

# Iste nets standards for teachers



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## Module 1: Assessing Strengths and Improvement Opportunities

### Comparison to NETS-T

#### Standard 1: Facilitate and Inspire Student Learning and Creativity

I believe I do a fairly good job of “engaging students in exploring real-world issues and solving authentic problems using digital media and tools” (NETS-T 1b). For example, most of my international ELLs are majoring in international trade. Therefore, I have my business English students do a business plan proposal and presentation. In small groups, students use the Internet to research opportunities and possibilities for starting their own business. They also have to create a business plan indicating their product or service, cost structure, and projected profits or losses for the first, second, third, and fifth years, among other things. They then organize this information into a PowerPoint presentation and present their proposals to the class. Students then vote for the proposal that is the most realistic and plausible and has the best chance of success. Many aspects of this multi-faceted assignment deal with real-world issues and authentic problems and use digital tools and resources to address them. I am, however, relatively weak on NETS-T 1c, promoting student reflection.

#### Standard 2: Design and Develop Digital-Age Learning Experiences and Assessments

I believe the business plan example discussed above is also decent example of a “Digital-Age Learning Experience” that “adapt[s] relevant learning experiences that incorporate digital tools and resources to promote student

learning and creativity” (NETS-T 2a). Students learn to do Internet research and use common office productivity software while acquiring and learning to communicate in business English. During the term, students also have to send me several business-related emails such as asking for more information, placing an order, checking an order’s status, complaining as a customer, and handling complaints from customers. We do similar topics as phone calls as well. These sorts of activities provide me with formative and summative assessment data (NETS-T 2d). Lawton (2014) says that 21<sup>st</sup> century assessments must move beyond simple right and wrong answers. PowerPoints, presentations, emails, and phone calls go a long way toward accomplishing that goal.

### Standard 3: Model Digital-Age Work and Learning

I do very little with digital communication or collaboration with students or colleagues beyond email and WeChat (a Chinese real-time messaging and social media app similar to WhatsApp). There are three primary reasons for this: culture, government restrictions, and my own ignorance. Culturally, everyone in China uses WeChat for both personal and professional communications. I, however, find it inadequate for professional or academic correspondence or collaboration. WeChat is so pervasive, in fact, that while most Chinese have email accounts, they rarely use them or even check them. It is common for me to send an email then use WeChat to inform the recipient that an email has been sent. China’s “ Great Firewall” (i. e. government restriction) is another barrier. The Chinese government blocks many Western websites and web-based services such Google (including Gmail, Google Docs, Google Classroom, Google Translate, Google Scholar, <https://assignbuster.com/iste-nets-standards-for-teachers/>

and YouTube, etc.), Twitter, and Facebook. VPNs to get around such blocks are available, but they are often expensive, unreliable, and the government does its best to ban and block them as well. Finally, my own ignorance is a barrier. I simply have not taken the time to research and explore the options that may be available to me in China. Part of the reason is time, part of it is complacency. I simply have not had the motivation to investigate.

#### Standard 4: Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility

This standard is also quite difficult to meet in my current environment. China has a reputation for weak protection of intellectual property (IP) rights. While China's written IP laws are comparable to those of more developed nations, they were written only relatively recently, the courts have little experience with IP cases, and enforcement is inconsistent (Ang, Yingmei, & Chaopeng, 2014). For example, from firsthand experience, Beijing is filled with DVD stores that cater to foreigners. Every Western DVD is bootlegged and pirated. Likewise, counterfeit bags, shoes, and clothing are easily available even though the government has shut down many of the offending shops in recent years. They just reopen elsewhere. Similarly, it is very common for university students to purchase photocopies of required textbooks. Any copy center in Beijing is happy to copy a textbook, even the ones on campus. In fact, two years ago I attempted to require my students to buy authentic copies of my class' required text but I was swiftly reprimanded by my superiors. " No, no, no, no, no!" my supervisor said. " Authentic books are far too expensive. Our students cannot afford them," I was told. " Photocopies are better!" The universities are owned, operated, and controlled by the same government that writes and enforces IP laws. It is little wonder that

foreigners have the impression that copyright laws and intellectual property rights do not exist in China in any meaningful way.

Having said that, one thing I am able to do-and I do it zealously-is insist upon proper documentation and citation of sources. I do my best to investigate, verify, and prove suspected plagiarism but it is difficult to do so when Yahoo is the only tool at my disposal. I would like to invest in a service such as Turnitin to catch, or better yet, prevent plagiarism.

