

Title of Session: Technology in the Classroom

Moderator: Donna Hendry

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DonnaH joined the room.

DonnaH: *waves*

EmilyW: Hi Donna

BJB2 cheers and waves hi to Donna.

DonnaH: I just walked in the door:)

DonnaH: (Beth's dissected heart made a splash at the science fair.)

GailTi: Yay!

SusanR claps for Donna

DonnaH: course, a lot of people were like...you let her dissect a HEART?

DonnaH: (and were really grossed out by the real thing...but hey...what's the fun in science if you can't be gross?)

BJB2 smiles

SusanR: any pictures, Donna

DonnaH: (and believe it or not, I actually have a topic tonight!)

DonnaH: yep...

SusanR: on the web??

EmilyW: what is the topic?

BJB2: Donna, would you like to start with introductions?

DonnaH: Online games...

DonnaH: Sure thing:)

BJB2 . o O (give you a chance to catch your breath)

EmilyW: great topic

GailTi: coooooool

DonnaH: My name is Donna Hendry, I'm an educational consultant in CT and the Leader of the Techclass forum.

BJB2: please introduce yourself and tell us where you are located and what you teach or hope to teach

LisaRu: I'm new and I just figured out how to get into the room.

DonnaH: (actually, it's not so much where to find them...but the controversy on whether or not to use them)

DonnaH: (but we can do that too)

JaneSa: I am also new, English secondary Texas

LisaRu: I teach first grade in California

DerekM: I'm also new to Tapped In. I teach 7th grade math in Palo Alto, CA.

GailTi: Good job Lisa! I'm Gail. I work for the School of Ed at the University of KS.. I work with the HPRTEC folks.. but I help administer Title II D funds in Missouri.

EmilyW: My name is Emily and I am in Dallas, TX. I am a web designer who hopes to be a technology coordinator one day.

DonnaH: (is that everyone?)

HelenK: I am from British Columbia, Canada. Work with adults helping them upgrade their skills and with professionals learning to transfer their skills to the online world

SusanR: K to 8 Occasional Teacher from Canada, former Tech Integrator K to 3+ Great Resources presenter here at TI

DonnaH: (love that term, "occasional teacher". btw, Sue...much classier than the American 'Substitute')

SusanR: right ..sub

DonnaH: *snicker*

DonnaH: Okay. To topic at hand.

SusanR: That's what they call us in Ontario..subbing with dignity

DonnaH: I was substituting today...and I have to admit, this topic really started sticking in my craw. (exactly, Sue!)

LisaRu: we've been calling them guest teachers in our district

DonnaH: Should we allow students to play online games...if so should we limit the types...and should it be the teachers' choice or a district call?

EmilyW: teacher's choice

JaneSa: Well I'm interested in what every one thinks

DerekM: My school doesn't allow students to play games online unless they are in the computer lab. I think.

GailTi: What kind of online games?

JaneSa: We don't allow games unless they are tied to a lesson/unit plan

JaneSa: I should say online games.

EmilyW: Games should be allowed if they tie into a lesson or unit

EmilyW: That is what makes learning fun

DonnaH: Well, I was having this discussion with the students.

DerekM: I think today students were playing slime sports. Two little half circle characters that play different versions of pong.

LisaRu: I'd allow it if they were tied to a lesson, but I would want to preview the game

SusanR: maybe we should rethink computer games in the classroom

JaneSa: What did the students have to say about it?

DonnaH: I had one student trying (and taking quite the little tizzy when I said I don't think so) to play a game where a tank is shooting down planes.

GailTi: oh my

SusanR: Marc Prensky argues that the prevalence of video games has actually rewired our brains and made traditional learning methods less effective.

DonnaH: Realize, I was left without plans...so I didn't mind the game playing so much.

DonnaH: where did you find that, Sue? I'd love to see it.

EmilyW: I don't think shooting or violence games should be allowed (unless it is a game like Oregon trail)

SusanR: <http://books.slashdot.org/books/03/04/24/1323205.shtml>

EmilyW: I learned about Marc Prensky in my Games & Simulations for Instruction class in college

SusanR: Digital Game Based Learning

RebeccaR joined the room.

