each other's lesson ideas, communicate with parents, and share interesting photos to go along with our topics. |  |
| Hi, Audrey  I have also experienced the process to comment on other teachers' blogs and communicate with them on thei blogs. I could also read others' ideas about the same class and thus I got more idea about how to improve my teaching plan.  I really think it is useful. |  |
| Edmodo is great, and there is a similar site called Schoology ([www.schoology.com](http://www.schoology.com/)) that I use with all of my classes.  I'm not quite sure how I lived without it, actually.  It has really helped me to manage my classroom business much more efficiently and I really think the students like the ability to access the materials at all times.  I never liked the "class website" approach because I felt like I had to decorate and curate it like a madman, but Schoology is a pre-form site that fits really easily in to classes without a lot of wasted time on decorating.  This week, in fact, I asked my seniors to read a few articles about personal statement/college essays and then carry on a discussion on Schoology about the readings.  Since they already had this discussion in their head before coming to class, the scaffolding was much less complex and we could jump right into the good suff.  The site also offers an "albums" tools that I opened to students to post class candids to.  Of course, I edit this just in case, but it is a really nice way to create a warm classroom community without a lot of set up hours on my part.  The best part is that the only students with a pre determined access code can gain access to the course site, so it is very safe |  |
| Hi, Aaron  I like the website called Schoology you have referred to. I opened it and the front page catched me because I like bule very much. And there are many different areas we could go, such as the learning platform, instructor tools.  There is also an area for higher education. So cool. |  |
| Set up hours is always problem for teacher because there are lots of things to prepare for one class. After you have prepared content, class activities, and teaching strategy for certain lessons, you want some tools to assist and make quality teaching without lots of hours decorating. Schoology seems to be a good solution. I should recommend this site to my friend in Thailand.  Thanks for sharing |  |
| Lily- I wrote in my post that I would use Edmodo in the classroom because it is very easy to create and keep private, although I have never used it.  I think it would be beneficial in a classroom because it is another way that students can have access to materials and teacher content.  I am thinking about utilizing in my EED 336 classroom with pre-service teachers.  I think that it would be a great way to connect with them when they are out in the field and also provide another opportunity for them to check out different social networking sites that they can use with their future students |  |
| I once learned English online with a English-speaker, but I didn't feel good,because of the bad quality of the Wbe site. If I knew this Web site earlier, I would solve that kind of problem earlier.  I was merely waste money and time on that Website. |  |
| Hi, Lily  I know this Website, it is really useful. People from different countries learn together. At first, I thought it would be really hard for them to communicate, because they speak different languages. But now, I think if we want to learn another language online, at first we should know some basic words and pronounciation of the language. Or we couldnot understand each other at the first step, not to say to go further. |  |
| I agree. The website also includes free vocabulary units |  |
| One social networking site that I think would be fun to use within the school setting is Storify.  Storify lets people create their own stories by bringing together various media that they find on all different sites, including social networking sites.  Social stories can be built to talk about the what is happening in the news and the world around us through an interactive, dynamic, and social forum.  I could see students using this type of social networking site as part of a history lesson on current events.  Weekly current events could be posted about what was talked about in school, but in kid-friendly language.  Once these stories are created, they can be published and embedded anywhere.  As a teacher, I would have the students create the stories and then I would publish them and show them to the class (as a way to control what they were seeing).  Another social networking site that I would use in school would be edmodo.  Edmodo provides teachers with ways to create online classrooms where students can ask questions, submit assignments, and share important dates and information.  Edmodo visually looks like facebook, so students are more inclined to be attracted to it because they are familiar with the format.  Studnets can also access this site via an iPhone app.  It makes what you are doing in the classroom more relevant with what is happening out in the real world.  Teachers could use this site a way to communicate with students, posting links and ideas for them to check out. |  |
| Katie, I like these two sites you discussed. Storify sounds really interesting to me. It is always important to have students experienced with various types of media. I could see this site also helping students with their creativity.  Also, I've heard of edmodo but have never actually used it so I think that it's great that it has a similar set up to facebook so more students would be comfortable using it. Being able to access the site on iPhones is a great feature too! It gives students more accessability and opportunities to participate within the site.  Good finds! |  |
| Storify sounds cool.  Free? |  |
| Aaron,  I just peeked at storify and it is seems free for educational uses.  Maybe Katie can share some examples (titles, topics) of what her students have created?  I am also wondering Katie, you mentioned that you control the upload?  Because I am not familiar with storify to great lengths, seems like a great safety feature you have put into place from what I can gather. |  |
| Monica- I have not used storify with my classes but I feel that it would be very easy to incorporate into classrooms once talks about Interest safety and use have been done. |  |
| Yes it is free. |  |
| Katie,  I like the current event connection, so often we are all about history and not the here and now.  I used to use newspapers in the classroom back in the day so this is awesome for the technology in todays times.  Thanks for sharing! |  |
| Monica- I have not used storify with my classes but I feel that it would be very easy to incorporate into classrooms once talks about Interest safety and use have been done. |  |
| When I was in high school, the merely way to learn more about history and politics was to use newspapers. But most students didn't like to read them, for that they were so boring and the words were so traditional.  No colorful pictures, no vivic figures, merely words. When I saw the news papers, I merely wanted to throw them away. So boring and so stressful. |  |
| Storify seems like a really cool tool! I'm going to investigate further and see if I might be able to include it in my blog about digital storytelling. |  |
| Yeah, Lily.  It is really cool and interesting. You could have a look at what other people thinking about the same thing with different ways to express them and have fun at the same time.  What's more, once there is wifi, you could check it. You could have fun at anywhere and any time. That's the advantages of the digital times. |  |
| That's a good idea Lily,  I also found many other digital storytelling sites that I just happened across when I was searching for e-learning information. We can use those for our collaborative project as well as what you Audrey have.  You have me so interested in this digital storytelling. |  |
| Hi, Katie.  Yeah, I like the social networking site you provided. Storify could be so easily used in the classroom and inrease the students' learning. But I really think there is a not very good situation here. What if the news spreaded is not good for the fame of the school, the teachers ot the students? If this happens, every one in the school wouldknow it, and the school, the teacher or the student would be affected. That would be a hard problem to solve. |  |
| Xiaoxin- I think I would use it more for synthesizing current events that the students bring into the classroom to talk about.  So really you are putting the news in a more child friendly format.  Not necessarily the news of the classroom or school I guess. |  |
| Yeah, you are right, Katie.  When I was in high school, some teachers of Chemistry, English, Physics and soon, also use newspapers, which were designed to help students to learn. But in fact, I thought it was boring even though I did them very well. |  |
| I really like the storify idea. I think letting kids interact with others on an educational platform in their own language with their own peers is really invaluable. Learning from each other and the beginnings of teaching self-reliance and self-study are incredibly valuable tools. I would also like to think I could find a way of incorporating a program like this in my future classroom. |  |
| Thanks for sharing lots of interesting resources. I need to check Edmoto and Storify out.  Here are the useful two social network for education  1. Ning [www.Ning.com]  Its flexibility, user-friendly, wide variety of widgets and tools makes it an alternative tool of social media that can be incorporated in education.  Plus, you are able to manage it your own way. The only problem maybe that you have to pay membership fee monthly for selected plan. I wonder if there is website that offer things like Ning but free.  2.  StudyCurve.com  This is a great site that aims to connect students with experts to answer questions and to form virtual study groups. I am not sure if the website is still working or not. I tried searching for an active link but I coundnt find. Anyway, I knew that one of my friend used this site before. The expert gave insightful and clear answer to the question she was asking. Study Curve also allows her to communicate with people with similar interests from all different schools and areas of knowledge. I think the site make the most use of social network to promote learning and profound knowledge in each study field. |  |
| Pim,  Thanks for sharing.  As for the StudyCurve, is there a way for you to find out if this site is active?  Is it free for users and what kind of platform does it have? |  |
| Monica,  I had trouble loading the Study Curve page, so my guess is that the website is currently not active. From what I understand, I believe its free for everyone. All you have to do is create a username for the website. |  |
| Thank you Richard for answering that for me.  Monica, I have never used StudyCurve myself and I could not find way to link either. I'm sorry, I don't really know much about it. |  |
| I really hopr the Web StudyCurve could work, I like the web site that I could find the people who have the same interests with me.  Especially for the teachers, it is really a good method for us to get information about what is going on in other school and communicate with each other about how to solve different kinds of problems that happened in the classroom teaching. |  |
| For this question, I decided to choose one social network website from the list and choose one off the list. Two social networks that could be and are being used in an education setting are Study Curve and Twitter. Study Curve is a free network with a focus on tutoring students and assisting in homework. It’s primarily focus is education. This social network website utilizes tools to connect students with experts in a variety of fields and to form study groups online. As a student I would find this website extremely helpful. Since it’s an educational tool online, it’s very efficient and effective for students because it’s easily accessible. The other social network website is Twitter. This might come off as a surprise since almost everyone is on this current social media frenzy. I’ve had multiple courses use Twitter as a source of discussion, participation, etc… It’s an easy way to raise questions, report articles, and respond to other students in the course; just like blackboard. I find it more effective, since I frequently check Twitter ; as I’m sure many other people would agree as well. |  |
| I never thought of twitter but you are right with right norms of communication in place this could be a valuable resource for older students. |  |
| Two sites that I think would be very useful in the classroom are Ning and Imbee. I like the idea that you can create your own safe social networking websites. They provide with a way to make a monitored way to incorporate social networks into your classroom. I like how they are both free. As teachers, we are always looking for things that are free that we can use in the classroom and are things that our students will enjoy as well. These two websites seem like great ways to have our students communicate in a safe environment. At the same time though, I could see how some students would be hesitant to use these websites. They might be so used to the real thing that they would get that it is an educational version of that. However, if it is prepped enough by the teacher, then it can be successful and perhaps even fun for students to use both in and out of school. Therefore, this article is a great resource for social networking websites that can be used in the classroom. As teachers, we should try and incorporate these into our teaching. |  |
| Yeah, free website is good choice for classroom teaching and communication.  It is also a truth that if some Websites are used for teaching, students would be kind of serious about these website, and even be resistent to them. But we should try and make them easier for students to receive. |  |
| Monica,  Two such websites that I found very interesting in the realm of education are Ning and Storify. Ning gives you the ability to creat your own social networking community and gives you the chance to play creator. You can shape the community and the flexible format of the tool gives it many different uses that teachers can most definitely utilize in the classroom.  Storify as another website which allows for great user flexibility in which they can gather their own information and media and share it with others once it is published. I believe letting students create their own works goes far in terms of students achieving mastery over their own education. |  |
| It's really useful to make students create new works with what they have learned from class. By this way, students become more familar wtih what has been taught and the transfer of knowledge is realized. |  |
| Louis and Xiaoxin,  Creativity is key and I like that storify allows for this.  I really want to delve into this at greater lengths.  Sounds like the students would find this neat as well! |  |
| Lois,  Thanks for sharing a few websites.  It seems that storify received some talk this time around from our classmates.  I will definitely have to check that one out at greater lengths.  I like flexibility and that it has a creative component. |  |
| Monica,  From the list I prefer Ning. Because it's enough flexible and I have  authority to create my own social network community, as a word "owner". Also, Ning is friendly and I very like this website's page design. Additionally, I have to say something about Facebook eventhough it is not on the list. I have experience of interactive learning on Facebook when I study English language in ALI of NYU. The instructor of speaking and grammar course required each student follow her Facebook account and invited everyone into class group. In the group page, she post assignments, announcements and discussion topics. Also, group members can post their ideas, interesing things in their life and ask questions they have. |  |
| Siyuan,  I am glad you shared your experiences with Facebook and how you used it.  It's nice to hear about other perspectives and the different age groups that we teach or the age in which we are learning new things.  I haven't heard much about FB as a classroom link but understand that it's useful because it's right there and you don't have to go into yet another programs to access it.  I also use it for my People to People travel groups. |  |
| Ning is a good website for those who want to be a "creator" for a community and social networks with their own visual design and choices of features. And it can be associated with other online services such as FB and Twitte. It is good place to found others that share the same interest with you and learn from each other.  Some links in the article do not work and you cannot find the website even you type the keyword in the search bar on Google.  I found Edmodo very interesting.From the demo provided on the homepage, it seems that Edmodo and Blackboard have lots of similarities in terms of functions. Both are used as tools for class management. And Edmodo, in my view, is more appealing to kids perhaps because it is colorful and involves some features like Badges to motivate students participation! |  |
| I am finding that I like Edmodo because it's safe and colorful, but it's very much like facebook and students try to treat it as such so it's a conversation we have had over time about conversations there and what the purpose of Edmodo for us is!  I am glad you noticed they have a demo as well.  I have also heard about Ning quite often this past week and need to research it myself to see what it offers.  Thanks for letter us know the links do not work.  I will try to remember to let our professors know! |  |
| When thinking about professional conduct on Social Networking Sites, what responsibilities might educators have in the content they post during the hours outside of the classroom? |  |
| I think the most important one is to be responsible for what you are going to say or to do. You are a teacher, what yousay and what you do means a ot to the students. You also work as a model for students, if you do something bad, the students would think that the teachers also do this and thus I can do this.  Secondly, we have to be honest. If we tell lies, no matter they are good or bad, we will stain the figure of ourselves and make student think that teachers are unbelivable. In this case, your teaching career would be ruined by yourself. What's more, your case would also has bad influence on the school you teach.  Thirdly, we have to make sure what we talk about would not hurt the students' privacy or feelings. When I was in college, one teacher of mine published a note online to critisize a student's mistake, and made all other students would not like to be friends with her. She was isolated and always felt alone. Finally, she has to go to doctor to get treated. Speaking something bad of students or other people would cause bad affects. |  |
| What we say towards others is equally important because we can't take what has been sent over the web back, so yes, all of us needs to take into consideration how our words will harm others.  So, to think before we send.  You and I know that and in one of the articles there was much talk of there being a fine line that teachers were drawing in the sand, how might we connect with those that don't have the common sense to create and create some common boundaries?  And, just as important, how might we teach our students those same boundaries? |  |
| I asked a few questions in relation to Xiaoxin's post, but open all of my questions up to the entire group, so feel free to answer other questions as they come up, and please ask any questions of the group as well. |  |
| Yeah, Monica.  You got a very critical point in social net working. We teachers would like to be responsible and honest to our students even online, but sometimes it is hard for us to control what the students or our friednds' thinking and action.  We teachers have to think  carefully about what to  write on the social networking website, in order not to cause so many confusion or something bad. What's more, we have to have an eye on the students' thinking and try our best to understand students' emotional and physical development, by which way, it is easier for us to handle what to express. Furthermore, we should set some requirements for the forum and warn the students not to put something out of the boundaries. |  |
| Monica, I think that for those who just don't get it, it might be useful to share some horror stories, like the ones we read in the weekly materials. Hopefully this would help drive the point home for students and teachers alike |  |
| Yes, absolutely.  Our private is public in a sense and I think it goes beyond the things we post, but some unfortunate stories are what others have posted, such as You Tube Videos. Counter examples are very powerful in teaching. I wonder if that might be a useful collaborative activity....T-Chart with Good Examples and Counter Examples? |  |
| Xiaoxin- I am happy that you brought up the fact that as teachers we are seen as role models to the students.  Therefore, if we are promoting inappropriate acts or situations then our students could have the chance of seeing these and thinking that it is ok.  I used to coach high school cheerleading and I would never be friends with my cheerleaders, but they would sometimes be able to access my account because they were friends with some of the cheerleaders that graduated.  Also, being that I coached at the same school that I went to school at, I was already friends with many students.  It is at that time that you have to decide whether or not something is inappropriate and if the conversation was brought up, how you would handle it.  Sometimes these conversations are worth having because they are lessons and teachable moments (with the right group of students). |  |
| Hi, Katie.  You have raised a very important situation here, especially for the new teacher.  As new teachers, it is very hard for us to keep a good distance with the students. We don't have so much teaching experience, and thus we need to learn from the experienced teachers. We respect them and learn from them.  But for the students, if you get too closer with them, you would lose the respect as a teacher; if too far to them, they would not listen to you. Tha's really hard to control. |  |
| Katie, I'm glad you brought up the issue with sports and athletics. Athletes and coaches are on Social Media, just like everyone else. For the most part, they have the most following on these Social Media websites since they are role models and superstars. You got to watch what you say as a coach or an athlete, because many people will see it. Some solutions include getting rid of Social Media in general, making separate accounts (private and professional), or taking a break on Social Media during the season. The most simple solution is to be responsible; don't associate with your students or players, and to double check what you post on the internet. |  |
| Richard- I agree with you.  I def. never become friends with my current athletes until they are out of high school because they just makes everything easier! |  |
| Yeah, Richard  You have provided some critical ways to avoid to make mistakes for teachers. |  |
| I believe educators have a responsibility to try to keep their private sites private, but also realize that people might see what they post anyway. It's not enough to make your Facebook profile unsearchable and then write posts about your students. You never know when someone will find a way to access this material.  I often notice my colleagues posting about their students (good and bad) on Facebook. I think that we should try to avoid even positive comments about our students or colleagues, as sharing this information could be considered a violation of privacy. |  |
| It is difficult to keep private sites private and you are correct in speaking about someone finding a way to access this material possibly one day.  I am thinking this falls under the umbrella of character.  How do we behave when no one is looking?  Or, we think no one is looking?  I have seen similar posts about students, school days, and even things happening in schools that should not be shared.  Is there anyone in the group that has heard of any talk in schools about our responsibilities to teach students proper social network ediquette or teaching teachers what's appropriate (and I am not saying rules to live by but creating a culture of norms for communicating online...anywhere)  Or is this a conversation that those in education haven't quite gotten to? |  |
| Yeah, as teachers we could not do that. If we write down everything online and make everyone look at it, it make people think that the teacher is so stupid and talk too much. Every student or teacher has his or her privicy, what if you step into the black area that some one don't want to remind.  What if you are something that is OK to you and your students, but angry their parents. We have different levels of sense to the same thing. So, be careful with what we say and what we do shoule always be kept in mind. |  |
| Yeah, as teachers we could not do that. If we write down everything online and make everyone look at it, it make people think that the teacher is so stupid and talk too much. Every student or teacher has his or her privicy, what if you step into the black area that some one don't want to remind.  What if you are something that is OK to you and your students, but angry their parents. We have different levels of sense to the same thing. So, be careful with what we say and what we do shoule always be kept in mind. |  |
| I agree with what Lily has written, keep private space private. Certainly, every person should take responlity of what she/he said, I think it is the prerequisite for freedom of speech. In regard to educators, people are used to take them as models, would pay more attention to their behaviors.  Social Networking Site users can show every aspects they want to other persons through their page, which means these users have been watched by hundrends of people, even more. In my opinion, posts on SNS fequently are misunderstood as people are used to scan and skim when they read articals on Internet(a paper I read before said it is a "F" shape).  As a result, maybe you just complain about the hard work of the begining of the new semester, it might turned out to be that "hard work in school are not only killing students but also teachers". To avoid this, educators and also officials, police, doctors should be carefull of what they have post especially the content are related theri profession, because in this situation, others will first see you as the educator, official, police or doctor, second see you as a common person. |  |
| Jiaming,  Could you tell me more about the "F" shape about posts on SNS? What does it stand for? Thanks. (\*^\_\_^\*) |  |
| Sorry, I didn't find the source, maybe I should take notes at that time. So, now what I explain is based on my memory.  The F shape means when a person reads an article on SNS, the person probably read the first several lines(top horizontal line of "F"), then read titles before each paragraph (if it has), or the first several words(the vertical line of "F"), if some words or titles seems interesting, the person will stop to read this paraghaph(the middle horizontal line of "F"), or he/she might just colse the webpage.  The result is that he/she does not read the whole passage, but he/she will think they have known what the passges is about. Most times, it turns out to be misunderstanding. |  |
| Jiaming,  Thanks for your explanation.   I think instructors should take this " F" shape phenomenon into account when using SNS to support teaching. It makes wonder if it can only be applied to social media or it can be used to any type of reading experience online? |  |
| Jiaming, thanks for the explanation of "F" shape.  I think many people read like this not only on social network but also in other website. Skim, scanning through text should be done carefully. |  |
| I think that it is very important for teachers to think about what is out on the Internet about them.  This includes knowing their online presence and how they are regarded on social networking sites.  Teachers need to be aware that even if they have limitations placed on their private pages, some information can always be leaked through.  I think that it is a good rule of thumb to always question whether or not you would be alright if this post or picture were to become accessible to anyone outside of your group of friends.  If there is any hesistation, then it should not be posted.  One way to ensure that all teachers understand professional conduct on social networking sites is to provide them with professional development on it.  If a school provides professional development on using private social networking sites, then teachers will know the stance that the school district has on posting.  Teachers can also have a better understanding of their personal, professional, and societal responsibilities connected to online web presence.  It is always important to think before you act. |  |
| Just like any profession, teacher's shouldn't repeat or publish things out into the public that have to do with your job. My best friend is a nurse and was telling me that they are not allowed to say anything about their patients. While you may think the person you are telling is trusted or a close friend, you never know who they may know.  People need to be careful about what they post on social networking sites and never post anything that you may regret certain people seeing or that could jepordize your job. Don't underestimate your students. They are quite tech savy and will probably search for you. You do not want anything bad out there they could get ahold of. Make sure if you are on facebook that you set your profile to private and make it so people can't search for you. ..or just not have a facebook at all. It can consume a lot of your time. During student teaching I've had students ask if they could friend request me and even add them on xbox. I know they were trying to be sweet but you cannot say yes to that. You can't cross the line of professionalism.  So I agree with Katie, that teachers/adults also have to be taught on how to be careful on the internet and understand professional conduct on social networking sites. |  |
| Good point Katie....not just for social networks but to know "our online presense", which extends to all areas of the internet. |  |
| I really wish I could fix that mis spelled word with a quick edit! |  |
| Yeah, good idea.  If the school could set up an apartment to keep an eye on this situation , it would be better.  But I still think this would also cause coms problems. Do students and teacher agree with this solution? Some teachers or students might feel spied by the school. Or maybe someone think the post they set online is safe to everyone, but the staff in the organization don't think so. As we all know,the staff and the students always have different opinions on the same topic. |  |
| Presenting yourself in social network is like having an elevator conversation.  Imagine that you meet someone important that you want to have a conversation with in the elevator.  Everything will happen in a fast pace. You will only have 2-3 minutes or even less to present yourself, unless the building has more than 50 floors. lol  Anyway, everything that you said is going to be count as who you are because it is what you said. The person whom you talk with will judge you from first impression he/she get from the conversation. He/She will not wait until he/she get to know who you really are and then judge from what you said.  Likewise, this is what happen in social network.  What you post, what you comment, your pictures.....they all represent who you are. People who are friends in social network do not neccessarily know each other well. Therefore, eventhough some social networking seems private group but it doesnt necessarily private in the sense that people in that group are close. They might form a private group because they are interested in the same thing/same field of study.  As an educator, it is very important to keep yourself behave consistently whether you are in the acadimic environment or in your personal life.  You are given creditability, being look up to, being seen as a teacher of their kids, representing your school/subject area that you are working on.  And what you have done may affect people's believe and behavior in the society. I've got a political science professor who post on his facebook the night before national election that he want people to not approve this election by tearing the vote paper [this is against the law]. As a result, a lot of people tore vote papers were put into jail. He was in jail too but he was able to defend himself because of his political belief. He said that he's not responsible for them doing that because it's their decision to follow him. In this context, I think he should not have post that in the first place. |  |
| Haha Pim I love your elevator analogy! And that's crazy about the professor. He should have been careful of what he posts and knew the possible of effects of it. I do agree he shoudn't have posted it at all. It shows how what you post can not only effect yourself but others around you as well. |  |
| Pim,  Your story of that professor is ponderable.   From the result that lots of people tore vote papers, I think the professor can be regarded as the opinion leader in his community. As human beings, he has the freedom of speech. However, as the opinion leader, what he said undoubtedly influences other people to some extent. So, does it mean those influential figures should be burdened more responsibilities than others? About one month ago, New China Internet rules came into effect. It says that if you post something untrue on Weibo (a China’s Twitter equivalent ), that is reposted more than 500 times or reviewed at least 5000 times, you will be put in jail. The sentence can be 3 years. We all know that the initial purpose is good, to prevent the spread of false information. But with so many rumors that are hard to be recognized on Internet, those Big V -those whose identities have been verified by Sina -on Weibo are more likely to break the rule. Sometimes they might forward a Weibo with goodwill, for instance, a Weibo that calls on helping a kidnapped child, and his followers repost it,however find it is more than a rumor at last. You know if someone else, who is as ordinary as you and me, post the same thing, it will end up with “just being a twitter”.   Also,here comes another question: is it necessary for the opinion leader to hold a mild, or even neutral position to some sensitive and controversial issues. A famous actress expressed her dislike about homos on Weibo several years ago. It ignited stormy debate on this topic. |  |
| I understand what you are saying. We definitely have these debatable issues in society at large (the professor and weibo fit in here), whether they are by a single individual or political groups.  What's right?  Who's right?  Yes, very debatable.  In the last few days here in class we have heard (or read) many thoughts about the responsibilities educators must take into consideration with their "internet presence".  Your question was about whether or not an opinion leader should hold a neutral or mild position on sensitive or controversial topics?  What I am wondering is, "What might be some of your thoughts, in relation to those in educational positions that have access to or thoughts about sensitive or controversial topics?" |  |
