Title of Session: Special Ed Forum - Tech in the SPED Classroom
Moderator: Paul Bohac
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Room: Special Education Forum Group

LeslieH: I have just finished eMINTS class and am excited to find out how others are using SmartBoards in their SPED classrooms.

BJB2 smiles. I'd be interested to know how many sped teachers have the luxury of owning a smartboard!

BJB2: Hi, Zachary and Melissa

ZacharyW: hi

MelissaRR: hello

BJB2: are you here for the Special Ed discussion?

MelissaRR: yes

ZacharyW: yep

BJB2: great

BJB2: Paul will hopefully be here shortly and we can start the discussion

BJB2 waits for the big hand to officially be straight up

BJB2 . o O (then we can give Paul a tardy slip   )

ZacharyW: ha

DavidWe joined the room.

DavidWe waves

DavidWe: Hi

BJB2 waves to David

PaulDB joined the room.

DavidWe: Hi, Paul

BJB2 cheers...perfect timing, Paul

BJB2 puts away the tardy slip pad

DavidWe . o O (ooooh, close)

PaulDB: Hello all!!

ZacharyW: hi

DavidWe is impressed that BJ HAS a tardy slip pad

BJB2: before we start this Special Ed Discussion, a reminder...

PaulDB: Hey, what do you expect of teachers?

BJB2: to go to the ACTIONS menu in the top right of this chat window

BJB2: and click on DETACH

BJB2: that will make it easier to follow the scrolling text

BJB2: we usually start the discussions in Tapped In with introductions

BJB2: I'm an art teacher in a male juvenile correctional facility

PaulDB: Okay, I am a retired correctional educator

DavidWe: I'm David Weksler, one of the Tapped In HelpDesk volunteers. I work with teachers and encourage them to use educational technology. I'm in New Jersey, near New York City

BJB2 hopes Paul doesn't get hurricane Rita at his Florida location

ZacharyW: I'm Zach I'm a grad - student

BJB2: where are you located, Zach?

ZacharyW: sorry I'm in Pennsylvania

MelissaRR: I am Melissa-a grad student in Pittsburgh, PA

LeslieH: Leslie, I teach K-5 Emotionally Disturbed students in Missouri

BJB2 . o O (I'm also in Pennsylvania...sorry)

PaulDB: That is a tough group Leslie!!

DavidWe: Good luck with your teaching, Leslie

PaulDB: Last month we were talking about the use of technology (computers) in the class with Special Education youth.

BJB2: perfect, Paul. Leslie would like to discuss smartboards

PaulDB: Good What is a smartboard?

ZacharyW: what about smartboards?

BJB2 smiles....Leslie, I rest my case

MelissaRR: smartboard= interactive whiteboard

ZacharyW: right so what are we saying about them

LeslieH: It's like a giant touchscreen.

BJB2: a smartboard allows you to project from a computer and annotate the projection...

MelissaRR: do you have one, Leslie?

BJB2: the annotations can be saved and printed out

ZacharyW: I've seen several in use and they're quite handy

LeslieH: I would like to know how others are using them, but it seems like no one else knows about them.

LeslieH: I am getting one in November. I am in an eMINTS class right now.

BJB2: I know about them...but they're pretty expensive

PaulDB: Tell us what you are doing or how do you use them?

TeresaHi joined the room.

BJB2: welcome, Teresa

PaulDB: Hi Teresa

LeslieH: Most of the uses I have learned about are for regular education students. The goal for eMINTS is to provide transforming uses of technology.

ZacharyW: Basically it's useful for projecting the image from you sationary computer w/o having to sit at the computer

PaulDB: For example?

BJB2 . o O (we're discussing tech in the special ed classroom...smartboards in particular right now, Teresa)

MelissaRR: well, it could replace overheads and give you more graphic options

LeslieH: A SmartBoard goes beyond the projection of the image, though. It allows interaction via the screen.

ZacharyW: right, how are you thinking of using it in your class in particular?

LeslieH: For example, right now this computer is hooked to a Smartboard and I could stand at the screen and scroll through the text using my finger.

BJB2 hopes Leslie will give us some examples

TeresaHi: I just received a special education student today. I am very interested in different ways to help my students.

PaulDB: How is the process implemented?

LeslieH: One project I thought of was to make reading passages that have phonetic sounds linked to parts of words so that if the student came to a word they didn't know they could click the sounds and blend the word.

PaulDB: Is there some type of remote device?

ZacharyW: nicely done Leslie, that's a good one

LeslieH: What process--the SmartBoard part or the coming up with ways it would be useful part?

TeresaHi: I have made several power points that help students blend sounds and ID sounds in words. Students interact with the program clicking the correct vowel or sound.

PaulDB: I am not familiar with the unit so I am having some difficulty conceptualizing how it operates.

LeslieH: There is a projector and a screen. The screen is SMART. It has markers like a whiteboard and it knows when a marker is picked up. At that time you can write on the screen in the color of marker you picked up.