DerekM: This week we are given the STAR test (standardized tests) and many of the students have finished with 30+ minutes left in the testing period. Many of them read, a few played cards, and one student used his computer with 5-6 other students watching.

GailTi: I think it would be hard to prove that games have rewired the brain.. .

DonnaH: (thanks, Sue)

BJB2: hi, Rebecca. Welcome

DonnaH: That is my attitude, Emily.

RebeccaR: Hi, Just reading and catching up.

DonnaH: I don't mind games like Bedazzled, for example...because there is a certain amount of logic involved.

EmilyW: I think card games and word games are great

DerekM: I know that there seem to be many more students who are diagnosed with ADD or ADHD. Can that be attributed to more TV and computer games? Constant stimulation and no down time?

DonnaH: I wouldn't be surprised, Derek

BJB2: Hi, Dee. Welcome. We're discussing using online games in the classroom

DonnaH: But do the trends really matter in the short term? We're still going to have to deal with what exists, even if we know why.

RebeccaR: I attended an Apple Digital Classroom in the 21st classroom today and instant feedback and constant stimulation was a big topic. However, games were not discussed.

DonnaH: (in the long term, certainly...I'm not downplaying it)

GailTi: there's a lot of competition for a student's attention, no?

DonnaH: Which is why using technology works...why it is a good thing.

DonnaH: but I think we need to keep in mind that there needs to be a balance.

JaneSa: Not if they don't have the critical thinking skills to go along with the technology

DonnaH: Should games be used as rewards? especially in cases of special needs students?

DerekM: I have given a few online quizzes this year using Blackboard and it has been fairly effective. The quiz is immediately graded and the student has immediate feedback. That was useful.

HelenK: it depends upon the reason for the game - there are many scenario based games that build critical thinking skills

LisaRu: The only time my first graders have played games on the computer this year is when they've finished all of their centers for the week and have "explore" time on Friday

GailTi: everything I know about advertising I learned from Lemonade Stand

HelenK: they are also useful for students who need lots of repetition

JaneSa: True, but most teachers that allow games are not using those games. The scenario based games, educational games are the ones that show up in the unit plans --

JaneSa: Rewards at the end of class games are usually not the educational based games

EmilyW: I loved the lemonade stand game

DonnaH: I'm just finding that I'm finding a lot more non-edu based games being used by students in the classroom.

DonnaH: and it's not in just one district.

GailTi: like TV babysitting?

EmilyW: where are you finding this information?

DonnaH: That's exactly what crossed my mind as i typed that.

JaneSa: Donna it is a problem everywhere

DonnaH: In the classes I substitute in, Emily. I teach in a number of different schools, in different districts.

DonnaH: GRANTED I'm still in one state:)

GailTi: seems like it wouldn't be the best reinforcer anyway...

DerekM: The math dept. at my school has a Jeopardy Game that plugs into a television or LCD projector. I have used it a couple times for review before a test. It was fun, but students can get very competitive. Any competition seems to need a winner and students are very sensitive to fairness.

DonnaH: I'm often told (especially if there haven't been sub plans left) to let them on the computer.

DonnaH: and I can guarantee you, the kids know right where the games are.

EmilyW: how many computers are in the classroom?

DonnaH: The class I had today actually had it on a list approved by the district (like a district favorites list)

DerekM: It does seem that computers can be a babysitter and not an effective tool if students are just left to wander by themselves and aren't directed in some way.

DonnaH: (to be fair though, it was a new game on this particular site)

DonnaH: depends. Today's class had 10 computers in it.

SusanR: Perhaps teachers should use more games for teaching skills and content or have the students create games

DonnaH: I've had students create games.

JaneSa: Have any of you created your own games?

EmilyW: how do you have students create games?

GailTi: are the computers loaded with *something* with some educational relevance?

DonnaH: (sorry, brb...I need to remind a few children of my own that going to bed means going to sleep)

SusanR: students create the games using Flash

EmilyW: no, but I hope to do that some day

EmilyW: (students can learn flash, and I can't)

LisaRu: Last year I taught fifth grade and I made a Jeopardy Power Point as the celebration of our ending of our space unit and to get ready for our simulated space shuttle field trip.

DerekM: I have had students create presentations in flash for the rest of the class. One student created a probability game that was a great example.