| I understand what you are saying. We definitely have these debatable issues in society at large (the professor and weibo fit in here), whether they are by a single individual or political groups.  What's right?  Who's right?  Yes, very debatable.  In the last few days here in class we have heard (or read) many thoughts about the responsibilities educators must take into consideration with their "internet presence".  Your question was about whether or not an opinion leader should hold a neutral or mild position on sensitive or controversial topics?  What I am wondering is, "What might be some of your thoughts, in relation to those in educational positions that have access to or thoughts about sensitive or controversial topics?" |  |
| I really think that if we teachers look at some posts that are sensitive, we should avoid to express our opinions on them. Because whatever we expressed about that opinion, there is a big chance for us to get sinked into a bad situation. |  |
| I know I am kind of off-topic. But I just can stop my wandering thought after I read Pim's story.lol  In fact at first I assumed teachers can be regarded as the opinion leader in the field he/she teaches. Students, especially kids in Asia tend to believe whatever the teacher says. So it is important to be cautious of content you delivery and assist them to develop critical thinking skills. Then how about in a college-level course? Is it good for a teacher to talk about his idea, which may be not widely accepted, on a controversial topic (of course it is relevant to the learning content) to students who have already developed independent thinking skills somewhat? |  |
| Mengying...we do make an impression by our position and age difference, so being cautious in delivery of content.  You raised a very good question and I am wondering if one (or more) of our higher level educators could share their thoughts about college level courses and topics of discussion? |  |
| Controversial topics in the society are often dicussed in academic arena[mostly in university/college level] to some certain extent, not that extreme. Some said that academic environment is a place that really allow freedom of speech and real discussion to grow so people will gain more insight about certain topics. For example, initiating talks about negative feeling or facts towards Thai monarchy is forbidden in public. You can be thrown into jail because of that if you talk in public. However, university classroom is a safe environment to really discuss to find out what really has happenned and to brainstorming about any related idea/questions students come up with. There's no right or wrong but you have to support your stand point and gather reliable information to make strong evidences. So, I think controversial topics discussion can be done in higher educational level because students have critical thinking skills and have sufficient knowledge to analyze and verify reliable sources. It's true that students in some region like Asia are incline to have less critical thinking skills because the culture of learning. However, they need to learn to think and stand for themselves, responsible for their own thoughts as they grew up. So, why don't develop the skills now. |  |
| Mengying, just a quick cultural note on your post. You may not be aware that the term "homos" could be considered offensive. For whatever reason, "homosexuals" is an acceptable word, but the abbreviation "homos" is considered an insult. I'm not really sure how this difference developed, but I thought you would want to know about it. |  |
| Lily,  Oh! Thanks for pointing out this! I really didn't know that! |  |
| Lily,  Thanks for noticing that and sharing your thoughts....helps all of us understand in this virtual world.  I just need to add that you are amazing with sharing your thoughts, insights, and asking questions about this weeks topic as well as the topics before now.  It makes for a more interesting class when we can have interactions, rather than posting an answer here to checking off a piece of homework.  Thanks for all of your input this week! |  |
| Another add.....when I said you are amazing with sharing your thoughts, insights, and asking questions ----  I meant it as a compliment to the whole class!  Thank you for your interactions! |  |
| I didnt realize that either. Thank you Lily. |  |
| The fundamental big concern is about netiquette. Teachers on SNS should first be a good netizen, recognizing that the Internet is an extension of the real world.  Merely “applying the same standards and values online as we are accustomed to applying in the rest of our lives” is not enough. You should always be more cautious in this virtual world because information just spread so fast. It allows no way to “take back” what you said that can be defined as slander or the photos you uploaded is inappropriate. Even if you delete it before things go worse, the influence continues. And also remember the Six Degrees of Separation theory, which maximize its power on Internet through a friend-to-friend chain.    Then, in the process of mutual  communication process online, the instructor should also notice his audience, that is to say, the recognition of the identity as a teacher. A teacher should pay special attention to issues that are related to children and teenager and always be sensitive to contents that contain inappropriate or misleading information because sometimes such kind of information is not apparent to be found; it is hidden between the lines. |  |
| Mengying, you are right.  We should be careful about these situations. The sensitive points of people are different and some words OK to us don't mean the same to others. |  |
| What you should say or shouldn’t say on Social Media has been an ongoing debate for years now; in particular in the sports world. Some sport organizations completely forbid the use of Social Media during their season, to avoid any potential issues. In Education as a professional educator, it might be even more important to monitor what you say. As an educator, you are responsible for teaching and molding students; who in some cases look up to you as a role model. Posting inappropriate things on Social Media will extremely reflect you in a very negative way; to your students, peers, and higher personnel. If you think that this could be an issue, the two things to do would be to get off Social Media completely, or create two separate accounts (one for professional use and one for private use for your social life). |  |
| Richard...yes posting inappropriate things could have negative affects as we read in the article and heard stories from others here in class.   So,are you thinking if you have two separate networks then you don't have to ever have to worry about what is on the private passing into mainstream internet someway or somehow?  Or do you have some other thoughts about this?  I am just trying to understand. |  |
| Richard I never realized that about some sports organizations forbid social networking and yes posting inappropriate things could have negative affects as we read in the article and heard stories from others here in class.   So, are you thinking if you have two separate networks then you don't have to ever have to worry about what is on the private passing into mainstream internet someway or somehow?  Or do you have some other thoughts about this?  I am just trying to understand. |  |
| I also didn't know this. Why? We could read a lot about the articles related to them, but they could not use the social networking website to express their ideas and talk about their own things. Is there any special reason for that? |  |
| I like that you brought up the point that many sports organizations completely ban the use of social networking. They do not allow their players to have such sites. It makes you wonder what it would be like if schools did that for their teachers too. I have heard of players being fined, sent to counseling, and in a great deal of trouble based on what they might post. What would happen if that happenend to teachers too? It really makes you think about what it would be like if companies banned their employees from using use social media. However, I have heard of companies advising their employees to not use them and some have even been fired for what they have posted. It is these reasons and more that really make you think and question if that post or that picture is really worth your career. |  |
| Banning the use is always one approach that can be taken by an organization to assure something stupid will not tarnish the reputation of the organization. However, I believe that one great thing about social media is that it is really a reflection on the individual. In this sense, social media can be used to weed out the bad. I know these social media checks are of great popularity in background checks, but what can be really important is how they are used once the employee is hired. I heard a story of a group of employees who at a corporate dinner decided to leave  the dining area and go to the bar and take pictures which were uploaded to social media. Within 3 weeks all the employees involved were fired, however not a one was told it was due to those pictures. |  |
| I cannot believe how this kinds of thing happens. That's crazy. These pictures would have bad influence on the students. What if the students go to the bars and blended by teachers, while students just say back "why could you  go to the bar with other teache, but we could not". |  |
| I think this is a very important point to always remember. Our students know just as much as we do about the internet and they can find us just as easily. That is why as a teacher, it is essential to remember that anything you post can be seen by not only your students, but your colleagues, and your administrators as well. Many school districts will even "google" you before your interview to see what they can find out about you through your social networking. They can see what you post, what you do, and what you may have done in the past. This can discourage many from hiring you. However, not only might these sites be probable in your job search, but you need to be smart when you have a job as well. You have to watch what you post and who you friend and follow. Your students and colleagues will most likely find you and ask to be your friend or follower. It is your responsibilty to be a responsible poster and tweeter. As a teacher, you should still and still are able to have the ability to have Facebooks, Twitters, Insatgrams, and Vines, you just need to be responsible and remember to think before you post becasue you never know who might see it. |  |
| I believe that it is incredibly important for educators to take total responsibility of their use of social networking and to be very cautious in what they decide to make public. The internet is for sharing information, and no matter how private you may believe your information on the internet may be, it always can be accessed. Your reputation as an educator can be badly mishaped by one misstep, and for that to occur over something as silly as social media is rediculous. Losing the trust of the student is all but crippling to a teacher, and losing that authority over your students makes the educator almost worthless to the school. I think it requires the utmost attention. |  |
| I definately agree with you. Reputation is both important for a teacher or a school.  Be careful with what we say and what we do is very necessary. |  |
| Based on this weeks readings and what you know about social networking, should educators use or not use social networking in classroom settings?  Please justify your answers. |  |
| In my opinion, this kind of technology should be used in classrooms, but teachers have to pay more attention to the whole process, in case something unhappy happens.  We sould use the advantages social networking brings to us, to make studens more interested in learning, make students motivated to learn all by themselves and build up their own way of learning. These are all teachers should do.  At the same time, we have to keep an eye on what is going on in the classroom when we introduce the technology into classroom. We have to make sure things go well and safely. |  |
| I think we need to understand our 21st century learners and what strikes them as interesting and captivating.  I agree we need to teach the process of how this might look.  What are some possible steps in this process, and is there a way to make the ambiguous visual so students understand what the boundaries are? |  |
| I have to admit that using new technologies in the classroom is harder than merely take the older ones, with which we have more experience about how to handle the situcation.  For the new ones, we have to keep an eye on it, search the problems that has been met by teachres from other regions even other countries and try to set requirements for them.  I think we could merely use some part of the new technologies which is safe and won't cause so many problems. For example, we could use the forum on some website and make students talk merely in this area or make students communicate with teachers or classmates on the official forum of the school. By this way, it is easier for teachers and school handle the whole process. |  |
| Monica, I like your follow-up question on "what are some possible stepms in this process". We need to think about "how" to use a particular technology when talking about "whether or not" to use it. |  |
| Jing, yes, I have the same opinion as you.  For us it is the "how" to use certain technology that is important. I wonder if the is the hump we are trying to get over is whether or not because some are fearful that it is not safe.  So, we get stuck in a sort of limbo, two sides debating.  I am glad you liked my follow up question, do you have some thoughts about how to implement social networks, the steps in the process? |  |
| When it comes to "how" questions, we have think of "why" questions, and give the final answer. It is during this process, we think, analyze and express our ideas. This ia a way of learning. I like it. |  |
| Monica- I am so happy that you addressed 21st century learners. Teachers need to take into consideration that students are not learning information the same way that we learned it or older generations have learned it.  Therefore, we need to adjust our teaching strategies so that students are engaged and motivated.  Students are constantly using technology on a day to day basis, therefore teachers need to include these technologies into the delivery of content.  The framework for 21st century learning provides educators with the necessary skills that students will need in order to succeed in society.  These skills incorporate life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, and information, media, and technology skills.  By blending these skills together, we create a new set of student outcomes that are all based around our societal changes, especially with regards to technology. |  |
| Yes Katie, and  I would like to share this quote by John Dewey, "If we teach todays students as we taught yesterdays, we rob them of tomorrow."  We want to be proactive in our thinking with the end in mind.  To do so we have to take into consideration the skills and strategies the younger generation will need in order to be successful. |  |
| Yeah, just I have talked with my group members in another class. We should use technologies to improve our way of teaching,  for that with these new learning and teaching methods, students cuold learn better and teacher could get more resources to make students get a better understanding. The technologies facilitate both the teachers' ability and the students' study, we should use them. |  |
| Great quote Monica!  Much of my research and writing has been on teachers needing to be active and continuous learners with technology because it is ever-changing.  This def. needs to be addressed in pre-service classes as well. |  |
| Hi Katie,  I like that you have mentioned "life and career skills, learning and innovation skills, and information, media, and technology skills. skills" in student learning. There are lots of example that show students who learn well in school are not necessarily successful in life. They need other skills to incorporate their learning and they need to learn how to integrate their knowledge in their real life situation. As teachers, our success is when we see students learned and grow beautifully with the best utilise of what they have learned. |  |
| I think one key element to your talk is the need to keep an eye on thechnology in the classroom at all times. I think with the advancement of technologies which make social networking possible, also make the monitoring of the classroom possible so we can combat this inapproriate behavior through equally adaquate moderating devices and technologies. |  |
| Yeah, and maybe for some social networkings, we should pay more attention to the disadvantages. New technologies really caused both teachers and schools more attention science they came out. But they could contribute to the teaching and learning system, and we could use them, just for more energy to keep an eye on them |  |
| I believe that teachers should be allowed to use social networking in classroom settings, but these networks need to be carefully selected and monitored. Some social networks, such as Facebook and MySpace, are too personal for classroom use, in my opinion. However, it seems that sites like Edmoto and Ning, which are specifically designed for educational use, are less "high-risk." Of course, we also need to provide training to students and teachers about appropriate online behavior in order to utilize such sites. |  |
| There are some social networks that are more appropriate than others for the classroom settings, I agree with you.  Once there is a selection of social networks that would work, what might the training look like for students?  How about the teachers?  I am wondering what activities might we implement that teachers and students could collaborate around in order to come up with appropriate online behavior? |  |
| I agree with you Lily. It may sounds more convenient to use Facebook and MySpace because students can use their existing account to access and participate class work but they might be distracted by games and commenting on their friends'personal life which are obviously off topic from what they should focus in school. Thus, particular social network made for school/academic use would be more appropriate to use in this case. |  |
| In my opinion, the technologies bring us more advantages than disadvantages, and that's why now we all use websites, computers and smart phones. We are better serviced by these different technologies, and it is in this way the world step forward.  When we use our phones, we also meet with different kinds of problems, such as someone you don't know send you the messages and ask for money or to advertise their products. These really bring us some trouble, but more advantages are there, such as we can communicate with our friends, parents at any time and anywhere. That's why almost everyone get a phone. |  |
| I agree Lily. Educators must utilize the less "high risk" Social Media websites as a source for education. Facebook like you mentioned, would not be acceptable. The examples in the document posted in this week's materials are all appropriate sources; as well as Twitter. You brought up training, which is interesting. Yes, many educators already know how to use the internet and Social Media sources; but a crash course or seminar in utilizing Social Media as an educational tool might come to be beneficial in education for educators. |  |
| After reading this week's articles, I have seen why social networking could be a benefit if used in the classroom.  Social networking provides an online avenue for students to collaborate.  It is also a way for all students to participate without the fear of speaking out in front of a classroom of people.  If social networking is going to be utilized in the classroom, then certain precautions need to be taken to ensure that all participants are being guarded.  Certain sites have these precautions built in.  Ning is an educational online social networking site that offers teachers to be in charge of creating and administering a private social network.  Ning provides users an ability to control membership, remove or edit content, control network features, create easy sign up, create ad-free pages, and report all network activity.  If these types of social networking sites are used in schools, I would see them as beneficial. |  |
| I believe that teachers should use social networking in class, however they need to carefully select what kinds of sites they use. I would not use Facebook for many reasons, one being that students could easily just sign into their facebook and get easily distracted and way off track. Sites like netsmartz.org can be very beneficial and teach learners about crucial rules and guidelines for using the internet. Other sites, along with social bookmarking, gives teachers the option to select a certain level of privacy.  It can be a tricky subject to deal with, but I believe if you do enough research and find the right kind of site it can be quite beneficial for the classroom. |  |
| Tricky for us to define and also society as a large.  Some think in order to move forward we can select user friendly sites that have an educational component and is purposeful and others think social networking sites may not belong in the classroom.  It's debatable for sure. |  |
| "It is also a way for all students to participate without the fear of speaking out in front of a classroom of people."  I really agree with this point.  A reluctant student might just open up when the collaboration looks a little different as in the case of social networking. |  |
| When I began teaching, we had to sit through a number of workshops including one about social networking and the pitfalls we might encounter with it. Many of the readings from this week reminded of the constant vigilance and caution that teachers need to exercise on a daily basis. It is very easy for teachers and students both to put themselves in very compromising situations that would jeopardize careers and friendships. Despite this, I'm not 100% ready to just discount the use of social networking in class. Like all things, a little caution and forethought goes a long way. I use Facebook very effectively as a way to promote one of my clubs to the students and parents and I actively invite them to join. So in a way the environment self regulates. In the classroom, collaboration is a huge goal, and social networking tools can make good collaboration work well. Sites like Facebook can be tricky because they tend to be unregulated by design, but there are lots of great social networking tools, many of which are in this week's articles. I think social networking does have a place in the classroom, and can provide myriad advantages to the teacher and the student. |  |
| Aaron, out of curiosity, are you also "friends" with your real-life friends and family on Facebook, or did you create your account strictly for educational use? |  |
| I actually have 2 FM accounts.  One is my personal profile that I do sometimes friend former (ALWAYS former) students with.  The other is a page I made specifically for my club.  Infact, I appoint a student the role of "webmaster" for the year and he/she will have admin rights to post to and manage the page.  It is really a lot of fin and really instills a sense of responsibility and ownership.  NEVER friend your students and/or their parents on your personal account.  No good can come of it.  It is always better just to make a new, dedicated profile for your classroom activity.  It can be a very nice way to foster a sense of classroom community. |  |
| Edit: I actually have 2 FB accounts. |  |
| That sounds like a good idea. |  |
| So far, I don't think we need to use social networking in classroom, I mean, traditional, physical classroom. I think social networking are used to connect people. But, if we, teacher and students are already in one room, what do we need social networking to do, how can SNS improve or assist class activity. Now I have no idea.  But, if we look the bigger picture, when students go back home, maybe teacher can use SNS to motivate them by posing some eye-catching materials, cartoons or interesting weblinks. However, I doubt whether students would like it, maybe it depends on how teacher use it.  For online courses, I think the course website such as BB is enough, as it designed for learning, and here are less distraction.  In my opinion, people use SNS for fun. Unless educators have a clear purpose and well-designed plan, or I don't think using general SNS in classroom settings is a good idea. Sometimes, certain technology may work well for informal learning, but it does not equal that it will work as same well as for formal learning. |  |
| Jiaming, you bring up an important point, having a clear purpose for what we are teaching in the classroom whether in the traditional setting of only the classroom or adding in technology.  That is the power of what we do.  It's not the materials or what we are doing but why are we teaching what we are teaching.  Thanks for sharing! |  |
| Aaron, I think that is such a great idea promoting your club on facebook! I feel like different departments could even have pages so they can update everyone on events going on, such as an art show or science fair. My art ed professor from undergrad actually made a page so alumni can always check it out and see what's still going on in the program and if there's anything we can do to come back and volunteer, or any art shows going on we can come see.  Also, as Lily asked I'm curious to if you use your actual personal facebook page to facilitate this or do you create a new separate one. If it was me I would create a separate one. |  |
| Audrey - the only downside is the fact that your idea is now public.  I've had a few problems where people (other clubs, other teachers, students) have ripped off my ideas and even some of my documents.  It is a good way to communicate though. |  |
| Aaron - It is an important problem about copyright on Internet. On the SNS I used in China, I always see some popular writers complained that their articles has been stealed by other people or even magazine editors. That is really frustrating for people who like to share their ideas with other people.  And I think this topic maybe a good one we can use in class to develop their thought about copyright on Internet. |  |
| I just remember an interesting example from a famous TV Show: Grey's Anatomy. Dr. Baily, a general surgeon, uses twitter to make her surgery on live (other resident text for her), sharing what she does during the operation with residents all over US. These residents can ask her questions, make suggestions and so on. When I watched this episode, I thought that is the right way of using SNS for teaching. Cool |  |
| I agree with you Jiaming. For most people, SNS is a place for fun and relaxation. Even with guidance and well-designed plan, students still need extra time to get used to posting something that is academic-related on Twitter or FB. A teacher in my undergraduate once asked us to comment on her posts( about the course  she taught)on Weibo( the China's Twitter). We didn't like it partly because none of us thought Weibo a good place to study. |  |
| The success of integrating social networking to classroom settings doesn't depend on only the technology itself.  Other factors should be taken into consideration as well.  How you use ,present the content through the social network, age and maturity of the students, how the students are utilizing it, are they/their posts really theirs or it was someone else's...these are also important factors.  So, social networking in classroom settings should be fine as long as others factors are concerned.  Applying social networking in classroom settings would be beneficial to teachers and students.  1. Social networking is a hot topic among wide range of internet users. New things usually attracted people to learn more about. So. I think that this is a good technique to keep students interested and more engaged.  2. Nowadays, technologies have been incorporate more and more with traditional classroom. It's good for them to update and learn more on how technology can help them learn.  3. Social networking allows students to interact with people from all over the world who are having the same interest to share their knowledge/ researches. |  |
| I think social networking can be used as the supplement of the classroom teaching and the key point lies in instructional design. We are all informal learners on SNS in a sense and it is teachers’ responsibility to transform this informal learning to formal learning. Also, features of a particular SNS should be taken into account. For example, Twitter is a good platform for sharing short poetry and course content summary while FB is helpful in creating a collaborative learning environment. Perhaps one of the biggest challenges that an instructor may encounter is how to motivate student and keep them focused on the topic because there are so many distractions that appeal strongly to students on SNS. |  |
| I like that you brought up the point about instructional design. I also think that this is the key to using it in the classroom and using it with success. Not only is it our job as educators to try and incorporate social media into the classroom, but was also need to do it in a way that it will work in our classroom. There should always be a purpose. We should not just have our students use it without any real reason. Instead, we need to set it up so there is a pupose and students see why it is being used in the classroom. If this is done, then students will most likely be set up for success. |  |
| I like the words " real reason" you have referred to. That's the focus we use technologies to teach, and that's also why now the word "Technology" is so popular both in the area of engeering and science teaching. |  |
| Students and kids in today’s world live in the Social Media world. Connecting education and the internet (social media in particular) serves as a huge beneficial tool in grasping the student’s attention and effectively educating them. I’m strongly for having educators using social networking in classroom settings. The educators need to set the standards by being responsible with their posts and comments. Like I’ve said in the other discussions this week, if the educator believes that there could potentially be an issue with what he or she says on Social Media; then the educator must create separate accounts (one for education and for their private life). In my past experiences with Social Media in courses, I’ve had a terrific time participating and conversing with my fellow students and my professor. Like I said again, Social Media in education is an effective and efficient way for educators; especially in today’s technological savvy world. |  |
| Even though we hear so much about social networking and why it might not be so good in the classroom because there are many interesting things and people on the internet, I think that it should be used in the classroom. Our students know so much about the internet and social networks that we would be silly to not use it in the classroom. It is important to make a connection and be able to relate to your students and this is one way that this can be done. However, at the same time though, we need to use these sites with caution. We need to be informed teachers. Selection of sites, postings, and assignments for students to complete need to be chosen with care. We also have to remember that there are many sites out their that are designed for teachers and students. They often even mimic the actual sites. These can be used in the classroom as well. In addition, we should also try and use what students may be familiar with. For example, my blog discusses using social networking in the classroom. I discuss ways to use as well as examples. One instance being using Twitter. Students can tweet their answers in class and in response to questions. I think that as teachers it is our responsilbity to be able to connect with our students and incorporate as much technology as we can into the classroom. The safe and effective use of social media in the classroom is one way to do this. |  |
| I believe proper use of social networking in the classroom is a powerful and innovative idea. To keep up with the coming generation of students, the ability to communicate with these students will need to change. Social networking, use of phones, iPads and all sorts of technologies make them unlike any other generation that has come before. They way they intake much of their information is through these technologies. I believe with proper training, teachers can utilize social networking as an invaluable resource in the classroom. Furthermore, I believe the importance of monitoring the use of these websites and technologies is important to maintain control and focus over the classroom and its students. |  |
| Just as what has been put forward again in the new standards for teachers, students should learn better how to use technology to learn and solve different kinds of problems with what they have learned. What's more, teacher should also make students understand the importance of learning all by themselves with the help technology. |  |
| Xiaoxin, yes we do have the new common core standards and you hit on an important aspect of technology use in the classroom.  How students learn about it and to use it to solve different kinds of problems is very important, and even more important to be self directed.    So, maybe along with the students learning, us teachers need to keep up with the growing demands of what role technology plays in the world. |  |
| In your past or current experiences, give an example of how you utilized assistive technology to assist a child or student with a disability. If this does not apply to your past or current experience, come up with a situation where you would have to use an assistive technology device to serve a potential students disability need. |  |
| In the past, I have mainly used low-tech assitive devices with my students.  I often use these devices with any of the students in my classroom because they have benefits for all.  Specifically, I had a student who had a hard time writing so that people could read it.  The writing was never dark enough to read.  The student had a hard time holding the pencil to the paper.  Therefore, I provided the student with a pencil weight and grip.  THe grip helped the student to hold onto the pencil and the weight helped the student to provide enough pressure so that the writing showed up dark enough.  Eventually the student no longer needed the weight because they learned how to press the pencil to the paper. |  |
| Katie, your example is impressive. Sometime we might not need hi-tech devices, just to think and find an appropreate one. |  |
| Oh I didn't know because that such a case happen because of their disability. Thought it was a person's habit.  I had a friend who is usually write light line of characters. The teacher asked her to use darker semi-sharpened pencil and it worked well for her too. |  |
| Katie,  You make a very good point here.  When a child needs assistive devices, it's just as important to know when they are no longer needed because it may hinder learning.  Another example is when teachers have students point to words when learning to read.  That is what we want for 1:1 correspondence, but once they have that under control it's no longer needed and can hinder fluency.  I teach 5th graders that are at risk and still point to the words.  Once the finger is out, they read at a faster rate, learn to read in phrases, which all positively impacts their comprehension. |  |
| You bring up a good point, Monica.  We always think that we are helping a student, but at some point it might become a hindrance.  I think this is most often seen with one to one aides because they feel they have to hover over the student because that is their job.  Providing students with too much assistance can be a detrimant because they will become accustomed to always having that assistance. |  |
