

Technology in classrooms

[Education](#)



Tablets. Smartphones. Smartboards. The biggest issue society will have to face in the near future is effectively incorporating technology into public schools. There is a mass of new equipment being thrown haphazardly into classrooms. But do teachers know how best to use it, or are they left drowning, trying to determine how to avoid the increased number of student distractions that inevitably accompany it? This is the newest challenge. How much is too much?

Technology has the potential to revolutionize the classroom if used correctly, but it could also be severely detrimental to the education of our students. Initially, the most difficult part is discovering all of the possible uses for the new equipment. A tablet, for instance, is usually used for playing games, checking email, and using social media. For some subjects, it is easier to relate these uses productively to the curriculum than it is for others. A common example is English versus math.

In an English class, a tablet can be used for projects, researching information, working collaboratively with other students via email, social media, or both. In a math class, this same tablet appears to be more of a hindrance than a help. Typing math symbols is more effort than it's worth, games always seem more interesting than learning the lesson, and there aren't usually research projects about algebra. Despite these obvious barriers however, tablets can actually become a useful tool in all classrooms.

There are many apps that can aide in learning, and more are being created every day. "Factor Factory", "Picturing Fractions", and "Khan Academy" can all be helpful in a math classroom, especially on a review day. Khan Academy is especially useful for students, as it has coherent lessons for <https://assignbuster.com/technology-in-classrooms/>

several different subjects, and many levels within each. There are apps for teachers as well, including some for monitoring students' progress and aides for planning lessons. All in all, having tablets in the classroom for student use can be exceedingly beneficial. What about smartphones?

Many students carry an iPhone, an Android, or some similar device with them daily. How can they be used in the classroom? Several teachers choose not to deal with them at all because they can be such a distraction. Texting, checking social media websites, and playing games can interfere with learning, so these teachers practice "phone surrender", requiring students to place their phone in a designated container at the beginning of class each day and only retrieve them at the very end. While this does seem to help students focus, there must be a way to use the phones productively instead.

The same apps convenient for tablets are also available for smartphones, so students can make use of online flashcards for studying, or watch video tutorials. Some students can text faster than they can write, so taking notes on a smartphone could be potentially easier. If a student misses class and needs to copy that day's notes, the camera feature can come in very handy. These phones can even record a lecture, eliminating the need for the old-fashioned tape recorder still used by some college students. This recording can then be easily shared with the class for those who are auditory learners.

Instead of fleeing from these handy little devices, perhaps it would be better to embrace them in classrooms. Finally, there are new tools for the teachers. Just as document cameras eliminated the necessity for the overhead projector, smartboards are becoming more and more common replacements for the document camera. Not so long ago, a whiteboard that doubled as a

touch-screen computer was completely out of the question. They seemed like some technology to be acquired in the far distant future, akin to flying cars and teleportation machines.

Now, they're quickly working their way into classrooms, and it's time to consider how to practically apply them. Not all teachers have a class set of tablets or laptops at their disposal, but a smartboard is a good alternative. These interactive whiteboards can be used in many ways. First, they eliminate the need to scan notes onto the computer; with a smartboard, notes can be immediately saved to a folder on the desktop. This means no more scanners required in classrooms, as well as less hassle for teachers.

Next, they can be used for lectures. The ability to switch between webpages and program windows with just a tap is priceless. Teachers are now able to switch over to an interactive visual on a website, then back to the notes, and then over to a short video, all without ever leaving the front of the classroom, and students can do the same while giving presentations. Allowing students to work examples on the board has always enhanced learning, and now these tactile learners can interact with problems even easier.

In a physics class, projectile motion can be easily demonstrated on the whiteboard by switching to an internet window with a simulator and adjusting variables such as height, weight, and velocity to see the effects on distance and time. No more confusing diagrams drawn by non-artistic physics majors! A geometry class could also discover 3D shapes more easily this way. The possibilities are endless. It just takes a little exploring to

discover everything these interactive whiteboards can do for us, and that is a task the teachers are going to have to tackle soon.

Technology is everywhere, and upcoming generations will be more immersed in it than ever. In the next decade or two, it is time to embrace it in schools. So many students could be benefitting from it if teachers would keep an open mind instead of becoming overwhelmed by the onslaught of new programs and equipment they find themselves trying to adapt to. Education is such an important topic because these students will one day grow up to lead the country. The teacher's job is to provide them with the best education possible to prepare them for the challenges they will face as adults in their lives and careers.