JaneSa: You can create or recreate jeopardy in power point/in fact it is a great review game

EmilyW: what grade level are students creating games?

DonnaH: I haven't learned flash.

GailTi: ya, we've had some jeopardy in games for *adults*!

JaneSa: Now that is great

SusanR: I saw grade 6/7/8 students creating flash activities in a lab setting..with ease

JaneSa: Having students create games

DonnaH: The types of games they made were games to be used off the comp afterward.

GailTi: could be a whole project--designing a game

JaneSa: we use to have them create board games

JaneSa: why not computer games

EmilyW: computer games are hard to do

DonnaH: But that's it...they are based on educational tenets

HelenK: Hotpotatoes <http://web.uvic.ca/hrd/halfbaked/> from the University of Victoria here in BC allows you to create games such as crosswords etc.

GailTi: so is there a need to good, simple online games.. or is there a lot out there?

GailTi: sorry if that's a dumb question

DonnaH: I use Discovery channels for that.

EmilyW: I have found a few simple online games

DonnaH: There are some.

DonnaH: Here is one I found:

JaneSa: I don't think any of use mind games as long as they are educational

DonnaH: <http://www.popcap.com/launchpage.php?theGame=bookworm&src=big8>

DonnaH: (this btw was the site i had said was approved by this district)

DonnaH: <http://www.popcap.com/index.php>

DonnaH: You'll notice the game I had the issue with does say 'new' on it.

EmilyW: Bookworm is an addicting game

JaneSa: I do know that when you go to these "free" sites you are also getting spyware loaded on your computer and need to run a clean up program afterward

DonnaH: I like the bedazzled as well...it is similar to tetris...which I actually think is good to teach planning and spatial and logic.

DonnaH: Depends on the site.

DonnaH: Yahoo isn't too bad.

DonnaH: (this one, as I said, I only fell upon today)

GailTi: run firefox.. that helps with the spyware

EmilyW: the only problem with yahoo is it has chat

SusanR: I have had success with the games at Orisinal, Donna

EmilyW: (unless you use a game like bookworm)

DonnaH: which is why most filters block a good portion of Yahoo.

DonnaH: I run adaware.

JaneSa: I run spybot

DonnaH: catches a ton that get through my virusscan.

DonnaH: but, I have to admit...do we do this on the computers at school?

GailTi: ya, if you use firefox as your browser.. there's less spyware that makes it to your computer

DonnaH: (I know in one district at least, I'm blocked from doing anything like that.)

DonnaH: I've heard Opera is good for the same reason, Gail.

GailTi: yes

SusanR: Safari as well

DerekM: My school uses foolproof which stops anything from loading on the computer. I have to unlock them sometime to run "normal" programs.

DerekM: It's not a game, but I will sometimes just put up a movie or quiz from www.brainpop.com on some topic we are dealing with in class. I'll often allow the class to do fewer homework problems if the class gets an A on the quiz. I let specific students know they will be responsible for certain questions.

DonnaH: We're blocked from loading most stuff as well.

JaneSa: brainpop is one site our middle school subscribes to

JaneSa: the teachers love it as do the kids

GailTi: that's a pretty cool looking site!

EmilyW: <http://games.zeeks.com/games.php>

EmilyW: (it's a great site, but there are way too many ads)

JaneSa: and some of those ads are awful!

DonnaH: I've had problems with games from cartoon network as well.

DerekM: I just tried bookworm. Does anyone know if a similar game for math? It would be neat to be given an equation such as $3x + 2 = y$ and have to link on the values that would be solutions to that equation.

GailTi: brain pop's not cheap

DonnaH: (I remember having to block the Matrix Reloaded game that was on it.)

DonnaH: Havne't seen one, Derek, but you're right...it would be great:)

JaneSa: If you go to Marco Polo and search the math portion they have some neat interactive math "stuff"

SusanR: I have used this one with from grade 2 to grade 8 ..no pop ups
<http://www.ferryhalim.com/orisinal/>

SusanR: with students

DerekM: I think our PTA subscribed to BrainPop for our school.

EmilyW: Do you think there is a need for better games used in classrooms?