| Hi, Monica.  I agree with you about the bad influence of pointing the words out to do the readings. When I was in high school, I used to point out every word to do the English readings. It was an ineffective way of reading, even though I could get a better understanding about the topics, it took a lot of time.  And I have never realized it would hinder my learning. Thank you for pointing out it. |  |
| I think it's understanding what a students Zone of Proximal Development is and what level of scaffolding they might need.  So, if we give a scaffold, also know when you can take it away. |  |
| Yes, Monica.  I apprecite your reply. Sometimes, students might not be realized that they have problems with learning, even though they maybe behind other students. They just think that they don't pay so much attention to study, but in fact, it's not. Therefor, it's important that the teachers could learn more about how to identify students with learning disabilities and help them out as soon as possible. |  |
| Hi, Katie  I know that some students always like to write their homework or notes in so light ways that others could not recognize. But I have never thought about that they might have problems or disabilities with their writing. And I was so stupid when I was in the prelimary school, I thought it was popular to write in that way and thus I imitated it for three years.  Wow, now I know that some students might have this kind of problem or they just cannot hold the pencil tightly.  Thank you. |  |
| Low tech is no less effective than high tech. I think we often use lots of low tech assistive tools without even really realizing it even in the mainstream classroom. Things like small whiteboards, can make working out a factoring problem much easier. |  |
| I like your answer, Aaron.  Sometimes, if we use balckboards to teach relative knowledge, it's easier for students to understand. If we put everything on Powerpoint, especially the reasoning process of formula, it's hard for students to understand. |  |
| I agree. Assistive technology can be both low and high tech. As long as it helps students it does its job and serves its purpose. At the same time though, it is our job as teachers to be able to distinguish between when this technology is helpful and when it may be a crutch for students. Having that keen eye and realizing that almost anything that helps students can be assistive technology is what is important to remember. |  |
| I never have this kind of exeriences before. Last week, our group(assignment 3) have download an Apps called vBookz PDF voice Reader, which can read PDF for its user, and hightlight the word it reads simultaneously. I think this App could help Dyslexia students or students who have difficulties in reading. Students can adjust the speed as he/she like, the highlightened word could let students connect spelling and pronunciation together. |  |
| Jiaming.  Good job. You are trying to use the new technologies to help students. I really think it would help a lot to the ones who have difficulities with reading. |  |
| Last year I had a student with dysgraphia and his writing was difficult to understand so he used a computer processor with a spell check.  This worked out wonderfully because he was a very bright boy and was able to write well thought out answers on the computer.  He didn't like it at first but once he got used to typing he felt like he could participate on a new level.  It did wonders for his self esteem and also allowed his teachers to see what his strengths were.  Because his teachers couldn't read his writing they thought his intelligence was low, but it wasn't.  I was so glad to get this up and running for this student. |  |
| Monica,  I'm glad to hear that it worked out for him.  Without investigation, challenged children are often judged that they lost abilities to do things like others, which is not always true.  By the way, could you explain more about dysgraphia please? What's it like? Was his writing difficult to read only because of the misspelling? or was it because of the structure as well. |  |
| Here is a link that tells more about dysgraphia than I can here.  http://www.wrightslaw.com/info/read.dysgraphia.facts.htm  This student is a very bright little boy and it wasn't the spelling in his case, but his difficulty was with fine fine motor and how the brain sends messages to the hand.  He has a difficult time writing letters and words to convey a message, and he found it especially hard to leave spaces between his words. So, although he could orally tell you what his thinking was to read his writing was especially hard.  When given the option to type, his writing is well thought out with few mis spelled words and his sentence structure is solid as well.  He had the option of using a spell check but that would hinder his ability to use the writing process to notice and correct errors, in meaning and mechanics. |  |
| I think dysgraphia means one could not writing or have difficulities in writing. One might have some problems with the part in his or her brain which hinders his or her hands to write or maybe the students just misspelling the words without realizing it.  In normal classes, it is hard to making students who have disabilities to utlize new technologies, which is a sign that they are different with other students. Some students might realize that they are different, but they think it's a shame or it's embrassing to do differetn things as their peers. Therefore, they refuse to do that. |  |
| Thank you Monica for sharing this example with us, you showed us how to use this tool (computer processor), how it is used, whether it is effective, and also gave some possible reasons for its effectiveness.  Also, I like this example you give because it is inpisring as well, actually some interesting questions hidden behind this example, like: when the assistive technology is the 'appropriate' one to help solve the problem (compare to other tools)? what is the real problem in the situation that we need to use the assitive tool to fix? Is the tool really able to solve that problem? |  |
| Hi, Ye cheng.  I agree with you. It's hard for teachers to make a decision about that. Just as I have referred to, some students know they are different, but they would not to behave in a different way as their peers.  In China, we have special schools for these students. By mixing them together, they would not feel embrassed or uncomfortable to use new technologies or different methods for learning. Another reason for why these students have to go to these special schools is that the normal schools would not like to receive these students with disabilities. It maybe because the normal schools don't have related equipments to help them or just don't want to shoulder related responsibilities, which means more money and attention shoule be paid to these special students.  It's really a bad situation that the disabilities among students in my country has not caused enough attention of the schools. |  |
| Xiaoxin, allow me to play devil's advocate.  Although students who require assistive technologies may be embarrassed or feel singled out in a mainstream class, I do not believe that separating them from other students is the answer. Of course in some cases, the student may truly require so much attention that it is simply not feasible to include them. However, I think in many cases, it is possible. To help these students feel more comfortable, certain affordable or low-tech accomodations could be offered to everyone. I think some students would voluntarily choose to use them.  In any case, I feel that sending students with disabilities to special schools is embarassing and isolating in its own way. Additionally, the "mainstream" students are deprived of valuable interactions with the "special" students, and vice versa, if they are not in school together. I realize that putting them together is difficult, but I don't think it's impossible. |  |
| Hi, Lily  I agree with you. For teachers, all students should have equal chance to be educated, no matter where they are from, whether they are disabled or not. I have to admit that in my country the disabled students haven't received enough attention from the society, govenment, schools and teachers. I feel sorry for that. |  |
| Lily,  I agree, students with disablities should not be seperated from other students. And I like the idea to provide low-tech devices to everyone because some students, even without disabilities may also need them to overcome difficulties in learning. |  |
| I have never used assistive technology for a student, but I am currently the official note-taker for one of my classes. This means that I take careful notes and submit them to the Office of Disability Services every week. The person or people who need them can get the notes through ODS. An alternative to this approach, which I learned about in a presentation on Universal Design, would be to have multiple note-takers every week on a rotating schedule and automatically make the notes available to everyone, both those students with and without disabilities. This would be helpful to everyone and would not single out the students with disabilites. |  |
| I think that is a great idea!  We all know that we could benefit from other people's notes because they might have written down something that we might have missed. |  |
| Hi, Katie.  I agree with you. In that way, both the normal students and the disable students could get a better understandind. It's really a good way of using these kinds of technologies. |  |
| I'm partially involve with the development of assistive technology for children with disability several years ago. My company did public relations for the project so I know a little bit of background about it. The project is called "mom made toys". This project is initiated by parents,mostly mothers, who have child/children with disability who concerns the need of producing special toys to help their love ones' cognitive and physical development. These special children need special toys that are hardly find in the market. The group of mothers then began to form study group about development of children with disability, observe the development of their children, cooperate with doctors to design hand-made toys. I'll research more and post a link of the project. |  |
| Here are some info about the project.  http://apichai2012.blogspot.com/2012/05/mom-made-toy-project.html |  |
| Aw katie I love that idea! That is great how eventually he could write without using the aid... you've must have been so happy for him! |  |
| In my undergrad classes when I first started to learn how to make lesson plans, my professor always had us include a UDL section. Since then I have always been thinking of ways to include ALL of my students and what I need to think about to make sure each student is learning to their full potential. Some students needed special grip paint brushes, or chubby crayons so they could better hold them. I also need to make sure I have left handed scissors or scissors that are easier to press (like this- http://cdn.dickblick.com/items/570/83/57083-1001-2ww-m.jpg )  In another class where I helped teach reading and writing to children, we downloaded apps on ipad. The apps would say certain sounds and words as well as provide supporting images and letters the kids could trace over and better understand. I would also have an art/sensory section of the class. All of the children were not only very young (3-6) but they also had down syndrome. They physically could not hold paint brushes so I had to think of another way they could mix paint for a learning lesson I wanted to do with them. I found this great idea where you squirt two different colors in a big ziploc bag and the students can squish it around and mix the colors. Also, with writing we filled ziploc bags with shaving cream and the children used their fingers to press down in the foam to make letters. |  |
| Sometimes just the littlest things help and they don't have to be a form of technology that costs a lot of money.  Teachers just need to think outside of the box! |  |
| It was even more fulfilling because it was my nephew and I was his teacher! |  |
| Pim, I took a look at the website and I think this is a fantastic project! I like that it draws on the moms' own knowledge about their kids. I think a similar project could be implemented by teachers, beause they are the ones most intimately acquainted with what their students need in the classsroom. |  |
| I agree. The project seems now extending to school as well. They are beginning to raise well understanding about these students and how the symptom that affect their learning look like. They are often ignored by school setting and society. If schools, teachers are involved, the students would have a wonderful support for their learning . |  |
| Hi, Pimsiri  It's the first time I have heard about this. It's an excellent project. Parents always care about their childre and thus they want to find ways to help thier children out. However, it's difficult of them to search a way out. This project helps the parents to get a better understanding about how to help their kids and give the teachers more information about how to teach the special students and make them learn better.  I apprecite it very much. |  |
| Pimsiri,  Thank you for sharing that information regarding "Mom Made Toys." It's not only important that educators are utilizing assistive technology to help children with disabilities, but the parents as well. This is an excellent example of parents taking the initiative in helping not only their kids but other children with disabilities using technology. Great post! |  |
| I have no personal experience. But I have watched a video of assistive technology in classroom.Most devices introduced in the video is not of high-tech, but they did work. For instance, amplification devices such as hearing aids are available for students of hearing impairmen, and also captioning on the iPad. And for student with low muscle tone, effective pencil grip is hard. In that video, a molded finger grip on the pencil are used for them. |  |
| I agree that the project Pim posted could be implemented by teachers! Imagine how many people it would help if teachers all got to share their ideas! |  |
| Mengying, as you mentioned in your post I believe that not everything has to be high-tech to be useful. Even simple things like finger grips can help in so many ways. It's good to have options as well, while things may work for one student it may not work for another. Everyone is unique |  |
| I had the experience of teaching students who had disabilities, but I have no idea how to help them.  In the last year of my undergraduate study, I worked as an intern teacher in a preliminary school. I met with a students who developed later than normal students. It was hard for him to understand what was going on in class and also hard for him to communicate with other students. I tried to communicate with his parents about how to help him out, but his parents seemed didn't care a lot about that. They just told me, you were the teacher, I paid you to teach my kid, and you could not teach him well. When I heard that I didn't know what to say. But I really feel sad and I had no idea how to deal with that kind of situation |  |
| I really like the idea posed in the Whal article that assisting tech can benefit anyone, not just those with disabilities and that "we all have learning disabilities." Working from this standpoint, I would say that I have used a variety of ATs in my classroom experience recently. (I think it is also important to point out that using assisting tech well means that I need to pay better attention to the specific needs of students. I can only be of help to them if I can really get a handle on their specific needs then match a tool to that need.) One of my favorite ATs is simple but seems, to my surprise, to be extremely effective. I have a number of kids in my classes that require notes, meaning I have to somehow print and distribute the class notes to them because of some pre-identified need. Maybe the student has bad handwriting due to injury, or maybe has an attention deficit. In the case that a student needs notes, I find the combination of my smart board and my class management site Schoology to be super powerful. Using the smart board I can take a screenshot of the notes and/or convert hand written notes into typeface. I then upload that document to my website for students to print and read. AT it seems, does not have to be anything fancy at all.  As long as it provides assistance to needy students, it can make a world of difference in their learning lives. |  |
| I like the last sentence you posted, Aaron.  We apply the latest technologies into classroom teaching or learning becasue they could make teaching or learning easier, and thus make life easier. It's the same principles for disabled students. They would get more chances to be educated better from both formal and informal learning, and thus they would not be so frustrated by life. |  |
| It's great to see all of your experiences coming into play with this question. I don't have any past or current experiences regarding assitive technology with children in an educational setting. My mother is a Special Education teacher in Stamord, Connecticut; and I chatted with her regarding assitive technology. So told me she rarely uses it and that a possibility why she hasn't could be from a low school budget, in particular with Special Ed. |  |
| Yeah, this phenomenon existed in many schools. Ther are many reasons for this, and I think it could not be controlled by teachers. But we have to do our best to help the students if they were in our classroom. |  |
| So far in my teaching experiences I have used some forms of assistive technology. While they do not involve as much technolgy as one would think, I have used forms of technology to assist my students. One way I have done this is giving students pencil grips to improve their writing. I have had students that have had trouble with their writing and I have found that these do indeed help students to write and improve their handwriting. I have not had much experience with students that require more sophisticated assistive technology. But I believe that this can come in all shapes and sizes. It can be both high tech and low tech, but as long as it helps a student it serves its purpose. After all, assistive technology should assist students. |  |
| Good question Richard.  While I have not had the opportunity to work with a student requiring a Assistive technology to help overcome a disability, I could easily imagine such a scenario. I have seen lots of information concerning the use of iPads as an AT. I believe that if you were to be working with a child with perhaps a cognitive handicap that there are so many different applications that are cheap, versatile and easy to access on the iPad that it could become an invaluable tool. So many Assistive technologies are expensive, cumbersome and specialized, making them not as an appealing tool as something like the iPad. |  |
| Using the Assistive Technology Tools at the bottom of the “Assistive technology for kids with learning disorders: An overview” article; what specific tools would be the most beneficial for a child with Dyslexia? |  |
| Two types of assistive technology that I like to use with students who have dyslexia would be Livescribe Smart pen and Dragon Naturally Speaking.  I like Livescribe because it facilitates the note taking and learning process.  Sometimes students with Dyslexia have a hard time taking notes.  Recording class discussions and taking fewer notes helps the student to focus on the content more.  Dragon Naturally Speaking is a great tool to use because it helps a student to dictate ideas and see the words appear.  It helps students who may have word-retrieval issues, grapho-motor weaknesses, and problems committing ideas to paper in a short period of time. |  |
| I've heard of these tools, too. As far as I know, livescribe smartpen is very useful for notetaking and facilitating learning process.  I like that the pen can capture everything that you write and heard[lecture] then you can transfer the note to the computer. You can also share their notes with others.  In addition, I think that teacher can also give them feedback of their notes to help them develop notetaking skills/organize their notes as well. |  |
| From the reasons that you give about why these two tools are 'most beneficial' for Dyslexia, I can tell that they are really good assitive tech. Nice sharing, thank you Katie! |  |
| While I love the concept of the Dragon speaking tools, from personal experience I have found them to strikes be somewhat unreliable. Word comprehension for the machines seems to be limited at times with small errors commonly occurring. This can be particularly true if working with specific jargon, such as found on many anatomical, biological and medicinal fields. This is based off previous use however and maybe the technology has greatly improved as of recently. |  |
| I think Audiobooks would be a great resource for students with Dyslexia.  Here are some resources that are related to this topic:  http://www.greatschools.org/special-education/assistive-technology/954-audio-books-publications.gs  What's neat about this is there are audiobooks that would be appropriate for all students. |  |
| Yeah. And for slow readers too. I like to use audiobooks with my ACCESS class because they can really help a group of students with varied reading skills stay on pace. Even though I'm an English teacher, I think I can be a rather slow reader at times and audiobooks have helped me stay on pace with class readings for the classes I'm teaching and taking. |  |
| I once to be a very slow reader in English, but then I pushed myself to read lots of English books and tried different ways to remenber words. I really hope my teacher could help me in a new way, but she didn't. I was sad at  that time. But now, thins go better with the students who have the same problems as I was. |  |
| I believe that Taking spell-checkers and electronic dictionaries could be quite useful for students with Dyslexia. Giving the students both visual and audio feedback could help accomodate a variety of learning styles, and having these technologies handy could make the process of writing and proofreading much more smooth and efficient for these students. In fact, I think a lot of students could benefit from these technologies! |  |
| Hi, Lily  I like the two tools you reommended above. For another course I have enrolled in, I have dyslexia with the English words on the papers.  I have never saw those words and I have tried to translate them by different dictionaries, but I still ccannot find the exact meaning of those words. But the dictionaries really help a lot in my reading.  The spell-checkers are also very useful. I think there is spell-check in the Macrosoft Word software. Everytime I write something wrong, it would show me. I like it. |  |
| A portable word processor would help these students with dyslexia.  It will specifically help students who can't write well by hand to write more effectively and correctly. |  |
| Yeah, Pimsiri.  It's good. With the easier way to make notes or write, students with dyslexia would do save more time to get a better understadning about what has been taught. |  |
| I am also working on apps that can be used as learning tools for the assignment 3 project. I found some apps that will be very useful for dyslexic students. These apps will help them cope with difficulty in reading, hearing, writing and speaking. One of these apps are Voice Dream Reader which convert your text from website, clibboard, bookshare, etc into audiobook. I like that this apps has integrate reading,  listening skills and writing by providing text highlighting and notetaking. Students can then practice skills via apps any time any place. |  |
| Everything you have all said are great tools! I agree with you all! I have found a lot of audio tools are great aids.  –Even in the article *Assistive technology for kids with LD: An overview*they state that an individual with dyslexia who may be undergoing training at a new job could benefit from AT that will read aloud his employer’s online training manual.  Some examples of AT that use audio are “Note2Self Audio Recorder”, “Image to Speech”, “Read it Later”, and “Say it and Mail it”.  “Note2Self” is an audio recorder and voice note sharing program where your notes can be saved or emailed automatically. “Image to Speech” is a program that allows users to take a picture, then the program will read out loud any text inside or next to the image. “Read it Later” is a more basic text-to-speech program. Lastly, “Say it and Mail it”, like the title says, lets the user record an email you want to write, then mails it.  Another way to help students with dyslexia read is to highlight specific words. You can cut up see-through color sheets of paper and cover a word to highlight it. The color helps the student focus on specific words they struggle with. You can also do this highlighting function on e-readers. Also, as you mentioned in your blog Richard, e-readers allows users to make text larger, which allows students to focus better on each word in a sentence. |  |
| I think these programs could also be useful for second language learners. For example, in community learning programs, we often find adults who have basic oral skills in English, but no writing skills (sometimes not even in their first language). I believe these programs could help promote literacy for these individuals. Thanks for sharing! |  |
| Pim,  That's an amazing app (voice dream reader) and I would like to know more about it and what your thoughts are as you are using it in your collaborative project.  Is there one app that does it all? |  |
| I agree! it's better if students could read, listen, speak and write at the same time. When I was in China and learning English, I had to try my best to read and listen at the same time. It helped me to improve my fast-reading ability and listening ability. What's more, if I could listen to the videos and understand them, my spoken English would be improved. Another importand way to improve oral speaking ability is to write well; by this way, you know how to use the words correctly and your oral speaking would be better. |  |
| Considering the fact that one major issues dyslexics confront is reading, I think audio books can be helpful for children who struggling with reading comprehension excel at school. They don't need to read and acquire visual information. Instead, audio books enable them to obtain auditory information, which children with dyslexia are capable to decode. |  |
| Thanks for bringing up the idea of using audio information as opposed to visual information.  We all know that students learn better in different ways.  One student might be more of a visual learner where as another student might be more of an auditory learner.  Therefore, I think that audiobooks are a great addition to have in the classroom.  We also know that the more a student is exposed to a reading, the more they will remember from it.  Therefore, we could have students who can read, read the story visually, then listen to it auditorally and then maybe act it out (bodily-kinesthetic).  The multiple opportunities the students get to interact with the text will help them obtain the information and have more of a chance to succeed with reading comprehension.  It is important for teachers to remember that if something works with one students (whether they have a disability or not), it might also have the chance of helping more students. |  |
| I love how you have suggested such a wide range of activities that accomodate different learning styles! This is something that I am striving to improve in my own teaching. |  |
| I agree that Audio books will be helpful but I don't know whether audio books will also offer the text, because some audio books I bought from iTunes stores have only the audio.  And I remeber that Kindle 3 have the function to read the content of books to its users, but I don't find this function in Kindle Paperwhite. I think e-book device which has the reading funcion will be usefule to Dyslexia students, because they can listen to the reading at same time look at the text. |  |
| Great point Jiaming! It's not only important for Dyslexia students to hear the text, but to hear and see the text at the same time. It's the only way to effectively assist the students with this disability. The combination of both audio and visual, usually on these E-Book Readers; have and will continue to be effective tools for children and adults with Dyslexia. |  |
| I really think this is a hard choice, because most people who is with dyslexia have difficulities in listening and speaking. The older the students, the harder to get methods to deal with their situations.  But if I have to choose one, I would like to choose "Optical Character Recognition", which is most beneficial to the ones who have difficulity with reading. "This technology allows a user to scan printed material into a computer or handheld unit. The scanned text is then read aloud via a speech synthesis/screen reading system. Optical Character Recognition (OCR) is available as stand-alone units, computer software, and as portable, pocket-sized devices."  What's more, I would like to choose to use dictinaries as a assistant way to help students to learn more words and refine their pronounction, which would be gooe for their listening. With the improvement of listening ability and recognizing more words, they would be better in reading. |  |
| Xiaoxin, I think I have heard of this sort of device before.. It's great because obviously not all of the materials the teacher gives in class are online for students to read. This way the student can scan in any hand outs they receive. I believe this device.. if not another similar, also allows the student to print things out or email them? |  |
| Yeah, you are right. Audrey. |  |
| Xiaoxin,  Thanks for sharing the software OCR. I have heard that before, but only as the tool to scan printed materials. I didn't know it has a function to read aloud the text! |  |
| I never know OCR can read text, that is really good and useful! |  |
| I think I would use a speech recognition device/software. I find that a lot of students ( even main steam , native speakers) don't quite see the correlation between spoken words and written words . Once in a while I will get a student who uses a word frequently in speaking, like a new vocabulary word from readings, but does not recognize the word when he/she sees it spelled on a page. I think that dyslexics could benefit from the verbal to visual nexus that speech recognition software can provide. It can reinforce the knowledge of a word and maybe help the students compute the meaning in multiple ways. |  |
| Aaron, You are right. This situation exists among many students who have dyslexics. The development of one are in our mind influence other areas. Therefore, we cannot focus on one phenomenon, we have to dig deeper to help the students better. |  |
| This is a good point you bring up. These technologies would not only help a student with dyslexia but other students as well. This is important to remember and consider when we select these tools to be used by our students. Instead of just having them for certain students, we could have them for all or most. Especially students that might be new to the United States or ESL students. They would benefit from these tools as well. The use of these tools by many students is a point that should strongly be considered. |  |
| I see that a majority of you agree on the same few assistive technology tools. I personally believe that E-Book Readers is the most beneficial, which I don't believe is on the list. I've been posting in my blog for this class regarding E-Book Readers, so I'm very knowledgeable on this topic now. These devices are very effective for children with dyslexia, since you have the option to make the font larger for the kids to read. This sometimes helps these type of students focus on each individual word instead of the jumbling them all together and properly comprehending the sentence. The dictionary tool built into these devices plays a major role also. |  |
| I really like the dictionaries. They can help both the reading and writing ability for all students. |  |
| Two tools that I think would be great for students with dyslexia would be the Audiobooks and Dragon Dictation. The Audiobooks allow students to hear the books being read. This is important for a student with dyslexia becasue they often have trouble reading correctly. This assistive technology tool would allow the student to hear the book being read. Allowing them to still get the information just without all of the trouble. Dragon Dictaion would also be a useful tool because it has a student speak and then translates the speech to words. This would help the student overcome the trouble they may have to write without confusing the letters in words. Both of these tools would be benficial to a student with dyslexia. However, in this day in age these tools would be beneficial to all students as well. |  |
| Based on the readings and your personal opinion, what are the potential opportunities and challenges of assistive technology in education? |  |
| There are multiple benefits to including assistive technology in education.  First, assistive technology increases personal productivity.  Students can accomplish more independently.  Second, it enhances collaboration and communication.  This occurs between all participants.  Finally, it acounts for individual learning styles.  There are also some challenges to assistive technology.  First, training must be initiated and sustained.  The assitants to the user must understand the technology.  Funding issues can also come up.  Sometimes machines or devices need to be updated and replaced.  Maintenance on the devices is also critical.  This should be ongoing with support. |  |
| Katie,  I like when you pointed out that assistants must be trained to understand the technology. Assistants play key role in guiding and shaping students to be more confident in their ability. Even a good technology need instructions abd guidance to use. My friend has a sister who was born with disability. She have a hard time finding well-trained in assistive technology, patient, and understanding person to help her sister's physical and mental development. So, she decided to take care of herself and study more about how to take care and aid her sister's learning correctly. |  |
| I mean... \* take care of her sister herself... |  |
| Sorry to hear about that. Nowadays, more and more assistants who have been trained specially are needed. More pressure are put on the society, and more students are found have different kinds of difficulities in learning. |  |
| Hi, Katie  I agree with you, the process of helping the disabled ones out should be ongoing with support, which costs much more time and money. For the families who don't have a high status of economy, even though they want to help their children, they could not pay for it. The development of technologies also cause a bigger gap among peple who have different economic abilities. This is also hard for us teachers to reach |  |
| There are many advantages to using assistive technology.  First it allows all students to be involved to their fullest potential and participate in class activities and discussions.  Communication is key.  All parties need to participate in the conversation around how, when the assistive technology is to be used and how to operate it.  Some challenges?  Parents are not always aware of what is available for their child so getting the information in the right hands is important, whether the school psychologist or teachers.  Cost is another challenge.  Who pays for the assistive technology? |  |
