iPods and iPads in Education

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# The Technology

iPhones, iPod Touches, and iPads could be incredible tools in a classroom setting. They are Apple producs that are equipped with a touch technology that allows direct physical interaction with the devices. Apple provides applications, or “apps”, which span a broad range of topics but there is specifically a great expanse of educational apps available which educators can put to use. Unlike looking at a photograph, students can view interactive displays and navigate their own learning experience.

# Why is this Interesting?

These capabilities are no small matter because it provides a way to get students engaged in learning. Some instruction time could be viewed as stagnant because students aren’t interested and consequently are not learning but by getting students physically involved and giving them options could foster a new understanding of a given subject matter. For example, instead of giving explicit directions like on a worksheet (which is the same for everyone) a student could be assigned to use a specific app but then from that point make their own decisions about what they want to learn.

# Uses in Education

Applications, iPods, and iPads can also be valuable tools when trying to differentiate for students. For those that are considered to be in special education, there are applications available that can help make learning easier and help to build confidence.

Also, classroom pedagogy could change in the sense that instruction no longer needs to be a direct line of communication. The teacher is not the sole input of knowledge but rather students are capable of learning on their own at any given time and they can receive knowledge from podcasts, university broadcasts, websites, and designated educational apps.

For example, Bestwick says "21st century learning environments are student-centered. This means the teacher should not be viewed as the sole provider of knowledge, but as a partner and an orchestrator of learning. Mobile technology allows students to be actively engaged in learning experiences by going out to the field and exploring their world, document their learnings, and then share what they have learned with others." (Bestwick & Campbell, 2010)

# Pros and Cons

There are some amazing pros for using this technology in a classroom. As previously mentioned, this will help with differentiated instruction. Also, students will be able to utilize these devices for their own, individualized learning.

Some cons, however, are that when first buying the iPods or iPads for a classroom that can be a large amount of money upfront. Certain schools will certainly struggle with gaining the money for this cost although there may be some grants available to help fund this technology in a classroom. To help cut costs, schools could get a few sets of iPods or iPads then rent them out from the library instead of individual teachers having sets.

# Applications for the Classroom

For sixth grade science, there are several applications (listed on the website <http://educ540ipads.weebly.com/>. Companies are also making some compatible devices to do classroom experiements while using an Apple device.

Students could utilize media resources such as youtube videos, dictionaries, and science databases online.

# Future Uses

As technology continues to develop, more apps are created for classroom usage, and cost continues to decrease, these technologies will be more and more advantageous in schools. More apps will be created to enhance the learning capabilities of gifted learners along with special education.

References

Bestwick, A., & Campbell, J. R. (2010). Mobile learning for all. *Exceptional Parent, 40*(9), 18-20. Retrieved from [http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ903143&site=ehost-live&scope=site; http://www.eparent.com/](http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&db=eric&AN=EJ903143&site=ehost-live&scope=site;%20http://www.eparent.com/)