SusanR: How much is a site licence for a school

DonnaH: Well, if we're stuck with having filters in school...wouldn't it make sense to block games that had no educational basis?

GailTi: \$800

DonnaH: (ouch)

SusanR: ooh

JaneSa: I think there is a need for how specific games can be used in specific subject area--they need to tie to our student expectations

GailTi: are you getting that type of information anywhere? How to use games in instruction?

EmilyW: I have been researching that topic

JaneSa: There is very little out there, but I haven't really searched hard

EmilyW: are you looking to find out about games on the internet or software?

JaneSa: I think either

GailTi: just curious if educators need help with that topic....

EmilyW: me too

DonnaH: Mainly internet...because we can control the software issue...

DonnaH: we don't have as much control of the internet one.

JaneSa: I would think whatever made it easier for teachers to justify and FIND good quality games

SusanR: an interesting study..can video games stimulate learning..worth reading at some point <http://cognitivedaily.com/?p=43> .. at the end of the session

EmilyW: but still, I think teachers might have a hard time with software games being used in specific subject

DonnaH: How do you mean, Emily?

EmilyW: How they can use a certain game in their lessons

DerekM: For the probability unit, I use a game called Treasure Hunt. Unfortunately I can't remember the site. We use Connected Math and the book is What Do You Expect?.

JaneSa: We've probably all used a version of Jeopardy to review for test/quiz

JaneSa: Created word search with vocabulary words

JaneSa: and crosswords

DonnaH: I've given those as tests, Jane:)

JaneSa: Great

EmilyW: I don't consider word searches or crosswords games

SusanR: Teachers often ask students to create the crosswords and/or word searches

GailTi: it sounds like some of the schools have given approval for online games to be in the classroom, right?

JaneSa: There are simple games in Study Island that our high school uses

DonnaH: There used to be a game (the site it was on is now defunct...but it wouldn't be that hard to recreate if you knew flash...) that had the little word 'magnets' on a fridge...and you were to create poetry.

GailTi: that's neat Donna

DonnaH: you could set it to print out.

DonnaH: The book worm thing, I could see...as it does have a certain amount of edu value.

JaneSa: I remember those, (the poetry magnets)

JaneSa: how about match games

EmilyW: match games are good

GailTi: I just found a bunch of games listed in our www.4kids.org site....

JaneSa: they are also easy to create in ppt

HelenK: there are some in the poetry links for the k-3 resource room aren't there Susan?

GailTi:

<http://www.4kids.org/servlet/coolspots.SearchCoolspotsByCategory?categoryId=1&catName=Fun+and+Games&subcategoryId=0&subcatName=All+Sites>

DonnaH: especially those where you can put in your own parameters (say words to definitions, etc)

DerekM: Okay, I think I found a site with downloads for some games from the Connected Math curriculum.

DerekM: Sorry. Here it is. <http://www.math.msu.edu/cmp/Resources/Software.htm>

EmilyW: <http://www.funbrain.com/>

HelenK: thanks everyone, have to run - good session

DonnaH: Funbrain charges too.

HelenK left the room (signed off).

DonnaH: I'm more concerned with where are students 'trying' to go, i guess.

GailTi: You can do a search on the cool spots area of 4kids.. I found some math stuff.. don't know if it's any good though!

DerekM: Thanks for the useful conversation and sites. Good stuff to think about.

JaneSa: http://illuminations.nctm.org/index_d.aspx?id=411 this is a marcopolo site--I searched games and a list came up

GailTi: ok, so ya there's a lot out there huh

JaneSa: kids are always trying to "go" somewhere we don't want them to, that is true on the computer and off

SusanR: I can see a use for KidQuest, Gail. I will feature it in The K to 3 Resource Room

JaneSa: night all

DonnaH: Gosh, it is that time, isn't it!?

EmilyW: bye all

GailTi: thanks everybody!

DerekM: As far as keeping kids where you want them, as Professor Moody says in Harry Potter, CONSTANT VIGILANCE!

GailTi: indeed

DonnaH: (you're speaking to a bonafide HP freak...no need to remind me:))

GailTi: nice to meet everyone! I have to finish a paper now good night

SusanR: Thanks Donna, I am rethinking computer games in the classroom

SusanR: certain types

DonnaH: Thanks, Sue:)