| Monica, I think that you biring up that parents matters are important. As we now discusss AT used in school context. But what will happen when students go back home, if they don't have these devices, how do they finish their homework? |  |
| Jiaming,  As far as I know, iPad is widely used in special education. Many apps are available there and can serve as the assistant tools for student with disabilities. So I think a connection between school and home can be realized by iPad. And if the cost is a problem for some families, school can lend them one so that student can use it at home for homework or further exploration. |  |
| I do think though that most students use their AT devices at home and at school.  I also think that teachers would not put students in an unfair situation to not be able to accomplish their homework for not having what they needed.  Some AT devices are needed by students continuously.  I they did not have their AT at the times they needed them, that would be very unfair and would probability fall under the American Disabilities Act.  Good question! |  |
| Government might would like to pay for the assistive technologies, but they cannot ensure that continual money would be provided during all the whole process. It would costs so much and maybe unaccountable.  What's more, it often takes a very long time for the policies of the government be applied into practice. Can the students, teachers and schools wait so long a time? I don't hink so. |  |
| Monica- You raise a good question and I'm unsure of the answer. I know that my mother, who is a Special Education teacher, has a limited budget to utilize and she rarely has the opportunity to purchase assistive technology tools for her students. |  |
| I don't think it would fall into your mother's budget.  It would be the school district or medicaid that would provide something.  I also think that there are AT's that might make learning easier, then there are those AT's that if the child didn't have it they couldn't be successful.  So, for someone in our district that was dyslexic and needed a co-writer then the district has them.  It doesn't come out of the special ed teachers budget.  It's also in the child's IEP, and otherwise the child would not be successful. Then, throw in the ultimate craziness that these students are allowed limited AT's for the NY state assessments.  So, if a child uses a co-writer then they went to take a state assessment they would be able to type but not be allowed to have a spell check.  That is not unfair. |  |
| I think that AT has a great potential to improve the quality of education for both students with and without disabilities, as many of these technologies could be widely used. I like the idea that AT not only improves the quality of education, but also its accessibility. With some simple assistance from AT, students with disabilities can participate in "mainstream" education, which could be an enriching experience for themselves and their classmates.  I echo the challenges mentioned above, such as cost/funding, and the inevitable technical issues (training, troubleshooting, etc.) that come with technology use in education. |  |
| I did my undergraduate in the Inclusive Elementary and Special Education program here at SU and am for allowing for full inclusion of students.  These AT's allow that to happen and of course it has to happen with a clear plan in mind and training for all involved.  Training of our teachers and our paraprofessionals and allowing for the appropriate AT in order for students to be successful. |  |
| better, and they are able to communicate much easier. It also helps students in becoming more independent, as Katie mentioned in a different discussion post, a student that used a pencil weight to write better eventually could write without using it. Students are more able to contribute in school activites, as well as home with homework and similar activities. They may also feel more confident in interacting and communicating with their peers.  One challenge AT could bring is causing a student to feel like they stand out. If they have to use a specific technology to help them in their learning process and none of the other students are using it they could feel like they stand out and that others are judging or making fun of them. Sometimes this can be avoided when a teacher tries to use helpful technology with ALL of their students. |  |
| Hi, Audrey.  You have pointed out an interesting point. Now, I am thinking that how to determine which way is better to teacher students  with disabilities. Most of the time, one kind of disability hinders the development of others. It's hard for us to select the appropriate ways to deal with this situation. |  |
| You're right Audrey. Disability sometimes causes students to feel alienate to normal students. AT will boost their confident and help them to be better in school as well life skills. Better attitude towards themselves make a big difference in them. |  |
| I also did my undergraduate degree in inclusive elementary and special education except at St. John Fisher College.  I remember we took a class about assistive technology, but that was an isolated/single class throughout the four years of coursework.  I think that as a special educator it is important to stay abreast of new form of assistive technology because like Lily said it not only improves the quality of education for students with disabilities but for students without disabilities too.  Therefore, I am proposing that all schools of education should provide ongoing professional development and classes on new forms of assistive technology.  I also think that it is important for school districts to provided this type of professional development because technology is always changing.  As a result, students will become more successful in their learning. |  |
| Katie, I completely agree. It can be hard to keep up with ever-changing technology, so having professional development days on this topic will improve not only the teacher's instruction and understanding of the field, but the students' learning experience as well. Teachers can also share ideas with other teachers. I wonder if there would be a way to include anything from parents? I have learned a lot of good tips from parents and they may be able to share some valuable information with teachers. They could work together and discuss what works best for each child. |  |
| Katie,  You have a valid point and yes At's do help ALL students, but then it comes down to money if it's not mandatory for that student to be successful.  So, where should the money come from?  I think it should come directly from the state. |  |
| Assistive technology can let school serve student better by helping students overcome the difficuties they have. But that may cost more money to buy these device and maintain them. Also it will need guidance to for teachers to know what is the appropreate timing and approach to use it, when students will not need them anymore. Another question teachers might meet is that will student be comfortable with these devices, what to do if they reject them. |  |
| I agree with you, Jiaming.  It's so hard for teacher to make the disabled students to understand the same thing as the normal students. Sometimes, even though more time and money are costed, no improvement in the learning situation of the disabled ones is showed. It's really exhausted for both the teachers and students. This situation would also cause the parents or others disbelief the abilty of the teachers. That's really bad for teachers. |  |
| Yeah, I think you are right. Along the same lines, I also think that sometimes it can be very hard to integrate and implement AT into a class so that it benefits students without being obtrusive. It is really, really hard to find the planning time necessary to implement the AT in an effective way. Like you say, this can really put the teacher, parents, and maybe even students at odds with one another very quickly. |  |
| Opportunities:   * Nowadays, more and more technologies taht are avaliable for normal people could also be used easily by the disabled ones. * More and more people are paying attention to the learning process and study of disabled students,and thus more theories that support or provide ways to solve this difficult situation are formed. * More parents have realized that theri children might have difficulities in study even though they would not to admit it. * More schools are equipping themselves to receive students with disabilities. * More money from the government are located on the area of disablied students' study.   Challenges:   * Students who know they have difficulities in learning would not to admit it and thus they prefer to be left behind rather than tell their friends and teachers they have problems with study. * Parents might want to pay more attention to the study of their children, but they don't have time. Because the new technologies also make them feel more worried about how to keep their current jobs. * There are still more teachers and schools would not receive or teach students with disabilities even though they realize the ergent situation. * Disabled students are still regarded as different ones in the eyes of most people, and thus it is still hard for the society to give them a fair status. |  |
| Xiaoxin,  I like how you split up the opportunities and challenges in your post to clearly define both parts of the discussion questions. Clearly, there are many opportunities with assistive technology in education. I think you made a great point on two challenges in particular that you brought up. Students who know they have difficulties in learning but don't want to admit to it; and that there are still teachers and school who do not have a background in teaching students with disabilities. I had one friend growing up that knew he had trouble learning, but never said anything to his parents or teachers. This backfired on him as he began to fall behind academically and before he knew it he was doing poorly in school before he did anything about it. I grew up in this technological advancement age and for the most part, some of these assistive technology tools were beginning to be available for students; which would have greatly helped him in his studies. I also like how you brought up the other challenge regarding teachers and their background of educating students with disabilities. Disabled students and how to educate them has been an issue for more than a century and it's time for all educators to be taught how to manage these students in the classroom. Yes, there are specific special education teachers in every school these days, but it would be very beneficial for every teacher to have some sort of background in educating children with learning disabilities. |  |
| Assistive technology gives students with disabilities the chance to reach their full potential. Students with physical and cognitive impairment are able to engage n class activities. It helps to realize educational equity. As for the challenges, I agree with you all that cost should be taken into account. Who pay for the devices? Besides, I think another problem is how to choose most suitable technologies among for children with specific demands. The effect of a particular assistive technology sometimes differs from person to person. |  |
| Yeah. Even though we classify the disabled students into one section as special ones, they have differences even among the same kind of disability. It's so hard for both schools and teachers to face with this complex situation. |  |
| Like 2 sides of a coin, AT has its benefits and drawbacks. I agree to all the advantages you guys have said. I'd add that emergence of AT raises people awareness to help student with disability and bring them into a typical classroom. No one wants be differentiate, just like races, skin color, language. AT make these students feel good about themselves, feel improvement in their academic performances, and feel more competent in social skills/interactions with other students. It's like a tool that help them reach higher education as can reach with their best ability. However, AT use may need hours of training both assistants and the students which can be considered time-consuming. and now it's a relatively new field, so the technology may adjust more frequent to find the best solution for these students, that means new training and even more time-consuming. |  |
| While I was watching the short videos on AT tools and their applications, I noticed immediately that one of the advantages of AT is expression. The boys using Pictello, the young man who enjoyed Japanese food, and the child who used proloquo were all able to express their feelings and ideas because of the AT. As an everyday human I think I can understand how important it is to be heard and how bad you can feel if your voice is stifled for some reason. Even if the AT is ONLY used to help people express themselves, I think it is immensely valuable. I have had many students, disabled and not, who have had a very hard time getting into their work because they felt like they were unable to share and/or deal with their emotions that day. It seems like AT tools that help students find their voice, may incidentally also help them gain confidence as learners. I felt good when I saw these people living better lives through AT, and I think the opportunities AT provides them are invaluable. |  |
| I think the possibilites for assistive technologies are endless. They can help students that might have a disability, ESL students, and all students. They are something that should be considered throughout instruction. They can make reading, speaking, listening, writing, and communicating easier. While assistive technology is extrememly beneficial at the same time though it brings challenges as well. For example, it can get expensive. While there are both low tech and high tech assitive technologies, the high tech can be expensive. This is something that needs to be considered. Schools might not have the money or the resources to purchase the technology to allow its students to use. That means that teachers need to be resourceful. They should try and use the least expensive when possible. Then, there are grants and ways that students can obtain the more expensive technologies. The benefits and the challenges should be considered when thinking about assistive technology. |  |
| As we discussed in earlier weeks it is important to be knowledgeable of determining credible sources. If you don’t know what you’re clicking on you could end up on a bad site and get a virus! How do you think teachers this day in age can educate students on cybersecurity issues? |  |
| The website Prof. Lei posted in the announcements section could be a very useful tool in educating our students. If you go to the section about teaching online safety, <http://www.staysafeonline.org/teach-online-safety/>, you will find information aimed at different ages and grade levels. Teachers could either present this material or have their students explore it independently. |  |
| I think that this is a very important issue to ensure that students know how to navigate the Web.  Before teachers allow students to partake in any activities on the Web, they must ensure that students know about credible sources.  After looking at the website, staysafeonline.org, I found some great resources to use to teach students about cybersecurity and being safe while online.  The website provides information on how to approach this topic with students of any age.  It provides lesson plans, instructions, class exercises, and class activities.  Therefore, it is a must for teacher to be aware that they need to teach this topic and they have a wealth of information at their fingertips in order to implement this lesson. |  |
| I agree with you , Katie  Before we teach students how to identify a good website and avoid the crime online, teachers should get a clear idea about the knowledge used to select a good website, how to make students learn about this in an easier way and how to avoid it. |  |
| I think teacher could organize a discuss activity. Let students discuss a controversy incident on cybersecurity. As we have learned from 621, students may have their own view on the same topic depending on their experience of using social network site, also their understanding on cybersecurity may be at different level. By expressing their thoughts, students could have chance to examine their knowledge. By listening other student's thought, students may change their view and move to a higher level. |  |
| Yeah, I agree with you Jiaming. It's a good way to make students learn from their experience and share what they have with others. What's more, from communication students could learn in a social cognitive way, which also helps to refine what they have known, because sometimes, what they have learned by themselves might be wrong. |  |
| I like group/class discussion. It brings us to profound the exploration of the content. We also learn a lot from different opinions which we might not think of. However, instructor have to make sure that most of the students have sufficient level of background in cybersecurity from reading and experiences. The discussion will be more productive and meaningful that way. |  |
| I really like this idea as well. A group discussion gives students a chance to clarify and explore their own views on cybersecurity, which I think would be more effective than simply listening to a teacher's lecture or going to a website. |  |
| Yeah, I agree with you, Pimiairi.  The direction of the teachers is necessary to make sure that the online class discussion would not go to the other way. What's more, the participation of the director makes students encouraged in discussion. They get the feeling that there is some one there observing them and they would do better than normal . |  |
| I think that we all need to educate at all levels.  The resources this week were a great place to start.  Again, also educating the parents and students about credible sources, cybersecurity issues, safety, etc.  I have seen one form sent home to students for permission and consequences if there are problems but so far no real conversation globally about developmentally appropriate steps that teachers could implement in order to educate students in the classroom setting.  I did talk to my students about how they used the computer at home and some students mentioned that there were locks on the computer to block their access to certain sites but overall they are unaware of cybersecurity (I am only speaking to those that I talked to but wonder if this is across the board?  Any thoughts? Or are districts taking action and educating teachers, parents, and students?).  In an earlier article this year and with blocking in general, does not always do the trick.  Education is the best plan.  Students, parents, teachers, and other stakeholders need to understand the issues that revolve around cybersecurity. |  |
| Monica, good points. I really appreciate that you shared your talking with your students to us.  The cyber security is not merely emphasized in education area, but also other areas,such as engeering, medical,computer science and so on.We live in the world, and if we don't do anything that might hurt others, we don't want to be hurt, too. But for education, it's not a focus of schools, but also focus of the whole society,even the focus of the whole world.  We encourage students to join themselevs in the world of new technologies in orderto make them to be more adaptive to the changing world, but t the sametime,we don't want them to be hurt. While, it's hard for the schools and teahces to do this. Parents should be included,for that students spend most of their time at home, and parents culd keepaneyeon them. And in this way, the basic knowledge of how to use technology and how to potect their children from sybercrime should be provided to parents. The society should also join in the protect movement, whichis not only meaningful for themselves, but also for others. |  |
| Monica- I think you are right about educating all.  We can't just educate the students about online safety and then expect that to be carried over in the home.  I think because technology is used so widely in schools, schools need to provide that education to the parents.  I found a website that provides helpful information about how to educate parents about online safety.  It provides one school's experience of offering Internet safety sessions to parents and the conversation outline used in the training.  I also found on this same website School Packs for primary and secondary teachers that help start the discussion around online safety, as well as promoting Safer Internet Day.  It includes five quick classroom activities, a lesson plan with curriculum links, and a script.  Here are the links if you want to check it out!  <http://www.saferinternet.org.uk/safer-internet-day/2013/schools-packs>  Here is the link for other resources for teachers  <http://www.nspcc.org.uk/Inform/resourcesforprofessionals/onlinesafety/internet-safety-schools_wda94003.html> |  |
| Great resources Katie....  The real question is how do we get everyone involved? |  |
| I am wondering whether it is possible that schools and districts work hand in hand to promote awareness and relevant knowledge of cybersecurity issues. Perhaps they can held some knowledge quiz games that both parents and students should take part in ( like a family team) and the result is part of students' final grade. |  |
| Thank you for your sharing, Katie. These are really excellent Websites. |  |
| I like your point. At school, teachers can educate students about cybersecurity, but it is also important that what they learn from their parents, whether their parents pay attention to cybersecuirty. |  |
| I don't think many districts are taking the time to educate the parents and teachers because I think they are just as in the dark as the students.  Maybe this is where WE as instructional tech specialits can be of help.  In my experience, the general lack of awareness across the board makes it hard to educate the students on the issues.  You point is very wll made. |  |
| It's important to teach students how to avoid crime online when e-learning is introduced into classroom. If I am a teacher now, firstly, before I introduced high techs into classroom teaching, I would hand out students an evaluation about how much knowledge they know about Internet. In the evaluation, students work together in groups and search online ot ask their parents about the advantages and disadvantages about learning online. By this way, they could get a general idea about learning online and know what to take into consideration. Secondly, I would introduce the technologies I prefer them to learn and tell them how to use it. During the process, I would tell them some easy creteria about how to identify a good website and how to aviod to be hurt by the information they post online. |  |
| There are lot of things students need to know about cybersecurity.  Just like scanning virus on your USB before open folder in the computer. Students need to be able to scan and detect suspicious things and avoid going there. I would begin with giving example of spam mails. There are a lot of spam in our emails. Sometime it make us curious and want to open it. However, these spam are written in some kind of patterns ...like offering you money, stating problem about bank account, asking you to transfer money, online chat..etc. Then, they will know what type of mails to avoid.  Then I would teach by using UCBerkeley site that we used for website evaluation as guidelines. I really like that website because it provide questions that we need to ask to check for the site's creditability. I may incorporate webquest in my teaching to protect my students from approaching inappropriate content.  If I teach young students [elementary, primary students] I would include role of parents in teaching their kids about online sites too. So, parents teach basic techniques for screening credibility of content when they were at home. |  |
| Thank you for those websites Pim. Bringing cybersecurity knowledge back home is so important. I have also been thinking about the teachers themselves. As we have discussed in past weeks some teachers are against or hesitant towards technology.. but what if they have to use it? I feel like eventually all teachers will need this knowledge.. which also encompasses cyber security. If the teacher doesn't know this information then they can not properly instruct their students. Teachers typically have development days where they are trained, but is cyber security ever an issue brought up or taught to them? |  |
| \* and I am sorry I meant to say **Katie!** thank you katie for those sites :) |  |
| Wow, you provided new points here. Recently, I got the emails from my friends telling me not to believe what has been sent to me, because her QQ acount was used by others to ask money from her friends. This phenomenon is very common when QQ is introduced into communication almost around the world.  For me, my computer has been dead for many times because the virsus from the USB. I am so used to use USB to save materials, because it's convenient and there is not need for you to take your computer everywhere. WHile, most of the time, it's hard for me to aware the shortcomings of using it. |  |
| I also agree that it is good learn from experience. Students can talk about their personal experience of dealing with such kind of issues. I think we all have encountered problems like virus and phishing before. These “negative experiences” can always alert you to paying special attention to cyber security problems. It includes an attitude learning process. We should take parents into account too. Perhaps a training can be held to teach parents some strategies on how to keep safe and secure online. Then parents can model behavior to children and help to decrease Internet security threats at home. |  |
| I think that when teachers incorporate technology into the classroom they also need to teach their students how to navigate the internet safely. To some it may seem easy and like there is not a point because they use the internet regularly, however it is still important. In school, there should be examples of appropriate websites that should be used when creating and researching. If these are given and specified to students they can most certainly stay safe. At the same time though, you want to try and give students some freedom while researching. This is where safety comes in. If students are shown examples of reliable websites and website endings to look for (.edu, .gov, .org, etc.) then they can use these on their computer endeavors. However, there is always google, this is where a problem may arise. When using this, students need to be instructed and explained to look for specific descriptions and urls of reliable and safe websites. I believe though that to insure safe internet use and searches, students should be given websites first. Then, when they become comfortable, they can look for the websites on their own. If this is scaffolded for students they will have greater success. |  |
| Yeah, students would be much more successful if they how to use onlie resources better without experiencing the cyberbullying or cybercrime. Nowadays, it's a time of technologies. Everywhere you could see is high technologies. In college, we have to use online resources to learn, finish our homework and then submitt it online and communicate with the professors or classmates via e-mails. If we don't know how to use these, how could we study. At the same time, there is an organization which is in charge of the whole Website in school to make sure that the students who use the Wifi in school would not be involved in cybercrime. |  |
| Tyler, I definitely agree with you in the fact that's it is lucky that students these days generally are so very tech savvy. I'm 22 years old and the generations growing through k-12 are already more advanced than me in some regards. They are savvy users. |  |
| Fortunately there are now a plethora of websites that can aid us in discovering the authenticity of a website. However, I think it is important for students to have their attentions set for a few tell tale signs of a bad website.  Some of these signs can be: web address, web suffix (.gov, .com, .org). Is their strange advertisements or shopping possibilities on the site? Lack of references, or information that is not constantly updated. All these things should be looked at to see how credible a website might be. |  |
| I agree. There are some key signs to help determine the credibility and authenticity of websites, just like you mentioned. It seems simple and it is. From my past experiences, its easy to determine the validation of websites by looking at the website address'. Once on the website its also important to determine where the information is coming from and if there are any references or resources to back the informaiton on the website up. |  |
| This is where I think the lessons from this class are really valuable.  The lesson about identifying reliable and "real" sites is very valuable, and might even be good to use with students.  I think that the best way for techers to be good watcdgos is by knowing as much about the issues as possible and planning preventative strategies into lessons.  It is never bad to be as upfront and transparent as possible about the lesson, the tool being used, and the potential threats that migh be encountered. |  |
| I think this is a great point. Students need to be taught, and I like how you explicitly mentioned in a lesson. Sometimes students need to be shown things clear as day and without all of the bells and whistles that might go along with it. This is important because this is not something that you should fool around with when it comes to their safety. It is with hope that if students are shown how they can be safe, then they can implement these strategies into their everyday website usage and searches. |  |
| In today’s day in age, it’s extremely important to know which websites are credible/valid and which websites could potentially lead to a virus. This is important not only for educational purposes, but for all personal web-browsing as well. The website provided this week: <http://www.staysafeonline.org/teach-online-safety>, is a great source in assisting this issue.  Before students learn how to determine credible sources on the internet, teachers need to be educated first on this cyber-security issue. A crash course should be taught to educators before they enter the education field. From my past experiences in previous courses, a key source in determining website credibility is the web address and suffix. Blogs and Wikipedia, among others, are a few examples of non-credible websites. Websites that end with .com, .gov, .org, or .edu; are most likely to be safe and reliable sources to utilize. Another key sign is to look for references on the page, from academic and scholarly articles. |  |
| I think it isn't university's or college's teacher's duty. Students touch internet are ealier than our generation. When they are 12 years old, maybe they already use internet to search information. But as this age, they can't distinguish which are credible sources on internet. So from my point, I think instructional designers can insert course of teaching students on cybersecrity issues into K-12 education. It can help students know how to find the website that they really need at the begining of they use internet to learning. |  |
| Tools such as social bookmarking and blogs gives classes a great way to collaborate and share idea with others. However, the issue of privacy comes up. How might teachers be able to control their students’ info in these cases? And if there is no privacy option do you think there is an issue of having student discussion and ideas out there in the public world of the web? How might we deal with these issues? |  |
| I think this depends on the age of the students. Students in elementary, middle, and maybe even high school should probably be restricted to using certain secure educational platforms for these types of activities. This is a good way to model safe online behavior for students. However, I believe college students should be allowed to choose their own platform, as long as the teacher also educates them about online safety and privacy issues. |  |
| I agree with you, Lily. As very young students'analytical skills are not fully developed, it would be safer to limited online access to only educational platforms like edmodo, storify,etc. Also, these protected platforms are easy to navigate. their functions are simple and easy to follow. |  |
| It's so hard to make young students learn onlien and be safe at the same time. Most of them are interested in almost everything and it's so hard to understand what they are doing might harm others. They might just think they do nothing real to other people, an sthus there is no harm for others. While, the truth is different |  |
| I think that it is important to ensure that a site has certain privacy measures when utilizing them with students in an academic setting.  This is especially important for students who are underage.  When conducting discussions online, teachers do not want outsiders being able to jump in on the conversation because one could not ensure that the environment was safe anymore.  Privacy issues can then lead to parent concerns and school-wide concerns.  If at anytime utilizing the Internet with a group of students becomes unsafe, then teachers need to stop it.  Just as in the classroom teachers are in charge of the safety of their students, this also now applies to life outside of the classroom and the Internet.  Safety and privacy should be teachers' number one concern about their students |  |
| If I were a K12 teacher, I would probably not choose unsafe online platforms where there are no or little privacy options for educational purpose in design because it is too risky to expose younger students to web environment with no protection. I would prefer Blackboard to social networking services such as Facebook or Twitter as the place for discussions and collaborative learning. You are always revealing too much on social networks and that makes you more vulnerable to cybercrimes. Also it is the teacher’s responsibility to take control of students’ information in case of privacy problems. And most kids don’t realize they are leaking personal information. I was shocked when I found that some high school students leave their real phone number even address on a forum which don’t have an access restriction. |  |
| Yeah, most of the time students, especially students who are less than 18-years old, are easier to be involved in cybercrime. They don't have a lot of experience and thus they don't know even when they are doing harms to others. Therefore, appropriate direction is needed to conduct them how to adapt themselves in the world of e-learning. What's more, I think maybe it's better to make parents learn some knowledge about technologies and how to avoid cybercrime. |  |
| Not only are students who are younger than 18 easy targets for cyber crime, but sometimes I think older adults and senior citizens are easy targets.  I think that we take for granted that the older you get the wiser you get, but this type of technology is new to many older adults.  Therefore, without the knowledge of the technology they might be coaxed into doing something that is against the law because others nudge them to do it.  This generation is also very trusting, so this leads to mishaps.  I think that we need to not only provide education about safety online to our students, but also open it up to the public.  Free classes could be done at the school and be provided to all community members. |  |