#### Standard 5: Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership

Rogers (2003, cited in Oncu, Delialioglu, & Brown, 2008, p. 21) identified five types of people with regard to technology adoption: innovators, early adopters, early majority, late majority, and laggards. My level of resistance seems to be increasing as I age. I know I am not the innovator I once was; at this point I might classify myself as “ mid-majority” had Rogers included that type in his scheme. I think part of professional growth and leadership with regards to technology is to approach technology with a more critical eye than is typical. While there are many undeniable benefits to using technology in the classroom, there are also potential dangers, drawbacks, and disadvantages that appear to be overlooked, ignored, or dismissed out of hand (Langford, Narayan, & Von Glahn, 2016). For example, concerns have been raised that overreliance on technology can cause declines in critical thinking and analytical skills (Porter, 2014; Greenfield, 2009, cited in Langford, Narayan, & Von Glahn, 2016) and that overdependence on the Internet hampers people’s ability to think, understand, retain, and analyze information (Carr, 2010; Ciarcia, 2012; Friedman & Heafner, 2012, cited in

Langford, Narayan, & Von Glahn, 2016). Finally, Bauerlein (2008) believes that “ the digital age has generated access to immense information at the expense of making us ‘ dumber’. He worries that the younger generation is increasingly disconnected from culture, history, politics and context contributing to ignorance and apathy” (cited in Langford, Narayan, & Von Glahn, 2016, p. 4). I think it behooves teachers and educators to acknowledge both sides of the debate and not automatically assume that any and all technology is beneficial or even harmless. Our students often embrace new technology cavalierly. Therefore, as teachers, educators, and leaders, it is incumbent upon us to evaluate the use and potential consequences of technology before adopting it rather than blindly follow the pervasive culture. In other words, if overuse of technology is part of the problem, as some believe, is more technology really the answer? As leaders we must ask hard questions and be willing to defy the status quo (Bennis, 1989, cited in Shoup, 2016).

## Conclusion

I believe I have done a fairly good job of meeting some of the indicators of the ISTE NETS standards for teachers. On the other hand, some of the standards and their indicators will be difficult to meet in my Chinese university teaching and learning context. Even so, there are two things I believe I can do to further develop the skills I need to meet the NETS-T standards and indicators. My first goal is to research age-appropriate online collaborative tools available and accessible in China. Such tools will help my business English students further develop their English reading and writing proficiency as well as prepare them for their future careers where such collaboration is

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commonplace. Secondly, I want to develop my professional growth and leadership by researching and understanding the potential problems and pitfalls presented by technology beyond the three most commonly associated with youth-predators, plagiarism, and porn-and how to mitigate them.

### Technology IntegrationMatrix (TIM)

Below is a Technology Integration Matrix reflecting my business English class for my international university students. I chose this class because I believe it is the most technology-integrated class I currently teach. My TOEFL and IELTS workshops are far less technology-dependent. In fact, I felt it necessary to create and add a new Level of Technology Integration to the Matrix: *Non - Integration* . There are several reasons why a teacher may not integrate certain aspects of technology with his or her instruction including, but not limited to, unawareness that such technology exists, ignorance regarding its use, a lack of resources or access, or a rationale where such use is deemed inappropriate (Kayalar, 2016). For example, I myself am unaware of age-appropriate online resources for goal-directed learning that are available and accessible in China.

### Levels of Technology Integration into the Curriculum

Non- Integration	Entry	Adopti on	Adaptati on	Infusio n	Transformat ion
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Learning

Environment

## Characteristi

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means to  
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language



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in pairs or

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is

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person.

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in English.

Authentic Students  
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proposal  
in English.

Students  
do not

Goal- use  
Directed technolog  
y in this  
manner.

### Goal 1

I would like my business English international students and myself to research and explore age-appropriate goal-directed online resources available and accessible in China that will aid their English-language acquisition and use. This might effectively move us from Goal-Oriented / Non-Integration to Goal-Oriented / Entry. Researching English-language educational tools in English will itself help build students' English-language vocabulary and reading comprehension skills as they try to discover online tools and ways they can be used to facilitate other aspects of their language acquisition and use.

### Goal 2

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I would like to move my business English international students from Collaborative / Entry to Collaborative / Adoption. In China, WeChat is the preferred means of real-time messaging and communication. However, email is more common in other parts of the world, especially in professional business environments. I would like to extend email (or other collaborative tools) use into the arena of real-world collaboration as opposed to the merely academic exercise it is currently.

## Conclusion

While many benefits of integrating technology across the curriculum are strong and undeniable, several barriers remain. These barriers might be categorized as external (relative to the teacher) or internal. External barriers largely involve the availability and accessibility of age-appropriate technological tools and resources, and are largely outside the teacher's control. Student social-economic status, school or district funding, or government policy and regulation are all examples of external barriers that may make it difficult to fully integrate technology inside the classroom. Internal barriers to technological integration pertain to teacher willingness, knowledge, and skill, and their legitimate concerns regarding student welfare as well as founded or unfounded prejudices and biases against technology. I would like to echo Langford, Narayan, and Von Glahn's (2016) caution against using technology for technology's sake and instead thoughtfully and critically adopt only those technologies and methods proven to enhance the student educational experience, in my case, the acquisition and use of the English language at the university level.

## References

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