| Yeah, good points here. There are some adult know the boundaries but they still do cybercrime to others, especially to students who are younger than 18 years old, and thus do not have lots of experience for how to idetntify whether it is cuber bullying or not. And it's good idea to join the people in society into school learning  and sharing their experience to stucents. |  |
| Very true, Katie. I'm currently teaching a class of adult immigrants and refugees, who might be particularly susceptible to cyber crime due to their lack of cultural knowledge, and in some cases, lack of computer skills. |  |
| Katie, you bring up a very good point. There is a demographical age group for people who know the consequences regarding privacy issues on the internet. Children under 18 and older adults/senior citizens are very easy targets to cyber bullying, like you said. Young children don't understand the consequences due to their younger age, and older adults/senior citizens (for the most part) still have a difficult time adjusting to the new technology and the internet. I mentioned this in past posts, but I do believe that everyone, not just student and teachers, need to be educated by taking some sort of a crash course in online safety, cyber bulling, and using the internet appropriately. |  |
| I totally agree with your stance on the position. While the popularity of the plethora of social media sites exists I Facebook, twitter, four square or even a semi-educational one such as blogger can have consequences despite their popularity. |  |
| I think students access to public forums needs to be restricted.  What would be the purpose for them to have that open access to people they do not know?  So, teachers should take into consideration that social bookmarking is out there but to what extent should it have use in a K-12 setting.  Again, older students with guidance should be educated about how to interact in these sites.  There are so many education friendly places that allow for privacy and activities that help teachers and students learn about technology so, in my opinion teachers have ample options that are not public. |  |
| I think it is a good chance for teachers to educate students on cybersecurity issues. Maybe the teachers could use one lesson to discuss with students if they use a website without a privecy option to post theri ideas, what should they pay attention to? What could write there, what shouldn't, how to protect their personal information and the copyright of their product, what shoul be noticed when they use other people's products.  Afterall, children will grow up, will be exposed to the complex world one day. Maybe so much protection is not that good. Let them know where is the boundry of safety may be more useful. |  |
| In some degree, I agree with you, Mengying. It's a good way to educate students with the "boundry theory" you have referred to. Because, most of the time, we learn from trial and error theory. It is always that after we do something wrong, and be "punished" in some extent, we know how to do it in a right way. While I am thinking that what if students get hurt serverly? In our life, some mistakes we could do, but there are slao some mistakes we cannot experience, because the shadow would follow us for the whole life. |  |
| Xiaoxin and Jiaming,  Good points to ponder, education is very important!  We are dealing with some very important topics and what the implications for education are.  Safety is key when implementing any technology tool and we need to be aware of the advantages and disadvantages of using different types of technology. |  |
| Yes, Xiaoxin, you are right. But what I try to say is not to let students make mistake then learn something. I just suggest that if we have to use some website without a privacy option, we can discuss with students first, kind of brainstrom, to develop ideas about how could we avoid be hurted or avoid making mistakes.  Also, for the mistake or shadow someting, I think it is inevitable somehow in everyone's lift. Don't be afraid, just live with it. :) |  |
| Jiaming,  I think your statement "  Afterall, children will grow up, will be exposed to the complex world one day. Maybe so much protection is not that good. Let them know where is the boundry of safety may be more useful" is great.  In the end, I think we as educators can really only go so far to protect our students.  Obviously, when parents, teachers, and other significant people add to the discourse it can only help the child. But, sadly the internet, like the world around us is a very, very vast place and preparing them to be good participants in the world and the web are vital. |  |
| I totally agree with you, Jiaming. For teenages, or even young people, too much protection is useless, and even is counteractive in some cases because the young generation are Internet savvy from childhood. Being online becomes part of their daily life. Too much protection and prevention is just unrealistic...  I also like your point of copyright issue. It is not widely recognized in China...Some people just "take" others' product without a permission. They don't take it seriously... |  |
| This is an interesting point that you brought up about too much protection being not that good. Students most likely will eventually be exposed to what we are trying to protect them from. I think it is important to protect students more when they are young as opposed to more when they are older then I agree with the boundary aspect that you mentioned. I think we should educate students how to be safe and provide them with websites that are safer than most. If this is done and in a way that is effective, students will have a greater chance to be safe and not want to rebel as much. |  |
| I think before the schools determine to make students begin to learn with the help of new technologies, several lecture about how to use high techs safely should be provided and students should be pushed to attend them, especially among K 1-12 students.  In the school systems, students information should be kept secretly and illegal using of students' information shoule be forbidded and published. Teachers should also choose platform on which privacy areas are included, in order to ensure the information-safty of students. What'sm ore, it's the responsibility to keep an eye on the platform and make sure no other person who might also posts his or her opinions on it and whether these posts would influence the stduents or not. |  |
| Private educational site seem to be a good preventive method to protect students from bad sites.  However, sometimes I have to admit that these young generations learn to navigate on websites at vey young ages. They know how to go outside boudary that we set for them. So, it's very hard to deal with this issue eventhough we have set private educational platforms like edmodo, schoology, storify. etc.  It might be ok to let them navigate through public world of the web. But imagine how much distractions they will get. For example, imagine you let your students use youtube site without setting up a private youtube page for your classroom. Students may clicking on bunch of different things that are unrelated to the topic. That's ...Chaos, right?  As a teacher, we can educate them, raise their awareness of cybersecurity, teach them how to protect themselves from the frauds who are looking for chances to take advantage of the students'innocence, etc. At least use your own created site to teach in school and for assignment to show your attempt of trying to protect your students. |  |
| Good points so far. The last things teachers want is chaos and their students getting off task.  Like some of you have been saying we need to pick and choose carefully. There are some sites that can be so beneficial but others that may say they do the same thing -like social bookmarking- but could have way less privacy or educational use. Awareness is key |  |
| Creating our own website to teach is really a good idea. By this way, it's easier for teachers to control who should be in the group wna who not. It's a much safer way to teach students. What's more, the privacy of students is better protected. However, at the same time, the teacher has to pay lot of attention to the Website created and thus it might be better for som teachers to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages to do this. |  |
| I also agree that before these tools are to be used in the classroom they should be chosen very carefully. As a teacher it is our responsibility to keep our students safe at all times. When a social bookmarking site or blog is used in the classroom, it should be one that is specifically created to be used in a school setting. There are many social websites that are specifically created to be used in a school setting. This is done to keep the privacy and keep certain things from going all over the word wide web. I believe that since students are young and vulnerable, this is how it should be done in school. |  |
| When I went to the field experience, I realized that the school I worked in was really good at protecing the privasy and safty of students. Their systems for students could merely be allowed by the staffs who work there and why it is used should also be provided. Even though it's kind of annoying for teahers to provide the reasons for having a look at the profiles of their own students, but they could understand this. That's good. |  |
| Personally, from experience I have found that I find it bet to utilize in-house websites and tools such as blackboard that limits the availability of student content to either single persons, instructor, or to the class. Otherwise, as a teacher the worst possible fear can be exposing your students to possible exploitation or insecure situations due o online activities. I personally have lots of public information on the internet solely from class, and luckily it so far to my attention has never been used against me or hurt my academic or professional standing insofar. |  |
| It is really hard to keep students 100% safe when using the web, even in school.  I try very hard to use web tool specificially designed for educational realms, but these are not always reliable or avialble for the exact purpose we want them.  In order to increase safety in situatins like this that might be a "gap" in student's sfaety, I will always encourage to use common sense tactics like only using their school e-mail address which can easily be monitored or by bringing the parents in on the project.  Most of the time, these gaps in security are small (Googling topics/basic internet research etc...) but when the gaps seem like they wcould be large ones, I have no problem bringing parents in on the projet. |  |
| I would say it’s difficult for teachers to control what the students say on blogs and group discussions for classes. Maturity comes into play with this issue. It depends on what age group you are working with when utilizing blogs and social bookmarking in a classroom setting. Teachers need to trust their students in regards to what is said and done over the internet. The internet is available by essentially everyone and I don’t believe there is a concrete privacy option. I would say the only thing you can do is introduce the use of online blogging/discussion in school when the students are believed to have reached the appropriate mature age. If some type of privacy issue or cyber bulling arises, then you may intervene and attempt to solve the problem. At the end, the children will grow up and will mature. Sometimes the best and most effective way of learning is through trial & error and learning from your mistakes. After a while, the children will adjust and act more appropriately. |  |
| Cyber bullying is a serious issue that schools struggle to combat. What do you think teachers and the school can and should do to deal with this issue? |  |
| This is such a difficult and important question! I don't have a perfect solution, but one thing I think schools can do is to monitor the in-person behavior of their students. Careful observation by teachers and support staff may provide some clues as to what's going on outside of school. In addition, it is important that schools educate students about the dangers of cyberbullying, perhaps by sharing some extreme cases with tragic consequences. This depends of course on the age of students, and what the school feels is appropriate to share with them. |  |
| Yeah, the education of students about cyber bulling should take the age and varience of students into consideration. Teachers and schools should also know what to share and what should not be referred to. Students who are in middle schools and high schools are at a  very sensitive age, sometimes, if examples are not appropriatly provided, worse outcomes would happen. |  |
| No question age should be taken into consideration, but I would argue that the earlier you can stomp out cyber bullying the better. Nothing makes my blood boil more than older students picking on younger students, cyber or not. You can't ban different ages from interacting, but being more proactive in different aged social events could be beneficial. |  |
| I thiink you are right about that: if we teach them to have good character and to be responsible, moral people, that will cover all areas of their lives. |  |
| I think that cyberbullying is not only something serious that schools try to combat, but also something that society at large tries to combat.  Cyberbullying can range from embarrassing posts or pictures to threats, harrassment, or stalking via online forums.  Cyberbullying most often occurs in teenagers and young adults that is why it is a growing problem in schools.  Teachers, school, and parents can do numerous things to protect children from cyberbulling.  Teaching about the safety and security of using the Internet is important.  Being able to monitor where students post information is a key.  Making sure that students know how to handle a cyberbullying situation is important.  Education is needed on how to respond so that the situation is not escalated.  Also, it is important to document all cyberbullying and alert authorities when it is occurring.  Education about online safety is key. |  |
| Yes Katie, education seems to be our answer, and I liked that you added educating students what to do when it occurs to them or someone they know, or even hear about it.  Many of the unfortuante cyber bullying stories happened over time and other students may and/or family members may have  been aware of "something" going on whether it's the situation, or that the child is behaving differently. Teachers need to be on the lookout for changes in behavior, withdrawn, sadness, a-typicaly behaviors. etc. and intervene when necessary. |  |
| While here, I relly want to know how do you deal with the situation if something like that happens in your classrooms Katie.  I know it's good for teachers to be good listeners, but they are our students, how can we do to help them? |  |
| Katie, I agree with you that society at large, and not just schools, is responsible for combatting cyberbullying. If we treat this only as an educational issue, I think we are missing the point. As Mengying mentioned below, this is largely a moral issue, and is not restricted to schoolchildren. |  |
| I think it is a moral issue in its essence. Adolescents who bully others on the Internet either show similar inappropriate behavior in real life or have the intent to do so but are suppressed by regulations or rules at school & home. For the latter ones, who are usually the victims of school bullying, they commit cyber bully to work off their anger because they can hide identity on the Internet. So in my view, it is important to let them know that you should be cautious with ethics and morality both in real world as well as in virtual world. Teachers and parents should shape students’ behavior and teach them what is appropriate and what is not |  |
| Mengying- I absolutetly agree with you!  I also think that even any form of cyber bullying, no matter how small needs to be taken seriously.  There should be consequences for any form of cyber bullying.  I was just reading in People Magazine today about a student who was cyber bullied and she told her mom.  Her mom alerted the school and nothing was done about it, so the mom pulled the girl from that school.  The mom decided to homeschool the girl and take her off of Facebook and Instagram, but unfortunately the cyber bullying did not stop.  It continued on other sites such as ask.fm and kik.com, ones that I personally had never heard about.  In the end, the girl became so depressed that she took her own life.  The girls that were bullying her had no remorse.  Luckily law enforcement stepped in and said something needs to be done.  The one girl was put in a detention center.  It is so disheartening to see the effects of cyber bullying!  If you want to read this article, check it out in this week's People Magazine. |  |
| I want to check out that article in People Magazine, thanks for sharing.  How sad, and if the school had gotten involved we might have seen a different ending.  I think we all need to send the same message, no bullying, whether online or face to face.  There is so much going on at the students homes, which is also why we need to get parents involved and teach students. |  |
| I feel really sad to hear abou this. How could that happen?!  I prefer to read this article, too |  |
| Katie- could you link it? |  |
| Audrey, I agree that there are serious issue with cyber bullying.  I have talked to students that have bullied students online and those that have been bullied.  One boy bullied each of his classmates, to the extent he alienated himself from everyone.  The boys family did not know he was bullying and came to the school to find out why he didn't want to be there, that he didn't have any friends.  I just happened to find out when I asked a group of my students why no one played with this boy.  They told me he was a cyberbully.  I think we need to be proactive in every way.  Just as we have the ongoing conversation about bullying in general, this topic definitely needs to be added to the curriculum.  I teach "Habits of Mind" with my students and so character and how we treat one another is something we talk about often, but not everyone understands the power of classroom atmosphere.  I think we can all make a difference in what we teach, classroom environment, building character ed programs, but us teachers don't necessarily see or hear what goes on at home, the bus, the bus stop, etc.  We need students to be the voice at those times and educate them how to share info that they hear about or know about.  Zero Tolerance, and the definition of bullying and laws that are now in place should be adhered to in cyberbullying as well as bullying.  We have had extensive training in our building on noticing bullying behaviors and our responsibility for reporting it.   Here is some additional information about bullying and the definition.  National Bullying Prevention Center:  http://www.pacer.org/bullying/resources/info-facts.asp  There are some great resources here under the "toolkit for educators" on the left toolbar. |  |
| I love  the Website you shared, Monica. Thank you so much.  There are many usefull information about bullying and how to protect ourselves from that. With a clearer understanding about this issue, more teahcers and students would be more confident about applying technologies into classroom learning.  I really like the Educator Toolkits part of the Website. Classroom, community and students Toolkits are provided and information about how to prevent cybercrime is clearly listed out.  It's a cool Website! |  |
| I like the idea of habits of mind you brought up. What does it focus on, the one who is being bullied's mind or the other way round. Can you please explain more about what it is and how you teach them? |  |
| Monica, I like your ideas about we can make a difference in the content we teach, classroom envrionment etc. All these are good ways to make an immersive environment to educate kids. Thanks for the website! |  |
| Monica,  Thanks for the resources.  Zero Tolerance, true! Cyber bullying heavily do harm to one's mental health, and may lead to irreparable result...Just like girl in Katie's story...  I like your idea that legal measures against cyber bulling should come into effect. |  |
| It is a critical issues. Students could be bullied or bully others. I think first we should let students know even if you use a net ID, you should take responlity of your own behaviors and words. No matter it is virtual or real word, bullying other people is wrong. Even some people do something wrong, it doesnot mean other people have the right to punish him/her. If so, why do we need law? Second, we should let students know, if he/she is the victim of cyber bullying, they need to tell other people, such as parents or teachers. Sometimes, for some privacy reasons, students might not want to pour out their bullying experience, as it is possible the bullying transfer from net world to real world. Therefore, especially teachers need to be more carefully to protect student's privacy, just in case. |  |
| I sometimes think that children think they are untouchable about what happens on the Internet.  THere needs to be consequences and children need to understand how to use the Internet in a responsible way.  I think this could be incorporated into a computer class offered at schools. |  |
| When it comes to the eduaction od children, education becomes more complex. They are so easy to be hurt or involved into cyberbullying or cybercrime when they don't know. What's more, it's hard for teacher to make them understand why they cannot do them. That's really hard. |  |
| Excellent point Katie and I completely agree. Children believe just because they are behind a screen and no one can see them, then they can say and do what they want. They need to realize that this is not true and that there are consquences with behaving inappropriately on the internet. It seems like the majority of everyone here agrees that the best solution is through educating students at a early age the appropriate internet behavior. |  |
| When introducing e-learning onto schools, the leaders should form a group to detect the devil using of Internet. If it happens, schools should have relative measurements to stop it. What's more, a relatively safe online environment should be provided by schools to make sure students are safe to utilize the web of the schools. By this way, if there are people invading the Website of the school illegally, they would be forbidded.  What's more, stduents should be educated and lectured about how to avoid cyber bullying and know taht what they are doing or they will do is illegal and would hurt others. Furthermore, parents should be worned to cooperate with teachers and schools to pay attention to students behaviors when they study online.  Teachers have very illustrated responsibilities about how to conduct students learn online and avoid cyber bullying. Firstly, teachers who form platforms for students to communicate and study should know what they would talk about and what they cannot to make sure students would not be bullied by teachers. Secondly, stduents should be worned not to bully other students. they also should be told the boundries of whther it is a bullying or not. Thirdly, teachers should predict what will happen if they apply e-learning into real classroom teaching, and prepare thwmselves to solve according problems. |  |
| It makes me so upset when I hear stories like the one Katie posted.. and it seems like stories like these are just increasing. I feel like so many schools really just dont care and dont put in as much effort as they should. Yea I see posters up in the hallway that say 'no bullying' and things similar, but in my experience I feel like the schools never really discipline or enact on what they say. |  |
| There are number of ways to take care of cyberbullying; precaution and reaction.  First of all, teachers should be able to detect the sign/ something wrong between students. As you have experience something like this before when you were young, you know what kind of person is likely to be bullied. You can target these students first and see if it happens to others too or not. Sign of bullying usually can be seen in classroom. sometimes it's obvious. Sometimes it's not. Teachers need to pay attention to it. Also, school can set up a way for anonymous report and also for harsh punishment for the cyberbullying- like expel or fine. Educate them what it considered bullying, what is the consequences of bullying, what to do if you are being bullied, Who to report about the bullying, how will school and teacher take action, etc. |  |
| It seems that you have provided a system about how to deal with this phonomenon, Pimsiri. I appreciate it very much. |  |
| This is an essential question to consider as educators. Cyberbullying is often something that is difficult to control becasue it most always occurs out of school. It is hard to monitor becasue students can be it from their computer or mostly from the cell phones. However, so often the effects of cyberbullying trickle in to the school and classroom as well. This is how it can try and be controlled and monitored. Teachers can explain to students that they do not tolerate any form of bullying and that includes cyberbullying. If students know that they can come to their teacher in confidence about any form of bullying this can hopefully be prevented. This is such a hard issue to deal with that we as teachers need to let our students know that we are here to support them and that any form of bullying is not and will not be tolerated. |  |
| And sometimes, the students who are bullying others don't think they have done something wrong. But for other students, what the students have done might hurt them . So, there is also a factor of sensetivity here. Different people are sensitive to different words. It makes the identification of cyberbullying hard and more complex. |  |
| While there are many measures that I have heard of, I think holding students accountable for their actions as if they occurred in school grounds to be the most effective. Many establishments try to impose bans on certain social medias, and truthfully it often times leads to alternative sites to be found and used and other forms of bullying to appear. Cyber bullying should be treated just like bullying on school grounds with similar punishments in place. |  |
| I'm not really sure there is anything schools can do to combat the issue of cyber bullying.  I think the biggest probelm with cyber bullying is that it is subtle and occurs in a varitey of ways.  A school can, of course, educate students about it, and try to implement policies that outline punishmnet for cyber bullying.  BUT when it happens on Facebook or the like, does the school really have any legal juristictcion? If course, schools can work to model and promote positive internet culture. |  |
| This is a really tough question to answer, because for the most part, cyber bullying occurs outside of school when students are on the internet during their leisure time. The only thing you really can do is to educate students as early as possible regarding the importance of online safety and behavior. You can also drill into the student’s heads early in their lives the importance of character and moral behavior. “What you say and do when no one else is looking” was the motto that was drilled into my head throughout elementary and middle school growing up. It was all about character and self-discipline. Those two aspects alone can help with preventing cyber bullying, which is a major issue. |  |
| What do you think are bad and good use of PowerPoint presentation in classroom? You can share examples either from teacher or student's perspective. |  |
| PowerPoint is a good tool in classroom learning. However, It also have advantages and disadvantages. It makes leatures clearer and much more understandable for students by  showing them how the content is connected in the leacture. Seconldy, it saves a lot of time. In traditional teaching process, teachers have to write the main concepts down on the blackboard; if they write something wrong, they have to erase them. All of these procedures take lots of time. What teachers would do is to type what you want to teach from computer with PowerPoint, whichis much more convenient. Thirdly, it's hard for techers to teach courses that require lots of pictures or space imagination. Take science for example, the shapes of atoms and how they combined with each other are hard to be understood by students. While, if teachers use PowerPoint to teach, the pictures could be showed easily and thus students could get a better understanding.  However, it would make it harder for stduents  to learn if teachers put everything the Powerpoint, especially for prelimanary, middle school and high school students. When I was in high school, it was hard for me to understand the processes of reasoning if teachers show everything on Powerpoint. While, if they use Powerpoint to introduce general concepts and homework and use blackboard to explain the reasoning processes, a large part of students in my class would understand better. |  |
| Very good point!  Too much information in ppt is boring,too. I also afree that it's very difficult to learn from PPT slides alone. Self-studying with ppt only work for review or with content that you know well already. |  |
| Yes, especially when teachers merely put the main points there. It's hard for students to get a detailed information from learning with PowerPoint. I really appreciate if teachers could put a general frame of the topic on the Power Point and provide the details that are not on the textbooks. By this way, we caould learn with the combination of textbooks and  Power Point. |  |
| I think that PowerPoint is a great tool to use in the classroom for presentation purposes.  It is an easy way to arrange your thoughts and ideas, so that students can understand the content.  There are both pros and cons to using PowerPoint for a presentation purpose.  Pros   * Makes it easy for each slide to hold a new idea * Helps with transitions * Allows you to include visuals with your thoughts * Allows you to incorporate animations * Links can be included to take you to a virtual source * You can add colors and themes * You can add notes to the bottom where viewers can't see them   Cons   * It allows for you to write as much as you want on a slide- this could lead you to being too wordy * Boring to click through each slide * Connects the presenter to the computer * You need to put in extra effort to make slides visually appealing |  |
| I really appreciate that we could use Power Point to make notes. Teachers could use it to write down the details in class teaching and students could make notes on the Power Pooint to make them understand better. I use it to make notes, too. I really think it helps a lot. |  |
| Katie- I hate to disagree with you, but from my own experience, Powerpoint can be very handy as a teacher tool, and student learning tool.  Your CON list is a good list, but I don't find that it takes a lot of time to avoid those problems.  And I think it is important to never allow the Powerpoint to become the lesson, it should only SUPPORT the lesson and provide a visual reference |  |
| My biggest pet peeve with Powerpoint is when the presenter reads directly off the slide- it's so boring! Making a Powerpoint can also take more time than making other types of presentations.  However, I personally find Powerpoint to be very useful in my own teaching. As all of my students are second language learners, it helps them to see the main points written down in addition to hearing them. One feature of Powerpoint that I like to (selectively) utilize is animation. If I am trying to get the group to practice a new grammatical structure, I can leave a blank, ask the class for the answer, and then bring the correct answer up on the screen. I could do this by writing the same sentences on the whiteboard, but it would be very slow and inefficient |  |
| Me neither. I dont see the point of reading everything on the slides for audiences when they can read themselves.  I like the way you utilize your presentation for class. Learning with the aid of PPT can be fun or boring depending on the design. |  |
| I agree with you, Lily.  When I was in college, some professors would not like to do the new Powerpoint that was really usefull for students' learning, and thus they just use the ones that were downloaded from the school system. However, some items on the PowerPoint would not be taught also showed up there. This situation made us feel really bad and most of the time, we were lost for that we had no idea whether we should master it or not.  In the class related to how to prepare lesson plan and do Powerpoint, I was taught not to download the materials from Websites directly. Maybe you could find really a good one, but most of the time, the one you find is not the one that really usefull. |  |
| Lily- I agree with you.  I hate it when people read directly off the slides.  The slides are important points that you want your audience to understand and then you go more in depth about them.  I think it is a great way to review concepts with little reading.  I also enjoy the printing functions because you can print note pages for your audience.  This provides them space to write the other interesting facts that relate to your main points.  PowerPoint is also positive presentation tool because it forces the teacher to take the time before the lesson to think about what he/she is going to be teaching and the order to teach it in.  It is a great way to get your thoughts organized |  |
| You raise a good point, Katie. Sometimes the act of making a PPT can help me organize my thoughts about the topic more easily than trying to make my own outline.  I often print out the notes view for myself, but not for my students. That's an interesting idea! |  |
| I have seen that before Katie, where the presentor provides slides and mini boxes to the right to take our own notes.  I think it depends what orr purpose is for using a powerpoint as well.  So, where I might not with younger students, I would with a teacher audience.  Also, I think using a power point has pros to provide a visual as students are working, so, you provide some power points and might show a video, then you want students to work collaboratively, then you could pose questions or a visual of what they need to accomplish in their groups, so it would aid in providing directions for collaborative work. |  |
| That's a great way for using PPTs Monica!  I have turned more to usine Prezi as a presentation tool because I think they are more visually appealing.  I also encourage my students to use this type of tool and they love it! |  |
| Yes, making the PowerPoint all by teacher themselves helps a lot. The most important thing is it helps to organize the lesson. Secondly, it also helps to find out the shortcomings of the lesson. Sometimes, what we have prepared might be easy for us to understand, because we have already known the knowledge; while for the students, it might be in the opposite way. Reading our Pointment again and again we could think more ways to organize the knowledge and whether more detailed information shoule be provided. |  |
| I like the way you use PowerPoint in your class. When I learn grammer in high school, I'd like teacher to write these rule on the blackboard, or I will worry about is what I understand right? But it is true, if teachers wright everything on the blackboard, it will slow down the pace of the class. |  |
| I have never used PowerPoints in a classroom setting, and have only taught K-7 students, so other grades might find them more useful.  I use anchor charts and post them on the walls allow students to understand how they were constructed and my students often have a role in them as we talk or they are created.  Pros:  They create a visual for the learner.  If done correctly can have a powerful impact on how the message is received by the audience.  Less is more when it comes to presentations.  So, another positive is if the presenter understood all the nuances of a powerpoint presentation so the audience could take away important information.  Con:  Often the presenter does not use the powerpoint as intended and the information on the slides can be confusing (as we saw in the video about what not to do with a PowerPoint).  They can be boring (I agree with Lily)  What we have available now where technology is concerned far surpasses the PowerPoint era.  So, although PowerPoints are used and students use them for presentations, they are not as widely used as they once were. When students create PowerPoints in the classroom, more often than not they are just presenting what they learned about a topic, concept or skill. |  |
| Do you have an idea of a good PPT slides for class should look like? |  |
| Some graphics, few words, organized, appealing to the eye....and not too many slides!  Short and to the point.....no pun intended! |  |
| Good point! I like the powerpoints with less words on it, but you could get the detailed information, which is also very importand information for you to obsorb.  Most of the time, the PowerPoint is a visual product. If you put so many words on the same page, it would be so annoying. |  |
| You bring up a good point; and a point that has been drilled in my head by teachers over the years. It's key to not use alot of words and to not read the PowerPoint word by word. The less words/less slides and more talking that is done by the presenter, benefits both the class and the presenter with actually learning the information. Most times, students will put all of the information on the slides from their research without really learning the material. |  |
| I like that PowerPoint can carry more information than other media, users can insert text, picture, audio and video in one file. The same reason, I like its hyperlink function, while sometimes it doesn't work.  However, it can also be a weakness, if the user doesn't not organize all the content well. And audience will be distracted by these good-looking materials, lost in that environment.  PowerPoint is a good tool in terms of software, the key point is how users deal with those functions to achieve their goals. |  |
| I agree with you- Powerpoints can sometimes be very distracting if they are too complex and fancy. I have also had difficulties with Hyperlinks not working as well. For example, if I'm linking to a website, I usually open the website in my browser ahead of time because I don't trust PPT to do it right. |  |
| I like that you brought up the point that fancy ppt can distract learners. I personally think that ppt effects of sound and visual should be used proportionately |  |
| I think we could make Power Point in difffent styles according to the atages of students. For preliminary school students, if we put a lot of fancy pictures and interesting videos on it, it could help to make kids concerntrate on the study. They are relatively young than middle school students and they cannot ocntrol themselves very well. So fancy Power Points would help teachers a lot.  For middle school and high school students, they are relatively mature, and thus teachers should not put so many fancy materials on Power Point. Otherwise, it would make students think that the teacher makes them feel stupid. |  |
| I agree. After taking Professor Foley's class in Assistive Technologies, I have to say I learned about the power of the simple PowerPoint. If PowerPoint is presented with too many fancy transitions and texts and colors and graphics it can take away from the power of the presentation. It is vital to keep it as vanilla as possible to keep the attention on the topic and not the technology. |  |
| I like that you brought up the point of powerpoint being a distraction. I have to admit that this is not soemthing that I had thought of. I think it most definitely can be a distraction if there is too much information or if it is too busy. This is something that needs to be taken into consideration when powerpoint is being used. You want it to be informative but not a distraction for the viewer. it should act as a guide and not the main discussion avenue. When this is done and it is not too busy, I believe that powerpoint is an effective and useful tool. |  |
| The extent of the distraction of PowerPoint depends on how the teacher use it, I think. If the teacher puts everything on it, it's more easier to make students be bored to look at it always. The teacher should provide students some cules about where to concerntrate when he or she is teaching, either on the Powerpoint or the blackboard.  Sometimes, students should concerntrate on lectures and what the teacher is writing on blackboard; while other time, students should listen to the teacher and look at the Power Point. |  |
| Good point. Distraction...  How to organize materials in a rational and visual appearling way is what we need to consider. I can't help thinking about PowerPoint slides created by one of my undergrad teacher. She like putting gif images on slides. They are cute and easily capture our attention. I admit it. However, some images are irrelevant to the topic or have little connection with what she is talking about. So apparently, we began to focus on those lovely pictures rather than paying attention to her presentation. |  |
| I want to share my personal experience here. I together with other classmates attended a lecture about PowerPoint Design in undergrad. Before that, just like what demonstrate in the video “How NOT to use PowerPoint”, we put too much information on slides and would like to create animation in every possible place to make it “fantastic”. Both my classmates and I didn't realize how annoying it would be until that presenter told us. And apparently, we were largely influenced by that lecture. All my teachers were surprised to see everyone in class have exactly the same PowerPoint Design pattern in presentation. The pattern is to use an image related to the topic as the background of one slide and place the key points to the background of “background image” or add a semitransparent bar (usually a grey bar) to put the key words. It is the pattern we followed and used in every presentation for almost half a year. Then, a guest professor from other school, who taught a selective course and one of my classmates took it, saw his slides for the final presentation and told him they were attractive however not “formal”. The pattern we followed do grasp listeners’ attention by big topic-related image and keywords in bold inform them what the presenter is talking about. However it is not good choice for an academic presentation because too many images makes it “informal”, said the professor. From his words, I learnt that what sort of presentation, an academic one or simply an introduction, should be taken into account in PowerPoint design. |  |
| Yes, you are right. Meng ying.  Sometimes, especially when it comes to lectures, Power Point shuld be made precisely.  If the lecture is related to research, the methods, results and so on should be highly condesed and mainly points should be provided. |  |
| Power Point presentations are a good way to organize and present information, present images and other media, and reinforce verbal instruction and lecture with visuals. Power points let you bullet key information you want to highlight for your students. In response to a previous post, learners that have difficulty keeping up with notes can be given a printed out version of the slides. I have also seen a teacher use the drawing tool on a smart board then immediately printed out what was drawn on the screen and gave it out for students to keep.  A few problems one might have with power point is a technical issue, such as a computer malfunctioning or the power going out. Also, some slides may contain too much information, making instruction boring or confusing.  However, overall I think power points are great. |  |
| That's a point when we use PowerPoint or other technologies in classroom teaching. Some times, the style of the slides cannot be opened in the computer of the classroom. It's really frustrating!  When I was in college, one of my professor tolds us. As a teacher, you have to prepare for at least 2 versions of preparation for lectures. Just in case you cannot open it in class. |  |
| Sometimes your PowerPoint presentation looks different on another computer because the aspect ratio may different between the computer you create slides on and screen you present on . You need to resize it before the lecture to enture that everthing looks fine during the presentation in case of problems like slides not taking up the whole screen. |  |
| Let's not forget that it is very user friendly! |  |
| In my teaching I fiind powerpoint to be very useful and helpful. However, I agree that it is extremely boring when the slides are just read off of and some consider that to be "teaching". Instead, I use powerpoint to guide my teaching. I put all of the useful information that I need on the slides and supplement what is missing as I teach. I find that this gives students something to reference and is where I write my problems as well. I can include the most pertinent information for my students to record in their guided notes. it is an excellent guide and way to display the necessary information for my students. I am not one to just stand up there and read off of ot. Plus, I don't put that much information on to be able to do this. I believe that the use of powerpoint is a great tool when it can be used effectively and well. |  |
| I agree.. it definitely helps highlight importnat information for the students and can better help guide the teacher along in their instruction. It's great for both parties |  |
| Definitely, PowerPoint is a great tool can provide strong help to teachers. I think if teachers use PowerPoint build a guideline and key content show board can help class very much. |  |
| PowerPoint is a frequently-used software producted by Microsoft. Most of people like to use PowerPoint when they do persentation. The good things are PowerPoint can help presenter hold whole presentation content in a frame, reminder presenter where important points are, use images to help students understant text content, and can make presentation more interesting.  However, I find some weaknesses of Powerpoint recently. I think PowerPoint's some slide models are  out of fashion. Online presentation tools a are developed very fast these years. Some of them can make slides have great visual impact instead of boring PowerPoint slides. Also, sometimes students always focus on text on the PowerPoint slides but not on what are teachers saying and miss some important points. |  |
| PowerPoint has it's advantages and disadvantages in the classroom for both teachers and students. As a student, PowerPoints are a great visual in the classroom especially for students who are visual learners. As a teacher, PowerPoints serve as an easy and manageable tool of presenting information to the class. Some disadvantages of PowerPoints in a classroom from a teachers perspective is maintaining the student's attention throughout the entire class. If the students know that the PowerPoint will be posted on Blackboard or another online education database, then theres the chance that the students may zone out during the class. I personally find the use of PowerPoints in a classroom effective as a student. I am a visual learner and will learn better through examples and slides on PowerPoints, even if the PowerPoint is available to the class online. |  |
| 1. 1) I think that PowerPoints are an extremely effective tool in regards to use a supplementary tool. When PowerPoint is used to aid a presentation or a speech or a lecture on a particular subject it can be very effective. The only downside in  scenario like this is when students only take notes off of the PowerPoint and either don't pay attention during class or don't attend the class altogether and look at the PowerPoints online. 2. 2) I believe an ineffective way to present PowerPoint is when it is used as a main focus of the lecture/talk. I have seen this occur particularly often when students are presenting. Reading straight off of the PowerPoint is a crutch and altogether boring. This technique should be avoided at all costs |  |
| I love using PowerPoint in the classroom to the point that I actually TRY to create PowerPoints for as many lessons as I have.  At first blush, a lot of fellow teachers that I tell this to have the same reaction of disdain.  I think it is often seen as unimaginative and a "cop out"  to normal instruction.  This could be the case if the teacher is not careful about crafting the presentaion well.  In my experience the PowerPoints that I use to support my lessons have lots of advantages:   * my handwrting is very, very poor - students don't have to struggle to "see" the board notes * Notes can easily be printed, emailed, and uploaded for students whose IEPs require notes. * I always feel that my students take PowerPoints more seriously- so when we begin a new Unit, I try to use PPt to "officialize" the information they need. * video, images and audio are all embeddable- AND with the smardboard, I can write and annotate amy image or text on the slide * A good way to record notes during class discussion so all can see.  Just pick a student to type.   I use powerpoint for almost all of my courses, and with electives like my Broadcast Journalism class- it helps keep me organized and ready to go.  I add notes to each slide for my own uses, and I found a powerpoint remote app for transitioning. (I don't always have to transition though, sometimes I only use 1 or 2 slides in the course of an entire period. |  |
| According to this week's reading, what do you think of this statement ?  "Technology in schools has long been criticized as**oversold but underused**"  Do you think school overly invested in technology? |  |
| I think that this statement is true in different ways.  Technology is something that has been pushed in multiple ways from multiple entitities.  We have read the research that it helps students learn and achieve.  Teachers are provided multiple professional development opportunities to learn about technology.  The problem is that there still is a gap between the technology that is present and what is being used.  In pre-service teacher education programs, teachers are instructed on how to use technology effectively and how to integrate it into their curriculum.  They are usually made to add technology to their lesson plan write ups.  So why are we not seeing these teachers actively using technology when they enter the teaching field?  My guess is that teachers have so much more to focus on that they "think" they don't have time to go above and beyond and figure out the best ways to use technology.  They don't have the necessary time or resources to use it effectively.  They might not even have the support to sustain such types of lessons.  These are all just ideas that we can use for blaming purposes.  Yes teachers need each of those characteristics to succeed, but they need to feel confident in using the technology.  Once they feel confident, everything else will come easy.  Also, they need to be seekers of new technology and developments.  Staying current in the field will keep them up-to-date and knowledgeable about what is going on.  Then, maybe technology won't be underused. |  |
| Teachers need to get knowledge about how to use technologies in classroom. And the most important thing is to make sure that when technologies are applied, students could learn better.  The reality is that the application of technologies in classroom teaching is very hard, because much more problems should be taken into consideration than traditional teaching, such as the equipment of the school, the policies of the school, whether the course you are teaching could apply technologies into it and so forth.  While, as a student teacher, who will be the teacher of a new time, we should learn how to apply technologies into real teaching situation. |  |
| I agree with this saying in some extent. Many schools have invested to renew the equipments in schools, such as computers and related equipments according to the requirements of the governments and related organizations. While in most prelimanary schools, middle schools and high schools, these tools are not fully used. In some schools, there are not courses related to them. When I was in middle school we have technology rooms, but we ararely have chances to learn in them. Most ofthe time, these rooms are used to deal with the monitors of the government.  While, in colleges, because of the appearance of College 2.0, the faculties have to learn how to use technologies to teach students better and students have  to learn how to use technologies better in order to get a better understanding about the content and find a good job in the future. What's more, colleges have more money to but new computers and get more employers to help to keep the technologies used by students safe enough. |  |
| I think that schools sometimes eschew basic, useful technologies for more trendy ones. For example, in my building at SU, we just had an 80-inch monitor installed in one room, while other rooms still have chalkboards, faulty projectors, etc. However, in other ways, I feel that SU has some truly useful technologies that are well utilized. For example, the document camera is a simple device that allows me to present grammar topics without having to make a powerpoint, or ask students to display their work for a peer editing. So I don't entirely agree with this statement, although there is certainly some truth in it. |  |
| Lily- I am glad that you brought up Syracuse University in your post.  Syracuse is so forward thinking and promotes technology, but yet I feel that they are lagging behind in what they are preaching.  I often see this within the education department.  As a teacher to pre-service teachers, I preach using technology in every aspect of your teaching.  It should seamlessly integrate into the instruction.  Yet, I am teaching in a classroom that only has a document camera and projector, not even a Smartboard.  How am I supposed to teach about using all these different forms of technology and not be able to have the students interact with the technology.  In this aspect it is being oversold.  I want to use the technology but it is not available.  I think that if schools are going to mandate the use of technology they need to provide access to it. |  |
| Wow, that must be especially frustrating when you are teaching about technology! Of course, I'm sure you are a good example to your students for what to do with limited resources, but it would be nice if you could have access to a greater range of technologies. |  |
| Some schools have this situation and it's really hard for us to apply new ways of teaching.  Even though we could find better ways to use the limited resources, there might be some difficulties. The stduent is the center of teaching. If they are used to learn in traditional ways, but you introduce a new way of learning. it's hard for students to understand you or it takes a very long time to make them adapt themselves to the new way of learning. |  |
| You've got a point there! I know what it feels like to teach in a place where technology is not available.  Do you think how can school solve this problem? what do they need to make sure that the curriculum and tech are available at the same time? |  |
| I think the main connection of the curriculum and techs is the teacher. The teachers should be well prepared to teach with techs if the schools intend to make students learn in that way. If the school originally doesn't have curricula that are taught with techs, students should be taught how to use the techs properly before they choose the courses. Not all curricula could be taught with techs, especially when it comes to the special situations of different schools. |  |
| Agreed- it is hard to learn new technolgy well, and then to integrate it into your curriculum can be an immense undertaking.  I think we as technophiles often forget that there are lots of people out there (many very smart people as well) who find learning tehcnology to be a very difficult skill.  I always think of it like breaking in a new pair of shoes everytime you try to use new a nrew tech tool.  You ahve to get used to the way it works inorder to make it work for you.  Some people have avery hard time with this, and will natrually fall back on the "old-ways." |  |
| I see your point, Lily. SU maybe one of a good example of school that well-utilized technology in classroom. Do you think technology is utilized better in university level? |  |
| I hope so, but I'm not sure that's always the case. |  |
| I agree with this statement because there is a wealth of technology available and either teachers don't understand how to use it in a powerful learning way or they might not know what's really available even though they have the technology.  The investment was a wise one but the education around how to incorporate it should have gone hand in hand.  I also think that a teacher could be using technology, but not in the best way possible, which sets limits for using technology.  The education needs to be ongoing and current.  Things are changing so rapidly in technology that staying current is important. |  |
| I agree that there is a disconnect between the implementation of technology and its use. Teachers and classrooms will usually get new technology, but then the teachers have no idea how to use it effectively. This is where there needs to be training for teachers. They need to be shown how to properly use this in their classrooms and with their students. I think that when this is done, we can have the most effective use of technology in our schools. |  |
| yeah, especially in some rural areas, teachers there might not have lots of euqipments for technologies, but they should also be taught to use them. However, they also have to be taught how to use them in a much more effective way. |  |
| I agree, Monica. We cannot exclude the use of technology in our teaching.  As technology has become more common part of our lives, we need to learn and select a good use of it for our students.  I also like that you mention "Education needs to be ongoing and current"  This statement make me think of maintainance cost of the technology. It would be a huge cost if schools invest in technology and keep it update all the time. What do you think about that? |  |
| Yes- and they need to be seekers of knowledge.  They need to search out the new forms of technology and how they are being utilized in the classroom. |  |
| For some schools, I think it is true. They chase the newest popular equipments, but less teachers would like to use them in their classroom. However, I also know some opposite cases. Teachers have great ideas on how to use technology to facilitating their teaching and students' learning.  In some of the former situations, schools just bought software or computers, Smart boards without any supplement support for users, teachers try and fail and are lost their patience and interest. Than people will blame it on technology. However, it is not fair to say that technology is good or bad (even I admit some software is not users friendly...), as they don't have mind, they are trucks, users are drivers. Also, nobody can drive trucks without lerning how to drive. |  |
| Jiaming,  I like your analogy of driving trucks without learning how to drive, very difficult.  So, I agree, support and training needs to be available for anything that is new or bought or implemented.  My district does offer training but it's few and far between and seems to be those that take it, do so because they are interested in learning. |  |
| Awww...I like your analogy!  Thank you for bringing up critical point here. People's attitude towards using technology really matters and should be taken into account. Technology itself is not the only factor to be blamed in this case. |  |
| Based on my experience, I agree with this statement. We have teacher station, overhead projector and digital projector equipped in each classroom at my undergrad school. But teachers seldom make full use of these technologies. Presentation (PowerPoint slides projected to the big screen) seems to be the main usage. Some instructors would utilize an overhead projector to illustrate contents on printed materials. That’s all. I don’t know the reason they never exploited other functions is that they want to do something else apart from the basic features however they don't know how, or the current usage situation can meet their demands so they don't need to learn extra things. Also I agree with Jiaming, certain guidance and support is necessary to help teachers in implementing technologies. |  |
| I actually do agree with this statement. I even heard a teacher say the other day he doesn't understand why the school spent so much money on smart boards when all the teachers use them for are power point presentations. I truely do see teachers most of the time just using their smart boards for power point... i don't know if it's because they haven't been trained enough or do not know how to use the technology to their best advantage. I know there is training on the basics of using smart boards but it would be interesting to see the effecs of a training workshop of specific subjects? Maybe teachers could learn more about tools or apps they could use in their specific subject area? |  |
| I know that in China, certified teachers who have already taught in schools have to be trained for new knowledge in teaching and tested for the new knoeledge they have obtained. But I really think that how to use technologies in teaching is not taught. Maybe it is because of the special situation in China that we don't have lots of computers in schools. Or sometimes, the training is simplified to be in that way. But I have to say, it's not a good way to train teachers. |  |
| Do you think that this is more about skills problem or attitude problem? |  |
| I think it's more about attitude problem. If the teachers have a good attitude for teaching, they prefer to learn more about the new knowledge and make themselves refreahed; otherwise, even the teachers who originally have lots of knowlesge about how to use technologies to teach, they would not like to apply it into real situation, because it costs lots of time. While, most teachers don't want to learn more about how to use techs, unless they are forced to do so, especially the teachers in suburbs and rural areas in China. |  |
| I both agree and disagree with this statement. One, I think that there is a push for technology in schools which is good becasue times are changing. However, I also think that some teachers are not properly trained on how to use and implement the technology. This causes it to be underused. That is where there is a discrepancy. Schools should invest in technology because it is what students are familiar with. When there is such an investment in technology, teachers need to properly be trained in how to use it. If this is done, then it can, hopefully, be used to its full extent in schools. Therefore, allowing it to be oversold but overused. With that though, comes the issus of time. It is often hard to train teachers especially, older teachers, how to use technology. Those are the teahers that need to be trained in order to become more familiar and confident with technology. Until there is a major change, I believe that this statement will continue to hold some truth. |  |
| I have to admit that it's so hard for the old teacher to learn how to use technologies. Teaching in traditional ways has become the habit of the old teachers and thus it's hard to make them change.  But there is a very good way to get more and more teachers who could use technologies in classroom teaching, whcih is train much more student teachers to be skillfull to use them. What's more, for the teachers who are teaching in schools, if they want to further their study, they would be required to choose a course related to educational technologies. I think in these ways, the situation would be better. |  |
| Technology tend to be relatively new things to teachers as they are always developing. No matter how well they design a course that well incorporate technology into their teaching, the plan is not going to be settled. It has to be changed according to the new trend of the technology every year or two. It is very frustrating because new technology is usually totally new invention instead of minor changeof the older version and it takes time to learn. So, the time spent for creating right and appropriate use of technology might not worth it. |  |
| You are right. New technologies are emerging all the time, and it is impossible and useless to pursue the new trend. It is really time-consuming to learn it and make evaluation to see whether it is worthwhile to replace the old one with new thing, or new technology can work as the supplement. And of course, money is also a crtical issue. It is not rare to see  technologies are "oversold but underused". If new technology can not realize its full potential in education system (e.g. no training program to inform teachers), why not just use old one? After all, teachers are more familiar with it. |  |
| Just an exception proving the rule...I had a teacher in undergrad at Syracuse who was obsessed with the newest technology despite her old age. She continually had me testing out new softwares and smart pens and pads to see if there was a chance that we could standardize their use in her class. I feel like she should be commended on the outreach of finding new software, however I feel as if she had settled on gaining mastery in a certain few of her technologies that were already in use it could have been a better fit. |  |
| I agree with you. Training is not easy, even teachers learned how to use technology, they may not use it efficiently or effectively. So bringing technology into school is very complicated. |  |
| Yeah. Most of the time, how to use techs cannot be taught. Teachers themselves have to learn from practice. I really have a very strong feeling about this. When how to use techs was taught in class, I just wrote down the notes and I thought I have known how to use it. However, in fact, its not. The notes are all about theories, when it comes to reality, lots of problems appear. How to deal with these problems is not taught by teachers because he or she cannot predict all the things that would happen on the Internet, how could  you solve this? one practical way to resolve this is to practice how to use high techs by teachers themselves. |  |
| To answer your next question Pim, I believe that it is largely a lack of knowledge. Yes there are attitude problems, but I believe that if teachers really understood and knew how to utilize these technologies, they would implement them better in their classroom. |  |
| Thats the key Tyler. The older generation of teachers don't know how to effectively implement technology in their teaching methods. Students, for the most part, are familiar with technology which is why teachers need to be more familiar and experts in utilizing technology with their teaching methods. |  |
| No, I don't believe schools are overly invested in technology. It's the way of life now in this technological advanced world we live in. Whether in the classroom or outside the classroom technology has consumed our lives. Most people use social media in some way, and pretty much everyone owns a smart phone in today's world. School's have been and should continue to use technology as much as possible. It serves as an effective and quick way to contact students from a teachers perspective; and it serves as an effective and quick way to turn in assignments from a students perspective. It's unfortunate that not every school district has the opportunity to utilize technology in the same way, but it has been and will be a growing trend in education. |  |
| I 100% agree with this assertion, because of its prevalency, however this does not signify my distain for the use of technology in the educational or work setting. For instance, in my football meeting rooms at Syracuse University, we have one of the most advanced operating systems in terms of cataloguing football video and its corresponding data subititles. With this new technology the ability to chart data can occur at least 20x as fast as I previously could with the old software. It is incredibly useful.  On the flip side however, we installed this incredible new camera that was supposed to give us the ability to simluate certain tasks at hand and be the new "it" thing. We used it once early on in the semester, with moderate success, and since then due to its technical issues has been little utilized since despite its success. It works boths ways. |  |
| This statement resonates with me because our school district is constantly trying to encourage us (with good intentions) to use new technologies.  We have a whole catalog of inservice sminars about everything from Powerpoint to Smartboard and beyond.  I think it is very easy to be excited about new instructional technology especially when it is very easy to see how it would benefit students.  I think it is a completly different thing to integrate that technology into our curriculum and daily lives.  Of course, there are a host of factors that play into the implementation of thechology: availability, storage, familiarity, time and many, many more.  I think it is easy for a school to become overly invested in technology and distracted fom effective proactice.  However, it is also important to rememeber that technology literacy is important to students who want to be successful in this job market, and including technology as part of a well-balanced education is important. |  |
| Do you think invesment in school's technology is relevant to significant improvement of education?  or it's all about building image for school's reputation? |  |
| I think that investing in technology in schools is important and a must.  This is my belief because I am an advocate for integrating technology into instruction.  Through research and personal experience, I have found that students are more engaged in the content if they are virtually learning it or are experiencing it through some kind of technology.  This is true because students are immersed in technology all day, so incorporating it in their learning will benefit them because it is creating a bridge between their daily lives and school.  As this week's reading stated, technology can be used for multiple purposes within learning environments.  It is a media for inquiry, communication, construction, and expression.  Therefore, technology creates multiple opportunities for students to use the skills that they have to help them learn the educational content. |  |
| Katie,  Yes, I agree about the investment and the importance of it.  What it has to offer as you said, inquiry, communication, constructivism are so imporant to where these students need to be in the 21st century.  I think what is out there needs to be made visual and then teachers could pick and choose what to incorporate to increase student achievement.  The training also needs to be ongoing because of the nature of the changing technology. |  |
| Yeah, I agree. When new ways of learning are introduced into class, students would be much more concerntrated in learning. For kids, if you use Power Point to teach them, it would be easier for you to control the whole classroom learning. Because kids have not so many experience with new technologies, and everything happens in the classroom would be novel to them and thus make them interested in the class. For high school students, the same thing won't works. They have been used to Power Point. But if you provide something new, they would be interested in what you are teaching, just like the little kids. |  |
| agreed- well said. |  |
| Schools invest schools for different reasons, for reputation or improvement of education quality, and sometimes both.  Some schools invest in technologies just for the reputation and thus they could absorb more students. As the development of the society, more and more parents know that it's important for students to master some skills in how to use technologies. Therefore, they would like to make their students to study in a school with more accesses to new technologies.  For some other schools, they invest technologies to help thier stduents learn; while whether they would really improve education quality in these schools or not is different.  In some schools, they have potential teachers to teacher these courses and thus they could use them to help students learn better; if sdtuents get a better understanding, it's easier for them to absorb knowledge in a different styles. This is like a cycle of learning:technologies help students learn better, and the knowledge tusdnets have learned make them better adapted to use technologies to learn. While some schools, such as common public schools, they might not have teachers who coule teach with technologies very well. In order to help students learn, they choose to combine merely a small part of the technologies with traditional teaching to teach. Therefore, the improvement in education would not be improved a lot. |  |
| Xiaoxin- I think you make a good point about schools investing in technology for different reasons.  With regards to the first point, I can see why schools would want to entice students to come to their school.  With declining enrollment in many schools, schools are pushing to up their population or force being closed or combined with other schools.  Whatever they can do to entice more students to come would help with their government aid.  In this instance, it might be technology.  With regards to your other statement about combining technology with teaching, it is all about the teachers having the knowledge to do so positively.  If teachers aren't provided support to integrate technology it is either not going to be done or be done poorly.  This is something that schools need to think about before buying technology. |  |
| Yeah. Some schools also make the excuse that they want to buy more technological equipment to help stduents study, to get money from government. But in fact, merely small part of money is spent on this area, and you have no idea where is the other part of money is. Sometimes, it's really frustrating for you to think about this... |  |
| Dont you think it would be better to merge schools together and and let them use well-equipped technology and tools together? |  |
| That's a good solution. But it also cause problems of transportation. If two schools are not very far from each other, it would be a very good choice. What's more, it also depends on the situations of different schools. Most of the time, if the schools have lots of equipment, they have ways to get lots of money. And most of the time, the students in these schools would be goos study students. If there are many sluckers in the schools that don't have better equipment, I don't think the excellent schools would agree to work with the nomal or below-normal level schools. If they do this, the students in good school might be influenced.  What's more, other problems, such as who teach the sdtuents from other schools, whether they should be taught the same knowledge and so forth, would also appear. |  |
| I agree that this is a good idea in theory, but might run in to some logistical issues in practice, as Xiaoxin mentioned above. |  |
| I think it's about both of those reasons, and that's OK, as long as the technology is truly useful for teachers and students. If having newer technology can improve ease of teaching and learning, as well as promote the reputation of the school, it's a win-win for everyone. My concern is that sometimes teachers and students are not consulted about what they want and need. The technological goals of policy makers should be most closely aligned with the needs of teachers and students. |  |
| I think later on more and more schools would par more attention to make teachers teach with new technologies. Becasue the new standards of science teaching have referred to making students know how to use technologies to learn in an inquiry based way. |  |
| I think both are true. It is not bad that schools want to build a positive reputation. While just as we discussed in other two questions, investment itself may not bring you any improvement of education directly, but it do give teachers and students more choices, such as the accessible technology we discussed before, those cases impress me a lot. Also with technology, teachers can use simulation to help students understand abstract concept, conduct experiments and so on, they can save times when they use PowerPoint instead of writing on the blackboard. Students could have the capability to accomplish some authentic project. |  |
| I have to admit that technologies makes study easier and make stduents' learning more effectively. When i was in middle school, teachers teach with pictures on the papers to help us learn about the different parts of the body. However, it was still hard for us to get a better understanding. While in high school , the biology use 3D pictures on the PowerPoint to help us learn the similar knowledge. Most of the students get the knowledge. |  |
| Very well put, Jiaming. Technology does provide us choice for convenience and better education. The point is not  about having technology, but it is how much you have, how much you use, and how much money you have for maintenance,too. |  |
| I think that schools invest in technology because of the impact it can have on education.  Right now with Common Core Standards and higher level thinking, technology is right there with learning reading, writing, speaking, and listening.  I just think if there is to be a significant improvement in edcuation that related to technology, teachers need to understand what is out there and how to incorporate it and for what purpose.  In my district, I did a needs analysis and found that teachers are just starting to "explore" technology, meaning they are hearing what's out there, and trying it out but it's only word of mouth.  So, Mrs. Smith might be using Edmodo, so her team mate starts using it and just to say they are incorporating technology.  No a powerful way to learn. It's not proactive, it's more reactive.  What might other school districts be implementing that would show a more proactive and appropriate use of technology, that would be ongoing, allow students to be creative and innovative? |  |
| Integrating technology into instruction can improve education. I am certain of that. And whether it would lead to a “significant improvement” or not largely depends on how to use them. We need to use technology in an appropriate way in instruction to achieve a wanted result. As we have already talked about it, it is all about design. While I can’t deny that advanced technologies is helpful to gain reputation, it shouldn't be the primary reason for investing in school’s technology however. I think the correct cause-and-effect relationship should be: More money on technology & appropriate integration----- improvement in education---- higher reputation |  |
| It depends on how wisely the technology is used... if you invest all this money on technology and do not use it to its full potential ... or use it at all, it becomes such a waste. You are keeping possble rich learning experiences from your students. There are also other, less fortunate schools that would probaly love to improve their instruction with this more advanced technology. Older technology can really slow down and hinder instruction. For instance, when I was in high school we had the worst computers known to man and it took just about 10 minutes to just connect to the internet. It wasted so much valuable time. We would have loved newer computers.  Yes I am sure that some richer schools try to do it for reputation... but you should also look at how the technology is being used. |  |
| I am not sure whether students would get apprant improvement in their study with new technologies, but I am sure it helps. While for the schools, they have to evaluate the improvement of students' study and the money they would spend on it. Becasue it is not merely the money spend on the equipment, they also have to employ other people to fix the equipment, teachers to teach with the equipment; if they set up wifi for the equipment, they have to employ some people to make it safe. In this way, continucal money would be spent. If the schools cannot make sure that they could get money in a continual way, they would be worried about what they have done. |  |
| I agree with you, Audrey. Sometimes old, malfunctioning equipment can actually hinder the learning process, rather than help. |  |
| Your highschool example is perfect in this situation. If your school is using older computers and it takes that long to connect to the internet (which is wasting valuable time); is the technology being effective for educational uses. The answer is no. Updated computers and updated technology would take this problem away. If a school is pushing towards technology use in education, then it is extremely important to update the technology in your school; which I believe will help the school's reputation and with the students learning. |  |
| When there truly is a technology deficit, like you present in your case, it can be quite crippling. In our workforces that are demanding greater and greater computer literacy and various technological proficiencies, skills such as computing are a powerful event in their own right. Information that is gathered through these mediums for topics such as humanities, or math, or literature can be at an equal place as the very process of acquring this information |  |
| Mengying, Would you like to explain more about reasons behind this relationship? |  |
| I agree with you. Only buying technology could not bring high reputation, as parents may more care about the quality of teaching, technology is just one aspect of school environment. |  |
| I think technology should be an investment that schools make. For one, with the Common Core Learning Standards there is a technolgoy portion. Students need to be experienced and well versed in technology in order to help them be college and career ready. Technology is there to improve the education of our students. There is so much technolgy that they experience out of school that they should be exposed to it in school as well. It is such a huge part of our society that we would be crazy not to incorporate it into schools as well. Plus, technology is engaging. It helps to hold students attention and there is so much that can be done with it to help them learn. If a school does have a lot of technology it does help to improve its repuation as well. The ultimate goal though, is to help students. With technology there is so much that can be done to improve education and the education of our students. |  |
| I agree, the ultimate goal is to help students (well hopefully that's everyone's goal!). It is important to follow through, though. |  |
| It's a little bit of both. I am all in on technology use in education so I believe that the investment in school's technology is relevant to significant improvement of education. I also agree somewhat that it's about building image for school's reputation. The more updated technology sources a school has, the more effective the school is in their image and getting their name out there. Since the world is more technological based, education needs to be the same way and you can clearly see the changes. There has been more and more online courses over recent years and more online educational databases being implemented into classroom learning. I do still support the in-classroom setting because that's where students learn more effectively in face to face communication settings. In-classroom settings allow teachers to have more control over their students and their learning. It's very important to maintain the traditional classroom while effectively using online and technological based sources. Technology creates more opportunities for students to learn. |  |
| In my opinion it is a bit of both. While technology integration into our schools advancing into the 21st century is vital in order to 1. optimize learning efficiency with the tools available to us and 2. to be sure to be able to communicate and educate with our changing student clientele. While these are vital components of advancing our education, it is also important for us to realize that our students typically aren't the ones driving these decisions directly, it's the administrative powers of learning places. Many of the higher scoring standardized testing institutions belong to more affluent districts, which can afford bette technology, yet not necessarily utilize them in the best manner. Other districts will blindly see the technology in use, and deem it necessary to improve scores. This is not the case, and at  times low  tech solutions are possible at better cost efficiency. |  |
| This is a loaded question I think.  It cuts to the quick of why we are in this course.  I think that technology can provide myriad advantages; we have seen this with tools like assistive technology.  It is important to include technology in the modern curriculum in order to provide students with a well-rounded education that prepares them for the demands of today's job market.  I would agree that sometimes the field of education can be subject to trends, so we shoudl be a little aware of how and when we apply technology.  But sll in all, I think technology is used earnestly in schools. |  |
| PISA and TIMSS provide study reports claim that using computer technology most frequently at school was not related perform better than students using technology less frequently. What's your opinion about this issue? Do you have any thought about the reasons? |  |
| I'm not sure there is a direct link between technology use and learning, although technology CAN be used to facilitate learning if it's used appropriately. Possible reasons for this disconnect include inadequate training in the use of technology, lack of goals for technology use, and the distractions that come along with computer access. I'm sure you all can add many more reasons to my preliminary list! |  |
| I also thought that that research was very interesting. We all think that technology will help students understand the information faster and easier, when in reality we have to think that technology is just another way for them to learn the information.  I do think that when you include technology into your teaching you are hitting students' different multiple intelligences which will help them comprehend the information.  We also need to remember that it is not the only factor for helping students perform better.  Many other factors need to be taken into consideration.  Also, we also need to consider that when implementing technology, we have to do it in a meaningful way.  That means taking into consideration if it will have an impact, if we are using it in a meaningful way, is it being used appropriately, and that changes might not occur instantly.  Keeping this in mind will help us to see technology as merely a tool that aids in performance. |  |
| You've got a great point there, Katie. I agree with you that technology should be implemented in a meaningful and well-planned manner. Alignment of making every bits of instruction meaningful is a key to make an effective way of teaching. |  |
| For me , I also think that we should regard technology as languages, which could be used as a tool to help students learn. If you don't know English, you still could learn very well, but if you know, you could learn better; it's the same to technology. |  |
| Yes, Katie. I agree with you. Before apply technology into class, instructor should has a clear plan to implement it. Not only use technology methods, but also use other methods to build a multiple system to help learning. |  |
| Yeah. I have to agree with you here.  I think we need to be aware of our student's performance and monitor and adjust to their needs.  If they are struggling with technology (as my ACCESS class does), it could prove more of a distraction than a benefit.  I find with the ACCESS class, that tehcnology needs to be used is small doses and with a very clear purpose or function in mind. |  |
| I am not sure whether this is true for all students or not, but I think that learning with technologies is not always efffective to all students. Some students could learn with computers better, while others cannot. What's more, it also depends on different knowledge. For students who are good at apply what they have learned from related class, using computers takes them less time to finish their homework more effeciently. For some knowledge, for example the knowledge related to media, it's better if you learn with computer technologies. Because you have to learn how to deal with the news with computer technology, or you cannot express what you want to do in a very clear way. Furthermore, whether thefrequency makes sense or not also depends on the individuals itself. Some students use computers in a very high frequency, but they just use computers to play online games. How could it make sense of their study by using computers like this? Others might not use computers a lot because of the limitioons of their time or family conditions. While they spend lots of time by reading books and other materials. |  |
| I think you make a good point about individual student differences. Those students who are less familiar with gaming (or perhaps computers in general) may struggle to keep up with their classmates. For example, my friends who are frequent gamers can pick up any game and get the hang of it very quickly. I didn't grow up playing many games, so I have trouble keeping up when playing games with my more experienced friends. |  |
| yeah, I  really think that whether stduents could learn better with technologies depends. Sometimes, students who are skillful at using computers are ot good at using them to study. |  |
| Xiaoxin- Good point that we all learn in different ways!  Sometimes I learn better through the use of technology, but sometimes I resort to using tools that are not technology related.  I think that it is important that we get to know our students and even ask them what types of learning works well for them.  If a technology based learning assignment works well for some students and they will learn better that way, then that type of learning should be promoted.  Teachers need to remember to differentiate their teaching and that not every student needs to accomplish a task in the same manner.  Teachers need to provide multiple opportunities for students to comprehend a topic and then to show their understanding of it and this can involve the use of technology or it doesn't have to. |  |
| Yeah, I have the same feeling, too. And I think this maybe is related to the way students learn. The characteristics amomg stduents are so different and it takes teachers' time to learn about how to manage their teaching better to be understood. Sometimes, if we merely want to use technologies to teach, it would make some stduents works hard while get little from the whole experience. |  |
| I agree that teachers need to keep in mind that students are vary in their learning and therefore create variety of opportunities to assess students knowledge. Students express their learning in different many ways as well as their different approach in learning. This leads me to issues of standardized test. I know that it is difficult to create and customize a assessment to really see if each of the students really learned what we expected them to learn. It is even more difficult when you want to assess great number of students at a time, like national level.  Sometimes, I think that we cannot indicate students' intelligence only from standardized tests. Its highscore may only tell you that you have enough practices. From my perspective, if you give yourself more time to practice and be familiar with the test, you can get a high score. It is such a challenging task for all educators to make it possible to assess students more effectively. |  |
| Using technology does not necessarily lead to an increase in academic performance. We need to consider whether technologies are appropriately utilized and make sure that they are facilitating instruction rather than distracting. It is the topic we have discussed a lot before. We also need to realize that a performance gap could seldom be closed through technology-related interventions alone. Like Katie said, there are numerous factors that influence the learning outcome. Sometimes students who are involved in no technology instructions outperform students who use technology frequently in learning. Possible reasons might be poor-designed activities or no alignment between learning content and assessment in the latter group. |  |
| I agree Mengying, there seems to be a common trend throughout this semester on this topic. When there is a performance there is A LOT a designer needs to look at, not just the technology. In the article "Does it matter if I take my writing test on a computer?" they state at the end that conducting a writing assessment in either mode alone may underestimate the performance that would have resulted if students had been tested using the mode in which they wrote best. So, computerized testing may be beneficial to some, but a struggle to others and instead of focusing on the conent on the assessment they become more concerned with the technical aspect. |  |
| Mengying & Audrey.....absolutely!  There are so many components in not just using the computer but also how we assess our students.  Knowledge of technology can surly impact positively or negatively depending on the assessment or student.  I had a student that I mentioned earlier this year, he had dysgraphia.  For our state assessments the essay parts are hand written.  His handwriting is so poor and in past years scored very low.  This past year I had him on a computer and he was able to type out his responses, which allowed him equal access to sharing his thinking, not his penmanship.   It makes sense to me that how students are assessed could impact their end score but I never really thought about it this deeply until now.  WOW! |  |
| Yeah, good point! In your case, you created equal chance for stduents to express themselves, which would definitely encourage stduents to learn better. |  |
| I agree Mengying!!! Utilizing technology in the classroom doesn't automatically increase the academic performance of the students. It all depends on how well-designed the technological activity is. Like you said and considering our past discussion weeks, poorly designed activities that have no relations to the content of the class can be a distraction and possibly negatively affecting the learning process of the student. Communication between designers and educational personell is crucial in developing an effective technological activity for classroom use. |  |
| How technologies are designed or applied into classroom is really important. The backgrounds of students should also be taken into consideration, in order to help them to learn more.  Among students who need special help at learning, technologies would be a good choice. Is hase been witnessed that with the help of technologies, disabled stduents learned better than before. |  |
| I just have a little bit confuse with why instructor use technology in the class. I think the ultimate goal of apply technology into classroom is help student learning and increase their academic performance. |  |
| Yeah, you are right. We developed technologies, because they would help to make our life easier and better. Even though there are some disadvantages when technologies are applied in teaching, more advantages are proved to be much more powerful. That's why they exists. We use technologies, for that we believe that they would help students learn better, and help teachers to induct their students in a creative way.  While, it does not mean that we could use technologies without thinking about the final results and why he or she use certain technology to teach. |  |
| I have to start with this quote by Mann:  *First, I believe that instructional technology works. Instructional technology*  *only works for some kids, in some topics, and under some conditions, but that*  *is true of all pedagogy, all systems for teaching or learning. There is nothing*  *that works for every purpose, for every learner and all the time.*  *— Dale Mann (1999)*  As I read this weeks materials this quote jumped out at me and made me think that it would be extrememly difficult to agree with the data found in the PISA and TIMMS studies.  There are many variables to take into consideration when we assess learning and it's not about more or less use of the computer, but the quality of technology used, how it's integrated, objectives, training of teachers, etc. All together would equal more learning.  So, maybe there are missing links in how the technology was used that resulted in these findings.  My opinion is that technology is not the means to the end, but an important aspect of education and it needs to be integrated appropriately.  We (teachers) need to have an understanding of what's available and have proper training on how to implement technology.  If we understand our students and their Zone of Proximal Development, what our objective and goals are, provide opportunities to learn in a variety of ways, and integrage technology in the best way possible, the we are moving in the right direction. |  |
| The world changes a lot with the appearance of computers and following technologies. While before the invention of computers, people also learn very well. What's more, with the development of computers and technologies, the role of teachers and education changes from making students learn knowledge on textbooks to learn with technologies to be more helpfull to the whole society when they graduate from schools.  From the changes in education, technologies and society, we should know why we use technologies to teach, what kind of knowledge could use technology to make stduents learn better. |  |
| I don't believe that there is a direct relation between technology use in a classroom and higher performance in students. I do believe that using computer technology in a classroom setting provides a huge assistance in potentially higher student's academic performance in a classroom. Just because computer's are utilized in a classroom, doesn't automatically make the students smarter. They still need to learn the material and the steps/procedures to get the final product. In some ways, computers could be a negative impact to students in classes such as math. I can remember learning my multiplication tables, long division, and numerous of formulas between grades 1 into high school. The use of computers, allows the access to calculators, which can take away from the students thought processing. Some may say that there is no point in learning how to do long division since we have calculators on our computers, tablets, and smart phones. Those people are wrong and educators should never rely on technology as a substitute to in-classroom learning. I believe the power of teacher to student connection in the classroom surpasses any educational computer technology method. I do see computer technology as an assisting tool in course curriclum's to further engage student learning and interest. |  |
| you makes me think of a presentation one group made a few weeks ago, which was wbout English Language Learners. It claimed that if language influence students' learning process, even though stduents could learn from the teachers' gestures, voice and pictures provided. Students could get a better understanding if he or she knows the language the teacher speaks. The same as the technologies. If you know hoe to use technologies, you get more ways to gather information, which helps you learn better. |  |
| I agree on the point of the improper shift from using technology from aiding learning to replacing it can be dangerous, such as your calculator example. The ability to properly utilize the basics before having to rely on technology is super important in my opinion. If you are lost out in the woods, chances are someone probably will have a high-tech GPS device, however, you never know and if all you have is an old school compass or natural landmarks to guide yourself by you better know the basics. |  |
| Your post makes me think of culculator in GRE quantitative section. I really think that if school teach me to depend on culculator in math class, I would have stuck in each question for longer than I should and that may result on many questions left unanswered. It takes at least 30 sec to run the culculator and sometimes it does hank, so you have to be careful and patient in using it. I am so thankful that my math teachers insist in using memorizing techniques so we can remember formulas and retain our culculating skills until now. |  |
| I too agree that technology should be the assistant of learning rather than the substitute of acquiring some certain knowledge and skills. It’s good if using calculator can save time to help us achieve the goal quickly. However when students totally depend on it to solve math problems, technology becomes an obstacle. I have the same feeling as Pim for GRE quantitative section. In fact I have never thought of using calculator in test because some techniques, if properly utilized, could simplify the question. They are the shortcut to get the answer, and are obtained through practice and experience sharing. The calculator can never find these shortcuts automatically. |  |
| I believe that the frequency of using technology in classroom doesn't have causality with students performance, because the key point is how teacher uses technology, we have discussed it a lot in this semester.  But I have one question. I think that teachers always use technology in their class indicates that the school can afford the purchase of technology. So these schools are more possible in developed area, which means their students come from rich family and SES is high. Or the goverment gives the school enough money, which means the schools are of high quality. Some reports shows that students with high SES perform better. However, I don't know what "technology" here refers to, as some technology equipments are inexpensive and typical but others are more expensive. |  |
| I think here technologies should be any technologies taht could be used to help teach. Without the equipment such as Powerpoint, we still can teach, but if we have them, it would be better. I know that some public schools cannot pay for the latest euqipment that could be used to help students with special needs to learn. But they still can use technologies to help students learn.  If schools could get more money, no matter in which way, they could have more choice to help students learn. But if they don't have a lot, it does not mean that technologies could not be used. |  |
| Well, I think that the two things you have mentioned are not necessarily relevant to each other. Having bunches of technology available for students to use cannot guarantee students' academic achievement.  I would like to emphasize on integration of instructional plan and school's technology plan to make sure that technology will be use appropriately, meaningfully to help students mastering acadamic and life skills. There are many cases that school just push teachers to use newly installed technology without discussing on how to put it meaningfully in their instructions. To successfully Implementing technology in school, all stakeholders should cooperate and make alignment in their roles. |  |
| Pim....well said!  You mentioned the "integration of instructional plan and school's technology plan" for appropriate use and I would like to add the instructional plan to include introducing teachers to "other" uses of technology and not just for powerpoints and writing essays using Microsoft Word. |  |
| First, Pim, i completely agree about having everything aligned. (Tiffany would be proud).  Second, Richard, I found what you said about computers in the math room quite interesting. I agree with you on not completely relying on calculators, or any sort of technology for that matter. What if the technology stops working, battery dies, etc? You should always know how to do everything yourself, then just use the technology for ease, efficency, or if you are teaching- engagement and enhancement of your lesson. |  |
| Pim, you raise a good point, sometimes school push teachers too hard, which lead to unnecessary use of technology. |  |
| I feel like I am echoing a common sentiment among the posters, but I also agree that it is important for us to look at technology as a means to its own end, but merely as a vehicle which can help facilitate learning. While technology can have great benefits and many different alternative solutions to more low-tech techniques and approaches, simply using it in itself is not an accomplishment or victory as you have demonstrated. Significant differences on scoring of standardized tests are important in my opinion when it comes to shaping curriculum. If the students are struggling simply to master the technology and the focus has shifted from learning the content to learning the vehicle for the content that is when we have an issue. Proficiency with certain technologies varies from culture to culture, and from personal upbringing to personal upbringing. We need to take into account these differences when analyzing the ability to institute various learning technologies, before we just buy as many as possible and assume they are the solution. |  |
| I'm not sure that this would dissuade me from using technology in any way.  I think digital technology IS a form of literacy, and an important one at that.  For that reason alone, I think technology matters enough to be included in my weekly curriculum.  Why does technology not make any discernable increase in student performance? I'm not sure.  I think the use of thecnology in the classroom is just beginning to really hit its high point, and maybe in the near future we WILL begin to see the impact that technology is having.  I also think that this may be indication that just using tehcnology for the sake of technology is ineffective, and that we need to be more intentional in our inplementation. |  |
| I think this is an interesting thought to consider. It makes you wonder if there should be technology used in schools. While I ask this question I still think that technology should be used. Students are more and more familiar with using technology in their lives and it should be used in school. It also works with the Common Core to help make students into 21st century learners and be college and career ready. They are going to be exposed to technology in their lives and that is why they should use it in school. However, with this though, I think that some of the reasons for the correlation could be the use and implementation of technology. Teachers should use it but they may not know how to use it properly or to its full effectiveness. That is where more training should be considered. While it has not been proven for technology to correlate with learning, I believe that it should be used when possible. |  |
| Have you ever taken a computerized test? How do you think technology ways and traditional ways of assessment methods?     Do you like test using technology method? If so, why? If not, can you explain the reason? |  |
| I haven't taken any computerized tests recently, but I am an online scorer for the TOEFL Speaking test. The way it works it that speaking responses are recorded, saved, and rated by scorers such as myself across the US. I think this technology is tremendously useful because it allows ETS to hire people like me to score from home, rather than requiring us to be present at the test site. However, it's difficult to evaluate speaking samples without being able to see the respondent because there are no visual cues or gestures to help me understand. |  |
| I have the same feeling. When I talked with foreigners online, while without seeing them, I feel that I don't know what to say. I t also makes me feel frustrated, because you cannot see whether the other one is happy or not, how she or she behaves during the talking. . |  |
| I have taken TOEFL iBT test either. I think computerized test is a good way in some cases. But sometimes such as English speaking test for foreigners, it could not reflect the real level of speaking ability when use computerized test. Because speaking is a way to communication with others, only face to face talk is the ideal condition for speaking. |  |
| Yeah, I agree with you. That also why language is called a method to communicate. When we talk in computer, no one would respond. I also don't think it's good to test students in that way. Real situation would work better. |  |
| I took the GRE's on the computer and I thought that there were pros and cons to this type of test taking.  I did think that I wrote a lot more on the essay portions because typing was quicker for me and less strenuous then hand-writing.  On the other hand, doing multiple choice questions on the computer is challenging because I was not able to use my test-taking strategies like crossing off wrong answers and eliminating answers that were not correct.  Although these are cons, I think that the more we complete tests online, the easier it will be.  We will become more comfortable with completing these types of tasks and develop new types of test taking strategies.  I fear for the students that have to start taking the new PARCC tests online because they will not only have to worry about learning and mastering the content but becoming familiar with taking tests online.  After a few years of completing these types of tests, the students will become more comfortable and can once again have their only focus be on mastering the content. |  |
| Katie, I felt the same way when I was taking my GRE test on the computer. I prefer typing my responses to essay/short answer questions as I am much more used to typing on a computer. I felt like it was much more effective to type my essay on the GRE test compared to hand writing the essay section on the SAT's back in high school. It's easier and faster to type then to handwrite, so I had a lot more time to go back and look over my response. I like how you brought up your test-taking strategies for the multiple choice questions. I use those same strategies as well, which I couldn't have done on the computer during my GRE test. |  |
| When I took this test, I felt so worried and anxious. I havd never taken that kind of tests. I had to practice how to type more words in one minute and make sure that what you have typed in were right. When it came to the multiple choice, I had to read the paraghs again and again to grasp the main points, which took lots of time. |  |
| Yes, and we need a lot of practice in order to be able to be comfortable with computerized test. Standardized test is not easy..but I am sure that a person who took time to familiarize with the text patterns and computer setting can achieve good score eventually. |  |
| The computerized tests I have ever took are the TOFEL and GRE tests. They were totaly different tests I had ever met with and I really think it was kind of unfair to take those tests, because soem stduents could read better than online reading. It took me more time to finish the same reading on books or papers while with less accuracy. Sometimes, it not a good way to acquire information about how much knowledge students have learned. For the TOFEL test, I got low scores in speaking part, because I had no idea about how to control the time; whereas, my spoken language was not that bad as the score showed.  Personally, I don't like this kind of tests, which takes me longer time with less accuracy. Online reading does not make a lot of sense to me. I have to read the reading again and again to get the points. |  |
| I have taken a few tests online before and I'm not really fond of them. Sometimes it is nice because you can do it from the comfort of your home, but sometimes these tests still take place within a classroom of some sorts. I always feel like taking a test online is risky because what if your computer shuts down, or the internet freezes and you lose everything!? That almost happened to me once and I thought I was going to have a panic attack. Additionally, I like to underline, highlight, and write in the margins... which is something I cannot do on a computerized test. |  |
| Yeah, good point! There was one time, when I was taking the TOFEL test, my computer died. I was so afraid and worried. That situation made me feel nervous and finally I got a bad score on that exam. I felt so sad. |  |
| Xiaoxin- I agree with you that not all online tests are universally designed and appropriate for all test takers.  I think that if it is expected for students to take these types of tests, then appropriate scaffolding and prepping needs to occur.  STudents should not be expected to go into these testing situations with no background informaton on how to take online tests.  It almost does a dis-service to these test takers because they know the knowledge but were unable to appropriately exhibit that knowledge just because of the type of test that was administered.  What ever happened to letting students exhibit their knowledge the best way that they can.  If they know it, they should not be penalized. |  |
| I really like the last sentence you provided. In the latest standards of science education, ways to eveluate students are stressed. Test is merely one way to know how much students have learned, while it is not the only way. In fact, experienced teachers know the shortcomings of this kind of test. However, we still use these tests, because it is a good way to evaluate lots of stduents with the same creteria. It is effective. |  |
| I have taken TOFEL and new GRE test. Both are computerized tests. Generally speaking, they are OK. I have been accustomed to read from screens so there is no problem for me to be tested in this way. Also, I like the speaking section in TOFEL more than that in IETLS because I feel nervous to talk to a stranger. One thing I struggle with is typing. I cannot type fast and I always find myself run out of time in writing section.  Apart from English tests, another exam I took after finishing the elementary school left me deep impression. It was an exam that selected good students for a famous private middle school in my province. I felt lucky to attend a computerized test because I knew basic computer skills well and technology wouldn’t be a problem. But for most kids at that time, they had never used a computer before. Although everyone were allowed to take a 30min practice such as typing, deleting and moving mouse before the exam, definitely it was inadequate. My mom told me some very competitive students failed in the test just because they lacked the knowledge of how to operate the computer. |  |
| Edit: not TOFEL, it should be TOEFL |  |
| I agree that knowledge plays a role in how students do but leads me to wonder if choice should be given?  We have our learning styles with how we like to learn and I am sure that would go hand in hand with how we are assessed.  I think also our students will be more willing and able to take computer based assessments because of their experiences and over time will get better and better as Katie has mentioned. |  |
| I think ideally students should be given the chance to make a choice between pencil-and-paper test and computer-based test before they all feel comfortable about the involvement of computer. One pitfall is that it will make grading process a little bit more complex. |  |
| Surprisingly, mine is the other way round. I feel it is harder for me to repond to TOEFL speaking part. I preferred talking to real person because I felt less stress that way and I like the flexibility of time given. For example, if the time ran out, the person may allow testtakers to finish the sentence while the computer will cut the time whether you finish it or not. I also like to see the person nodd his/her head while listening to me. This give me reinforcement in providing more supporting details. Haha... It is so true that humans learn different ways therefore need different kind of assessment. |  |
| I have taken computerized test for my work with People to People.  These are multiple choice tests and don't really like them because I don't feel as though I can interact with the questions as well.  I have found that I can miss an entire line if I am not careful and some fonts are more "eye friendly" than others.  I also feel as though I have to hold a lot more in my head where when I take a pencil and paper I can make notes and cross off incorrect responses.  I think I would prefer to take an essay type assessment on the computer rather than handwriting.  I like to edit and the ability to change things around is a huge plus for me |  |
| Yeah, me too. Writing on computers allows you to change without causing so many visual uncomforts. And it saves lots of time. If you  use papers to write and you have to change all the order of the graphs, it would be a hard work; while if you use computers, it merely a problem of "cut" and "paste". |  |
| I met the same problem when I did some computerized test. Based on my own experience, if a test has lot of reading requirement, the computerized test will be not appropriate. Becuase reading on computer screen will make people not easy to keep focus since physiologic law. |  |
| Yeah. The test takes so long time. It makes you feel sleepy and cannot concerntrate. |  |
| Right! four hours on the computerized test is too long. It is like a marathon that you gain strength through hours of practices. |  |
| Yes, I've taken a few computerized tests in the past; for the GRE and for my driver license's test. I would say it had it's positive's and negatives. When writing essay's or short answer questions, I prefer to type my responses. It varies for each person with their typing/computer skills, but I prefer to type instead of hand writing. I would say it was more effective for me to use a computer for the writing section of the GRE then when I had to handwrite the essay portion of the SAT's back in high school. My driver license's test was a different story. After each multiple choice question, the computer would inform me if I got the question right or if I got the question wrong. I'm not sure how it works in other states, but in Connecticut you could only answer four questions incorrectly. I became stressed out and worried every time I got a question wrong. I was more focused on the wrong answers then the upcoming question. I ultimately failed the computer test for my drivers license and had to come in the next day to retake the test. I decided to take the test on paper instead of the computer and the results were completely different as I only got one question wrong. Same test, different formats; led to different results. So overall, I would say that there are both positive and negative reasonings between taking tests on a computer and taking tests the traditional way. |  |
| I agree Richard that the formality and black/white nature of computerized testing can be somewhat daunting. In regards  to your driver's liscence testing being online, I feel as if the ability to instant feedback is unnerving and not helpful in the process. Perhaps for prepatory courses for the test this immediate reinforcement of information could be useful, but on a test-day scenario instant feedback is unnecssarry and useless. I would think that this feature being eliminated in many different testing places online wouldn't be a large convenience, however I would be curious as to hear the argument behind why it should be kept. |  |
| Different kinds of exam does results in different scores. This might one of the issues instructional designers should concern when it comes to assessment. |  |
| I have taken GRE and Toefl. The most nervous part in iBT (internet based Toefl) for me is speaking. It is very hard for me to speak to a computer. Certainly I know actually there will be a scorer person listening to me in the following days, but it is really not easy to keep speaking to a computer without any feedback (facial expression).  Overall I think I like computerized test, as least it saves paper. But I think the most important is that computerized tests are good at Adaptive Test, such as the new version of GRE. It can measure students performance more precisely than regular test. |  |
| As a scorer of iBT speaking, I share your concern. It seems like an artificial interaction sometimes, although I know this is probably necessary to maintain the annonymity of test-takers. |  |
| I have also taken IELTS before I took iBT, in its speaking part, it is face-to-face. During the whole process, even the examiner didn't actually talk to me, I feel less nervous. That is strange, I don't know why I feel so different to speak to a computer and an examiner. |  |
| I have the similar opinion with you. I don't think TOEFL is a good way to test stduents' ability of using English as a second language. While GRE is better than TOEFL, even though I have to admit that GRE is much more harder. |  |
| I think the purposes of these two test are different. GRE is not a language test. |  |
| Jiaming, computerized adaptive testing format in new GRE confused me when I was preparing for it. At first I doubted it fairness because examinees are given different questions according to previous responses. I thought someone could take advantage of it and applied some tricks to get a higher score than his actual English skills. Then a friend of mine who had taken GMAT told me that adaptive tests in fact could reflect students’ abilities in a more fair way than standard test because it decreased possibility of overestimate or underestimate that resulted from varying individual capability. One shortcoming of standard test is that students who could get 100 and students who could only get 80 in adaptive test might get the same or similar score in a traditional pen and paper test, and hence we cannot see the difference. |  |
| Yes, I agree. As the difficulty of one item relate to its discrimination, CAT is able to do a better job on discriminating student with different ability levels in a detailed way. |  |
| I have some experiences on taking computer-based TOEFL and GRE exam. For me, I think there is huge difference between taking paper-based and comp-based. Traditional way works well for me because I like to read and write on paper and my eyes can maintain focus better on paper. Since GRE and TOEFL are inevitable to international grad students who want to study in the US, I had no choice. So I trained my eyes to be familiar with staring on exams on computer for 4-5 hrs. My body react to comp-based test in an unexpected way. I had strong virtigo and headache after several days of training. Luckily, things were better after a month. Apart from physical reaction, I think that computer-based sometimes prone to errors, both technical problems and unintended mistakes cause by test takers. Some test program is so sensitive that it skips a page when u click "next" button. Sometimes, you stuck in on page because of technical error and the test time is still running on. Test takers have to pay more attention to these possible errors instead of just focusing on answering questions. |  |
| Pim I have had the same problem! If i stare at a computer screen for too long I feel really sick to my stomach and my head hurts. Even when I take short 5/10 min breaks throughout, if I am on the computer for long periods of time I do not feel well.  Also, what you said about the technical issues is quite true and one more factor people need to watch out for on computerized tests. |  |
| I have taken numerous computerized tests, including SAT/ACT prep tests that I consistently scored lower on as compared to the standard version. Personally, I have a much worse time critically analyzing, comprehending and creatively thinking when it comes to working on a computer as opposed to pen and paper for whatever reason. For instance, one technique that I often utilize (for this very class even), is for long paper I will not only make a hand written outline for it, but often complete a whole hand written rough draft. While it would seem inefficient to have to go from hand written rough draft, convert it to a computerized rough draft, then edit and finalize, because of my typing speed proficiency I gained through technology classes in my youth, I am capable of achieving this in minimal time. I believe I have strong typing skills, yet for whatever reason my brain "flows" better when working with old school pen and paper. Just my personal experience. |  |
| I think lots of high school have a similar feeling about tests.  Even though technology is ubiquitous, many students I've talked to do sometimes feel like it is cumbersome.  I think I would hate to take a test on the computer and not be able to write out my thoughts.  There is something familair and expected about a paper test that I think students like better. |  |
| good point about having hard time with building creativity and comprehension. I think I experience the same thing in my own language, too. I read and comprehend slower than reading on papers. I also have hard time in writing papers on my computer that I have to make an outline and drafts on papers before transferring them to soft version. It took me a while to be more familiar with it. Part of the difficulty is my own attitude that I want to stick to the traditional way I felt comfortable with and dont want to change. However, more and more assignments in college require typed version because they are easier to read and to submit via email. I then generally open my mind and try to type essay drafts instead of handwriting until I feel more comfortable with it. |  |
| I've never taken or given a computer based exam.  I have used exam technology for surveys, though.  I am not at all opposed to online examinations as a practice.  I'm not really sure why I've never really used them.  I suppose that In my discipline we don't administer objective exams all that frquently.  I think for disciplines that test alot, online/web examination tools would save tons of time, and allow students to avoid falling behind if absent.  As I write this, though, I can hear the disappointed groans of my colleagues who would be very cautoious about test security.  A test that can be taken online at home is probably a test that a student would cheat on (maybe using notes, the text, etc..).  It is hard to monitor the users behavior if they are not being proctored.  It woudl most certainly make the grading and data collection of the assessement easier. |  |
| I have never taken a test on the computer and I think it would be challenging to do. However, it is believed that eventually for students they want to make their state assessments online. This means that students will use a computer to take this type of test. Personally, I think it's a bit crazy. We teach students certain test taking strategies and if they are to have to take these tests on a computer, it is going to be utterly impossible for them to use these. It also makes you wonder though since students are more familiar with technology if they will be more responsive to it. They might enjoy completing the test online and not see a problem with it. This is certainly an important aspect to consider as paper and pencil assessments might become a thing of the past. |  |
| In your view, which subject will be more effective if use more technology? Why? |  |
| I think this is maybe a trick question, because it could be helpful in all subjects! From the perspective of language teaching, technology is really helpful in exposing learners to authentic speech (through news programs, TV shows, blogs, social media sites, etc.) It's especially useful in foreign language settings, where learners do not get this type of input outside the classroom. |  |
| With the development of technologies, more areas of learning could be realized online. It's like a magic. While we have to know how to distinguish the good ones and bad ones, because not all stduents are used to use technologies to learn in a better way. |  |
| I partly agree with your statement Lily. But different subjects have different characteristics when using technology on the class. For example, mathematics, physics, engineering, meteorology and etc. will be very easy to understand when instructor use some technologies such as visual software. But like theology, literary arts and philosophy, the technology will have limited space to be applied and help leaners. |  |
| Siyuan,  I agree with both of you.  I am always surprised at how different the disciplines are within my school.  Our science and math teachers use technology to FLIP they classrooms and deliver very dynamic content.  As an english teacher, I find technology plays a very different role in the class. As we don't generally lecture, you wouldn't find an english teacher in my school using technology to support classroom flipping or the like.  You might, however, find us using social media tools, personal broadcasting, and clasroom management tools.  So, I agree with both of you: tehcnology can benefit all content areas, but it might look dramaticall different in each content area.  (I apologize to any science/math teachers. I drastically misrepresented the depth of technolgy used in your classes.)  Aaron |  |
| I also think that technology is very effective in any type of subject if used correctly. Technology must enhance the concepts that are being learned. I like how the article, The Learning REturn on our Educational Technology Investment explained how technology should be utilized: "technology is a means, not an end." This expresses the idea that technology is a way to help enhance the content and provides a different avenue for learning. It is not the end all be all or assessment. It is a tool for achieving our instructional goals and not just the end goal. Therefore, if we think of technology in this way, then it would be suitable for any subject area. |  |
| I agree with your statement Katie. If used correctly, technology can be effective in any subject essentially. Great job bringing up that article. I've seen a trend in the past discussion weeks, as I'm sure everyone else has as well. I see many key points coming up over past discussion sessions. The one point I've seen a lot is that technology should be utilized to help enhance the learning experience in the classroom, not take over the traditional classroom experience. The quote is direct and to the point, "technology is a means, not an end." |  |
| In my opinion, technology makes more sense in the area of educational technology related courses, if you major in the area of education. No matter which area you are in as an educator, you have to know how to use technologies to teach and learn. The world is now crowed with different new technologies, every where you go, everywhere there is technologies. Even the kids who are few years old know how to use technologies, how about the teachers.  What's more, for a teacher, it's better if you could use computers to help students learn. In the course realted to science, technologies are so important that without it, you could not teach students effectively.  Because science itself it closely related to technology. The ways you could gather latest information, the ways you could put all the information together in a much more meaningful way and the methods that are used to make your project more effective and effecient are all realted to technologies. If you don't know how to use technologies, you could even cannot talk with others or understand why others think like that.  Technologies have been the part of life that cannot be neglected. |  |
| Well, Siyuan, I believe that it really could benefit all subjects, if used correctly! Just, different subjects may utilize it differently and use different apps or tools. Just like i feel like all subjects can really be utilized in all other subjects- such as in art you definitely use history, math, reading and writing. Or in English you once again have to use all of these. All subjects can benefit from each other and can all use technology to enhance their instruction in some way |  |
| Xiaoxin, I agree that technology cannot be neglected and helps so much with things like research. I wonder, however, what you mean by "you coud not even talk with others or understand why others think like that"? Do you mean if they are ignorant of technology they cannot fully understand its potential? I do at the same time feel like there needs to be a limit on technology. Sometimes there can be an overload and there are a lot of basic life skills that people miss out on because they are so absorbed in their technology. |  |
| Audrey, I think there needs to be a balance.  So, not to limit technology, but create a balance in what and how we teach so students benefit. |  |
| Audrey. I mean that it might be hard for you to understand the ones whose ways of speaking and thinking are changed by the use of technologies. I find sometimes it's hard for me to talk and undertsand my brother, who is influened by technologies a lot. |  |
| I can see Xiaxin's argument in the fact that there will exist certain cultural/time barriers where extremely knowledgeable people will have a gap in communication, yet have access to the same information. Take an example of an elderly, aging professor at Oxford University, compared to a young recently graduated Harvard law student. It would be hard to argue that one was more intelligent than the other, but they learned in much different manners and probably continue to learn in different manners. Another example I like to picture is my grandfather. He worked at a Holiday Inn for almost 40 years, and his hotel knowledge is extremely immense. My friend now works at a Marriot and every reservation/event is registered and categorized online. My grandfather has the same amount, if not more experience and knowledge running hotels yet doesn't know how to click a computer mouse. I would say they would likely be able to communicate quite  fluently on a variety of subjects, yet on another sect of subjects, their jargons simply would not match up and communication could be difficult. |  |
| True, technology is so deeply integrated into some field of study that the terms a domain-specialist used or the way he describe a certain situation is closely related to some technologies. Of course, it is almost like a foreign language for a layman. |  |
| I think it depends on our goals and objectives so can't really say there would be one subject technology would be more effective in.  I would think having technology integrated into the curriculum would be most beneficial, with the teacher understanding the purpose of using what they are using and why.  In our readings this week was a video on Electronic Portfolios by Helen Barrett.  It's fascinating.  She talks about the reflective side of learning and using technology, specifically the E-Portfolio, to share learning and look at change over time in learning.  She also mentions that students should have "voice and choice" in how to represent learning.  Here is the link in case you missed it:  <http://vimeo.com/23513397>  This really stuck out for me because Audrey, Lily's and my collaborative projects are on Digital Storytelling.  It gave me an even deeper understanding of the "why" of digital storytelling. |  |
| Thanks for pointing this out- I actually missed it the first time around! I agree that the WHY of technology use is of utmost importance when considering what technology to use in our respective subjects. |  |
| I also reviewed some topics about visual trips, which impresses me a lot. It makes learning much more effective and interesting, and saves lot of time and money at the same time. I think if as teachers, we are sure that technologies could help us to teach and help stduents to learn, and the real situation allows us to do so, why not? We create technologies because they could help us to make life easier. We have already made our choice by developing so many technologies. |  |
| Monica- I am glad that you brought up a topic that we read about this week, Electronic Portfolios.  I think that these are great projects for students to be able to show their knowledge of a specific topic or content area.  I also liked how you stated that students should have "voice and choice" in how to represent their learning.  Not all students learn in the same way, so we should not expect all students to show their understanding in the same way.  That is why I think that portfolios are so beneficial.  The one thing that does scare me is if we are having students demonstrate their learning in these different ways, are they going to be ready to partake in high-stakes testing?  All of these tests are either computerized or done in a MC/short answer format and don't take into consideration that showing one's understanding can be accomplished through multiple ways. |  |
| I think any subject could benefit with more technology use, only if it's used effectively. Some subjects though would be a little tricky such as math since there is the need for writing out formulas and showing your work. I would say that any foreign language course would be more effective if they used more technology. Utilizing computers and audio software programs, you can actually hear the words through audio sources to learn how to verbally speak foreign words. In a typical classroom setting, the teacher is essentially the only person who can speak the foreign language fluently; with regards to a few students. On a computer, the outcomes are endless. A foreign language class can utilize many different sources online and through various programs to effectively enhance the experience of the students. |  |
| I concur with you all so far! All technology can find it place to enhance learning outcomes of a subject if used appropriately. Different technologies have different characteristics. We need to make it match with instructional goals and objectives. A good design can be helpful to fully realize the potential of a technology. Also, as Audrey said, it can be implemented in different way in different subjects. Technologies are tools. They are not decisive factor. It is the people who utilize them that play a key role. |  |
| That's a trick question. I think for each subject, we can find a way to use technology effectively, I also believe sometimes teachers can teach effectively without technology. The key point is how we will use technology we have. We need to think the content and pedagogical knowledge first when we think about using technology. Then think that how technology will help to deliver content or facilitate class activities. |  |
| I agree with you, mengying. Some knowedge could be easily to be understand without technologies. When I was in high school, the math teacher could teach us without technologies better. Maybe it is her way of thinking and doing things. We don't think she is so stubborn that she would not like to change herself. It is because she thinks that her ways of htinking and the logical ways to solve math problems culd be better transferred to stduents with handwritings on blackboard, which provides students more time to think and make the knowledge to be thier owns. |  |
| Absolutely! Instruction should focus more on content and need to use technology. Fancy technology might not help students gain and master competencies as much as they are expected if the core content is not meaningful and well-incorporated with the technology. Technology should be thought of as supplement to the content to support learning, not main tool to deliver content. |  |
| I wish i can give "like" to you guys, Lily and Jiaming, when you say that it was a trick question!! :D  Technology can be incorporated in every subject in many forms and at different level depending on how you design instructions. Different types of technology are appropriate to be use in different subject as well. Im grateful that we have hi-tech softwares and programs that assist engineering students and architecture students in simulating what they are building. Building Virtual model of building is risk-free emvironment practice for them. If it fails or collapse because of miscalculation, it would not hurt anybody or other structures nearby. |  |
| I believe in the end, the efficacy of the technology is dependant upon how it is incorporated into the curriculum by the instructor, how proficient and the personal experience the learner has with the technology and the existing availble resources in this up and coming generation of computerized learning tools. It is first and foremost vital that an instructor has the ability to smoothly and efficiently institute technology with the subject. If too much time is spent teaching the technology, or it is not as narrow focused on the subject as it should be, then it can simply become a hassle and at the end of the day a waste of time and an inefficient manner for the teacher to teach the subject. Furthermore, if the students simply do not have a strong foundation for the technology, or are not developing skills at the anticipatory levels, then again the technology should be scrapped for either alternative technology or more traditional teaching techniques. Finally, if the existence of developed technology for the particular subject is limited and the "next-best" is not as laser focused on the subject at hand as you wish it to be then it also should be scrapped. Use technology that your students are comfortable with or can find a certain level of comfort after a good amont of use. If the technology available isn't sufficient for your class subject and material, don't even waste your time - it is better to find a more suitable method to teach your students. |  |
| I have to say that I am always surprised at how useful "technology" can be in the classroom.  As a tech enthusiast, I am a little biased towards using technology in the classroom.  I often look for ways to use the technology that I love to solve those nagging problems that pop up in the course of a unit or class.  But when I have the chance to watch colleagues, or classmates who really put lots of thought into the use of tehcnology, I'm shocked by the depth and breadth that technology can add to a unit or a course.  From web-quests, to global connections, to vitual museums and education games technology can bring so much to a class.  Students benefit from longer more thorough interaction with the content, and teachers can benefit from a more efficiently managed classroom.  In sum, I think that technology has so many beenfits to the classroom that it wouldn't make sense to completely avoid it.  Afterall, in the strict sense of the term, almost anything can be tehcnology.  Aaron |  |
| This is an interesting topic to ponder. While I think there are aspects of technology that can be used in all subjects I think it depends on how it is used. For example, it is probably easier to use pencil and paper to solve math problems. However, technology should be used to teach the topics. This can be through a SMART Board and videos. I think it easier to incorporate technology into social students and english just based on the nature of the subjects. They rely less on the pencil and paper and more on the overall delivery and ability to learn the material. Therefore, I think that since technology is such a big part of our lives, it should be used when ever possible. With that being said though, it needs to be used well and effectively. |  |