TeresaHi: We do not have Smartboards at our school.

MelissaRR: I don't know that I've ever seen a smartboard used to it's full extent... only as a projection screen

BJB2: http://www.d131.kane.k12.il.us/Bardwell/smartboard.html

LeslieH: It also allows you to interact with the screen.

BJB2: hold down your ctrl key as you click on the url

LeslieH: That way you can use it like a touchscreen.

ZacharyW: The smart board is an interactive white board onto which is projected a basic computer image via an LCD projector. The board reacts to touches thusly freeing the user to move around and use an oversized screed

ZacharyW: that's the basic function

LeslieH: It comes with specialized software as well.

ZacharyW: there is probably much more to it that I don't know

PaulDB: Okay, so one could do a math problem in steps using the smartboard?

LeslieH: Yes,

ZacharyW: with a program yeah

PaulDB: Create a map in geography?

ZacharyW: anything you can do with pc software you can use on a smartboard

LeslieH: whatever you can do on the computer will be projected onto the screen with the added benefit of writing over it, circling things, etc like a whiteboard.

PaulDB: But it allows for class discussion during its use?

ZacharyW: yeah

BJB2: this is a cool fractions site
http://illuminations.nctm.org/tools/tool_detail.aspx?id=11

PaulDB: How much does it cost?

ZacharyW: lots

ZacharyW: don't know any exact figures

BJB2 grins...BIG numbers, Paul

LeslieH: $3,000 or so

PaulDB: Could one integrate the smartboard into the technology plan?

ZacharyW: I do like the idea of linking in the phonetics to whatever is being read

MelissaRR: really? my aunt said her school is getting one for every teacher and requiring them to use it

ZacharyW: it might take some time though

BJB2: here's a study that was done on smartboards
http://www.mirandanet.ac.uk/pubs/smartboard.htm

LeslieH: Sure, our school got our first ones through a grant, but now it is in the plan to get 5 new ones each year, with the corresponding professional development

PaulDB: What are the elements of the professional development to be provided?

BJB2: here's another page of uses for the smartboard
http://www.eduscapes.com/sessions/smartboard/

MelissaRR: I would think training on use and function of the smartboard

LeslieH: We are doing module from eMINTS. I think eMINTS is in Missouri and Ohio. I will get the address for their site.

LeslieH: www.emints.org

PaulDB: It seems as though there may be an issue with the technology, but it also appears that the instructional content would not be substantively different.

LeslieH: Not with the

LeslieH: Smartboard, but with eMINTS the focus is on transforming uses of technology.

LeslieH: Higher order thinking, student directed questions

BJB2: part of the appeal is that it's interactive and it's on a screen...easier to engage the students

MelissaRR: I would think that the instructional content would be expanded because you would be able to offer more

TeresaHi: It sounds as if Smart boards get the student more involved in their learning. I find that students learn better when they are more involved.

LeslieH: With the Smartboard students can interact with the computer in a way that everyone can see while the student stands at the board.

PaulDB: Yes, that is true.

PaulDB: So now we can talk about modeling or the process by which one derives an answer?

PaulDB: That would allow for discussion that could carry the thought process further?

SusanR joined the room.

MelissaRR: it offers more visual representation of what you are trying to get across

PaulDB: It moves from a description of how to do something to an explanation as to why something is done?

PaulDB: Hi Susan

BJB2 waves hi to Sue. We're discussing smartboards and their effectiveness in the sped classroom

SusanR: at least one in every classroom!!

PaulDB: So it can be considered as a auditory-visual and tactile kinesthetic experience?

ZacharyW: yeah

MelissaRR: yes

PaulDB: Research says that a multi-modal approach has the greatest effect!

LeslieH: Well the SB is definitely multi-modal.

MelissaRR: which is beneficial in a spec ed classroom b/c a lot of times they need to have a more concrete example and not just a random explanation

ZacharyW: It can possibly have a great effect in a classroom that's for sure

PaulDB: Also, research says that kids who have ADHD and who spend less time worrying about "being still" and more time on task tend to do better.

PaulDB: I would love to see some data from a classroom use of a smartboard with a group of ADHD youth!!

TeresaHi: Students with ADHD need as many tools as we can provide to help them stay on task so they can learn. I would love to try a SB in my classroom.

SusanR . o O (so the smartboard can accommodate different learning styles)

ZacharyW: that data might be a while in coming

ZacharyW: with the expense involved

MelissaRR: the smartboard accommodates just about every learning style

PaulDB: Does that mean that we need to attend to learning styles as we develop lesson plans using the smartboard?

ZacharyW: as always

LeslieH: Don't we always need to attend to learning styles?

ZacharyW: some things don't change with the technology

MelissaRR: I think the SB lends itself in that way and so we really don't need to be too concerned with the learning styles b/c they will all be there

TeresaHi: Yes, we always must attend to learning styles.

PaulDB: Yes we do. It would seem that in this instance it might be possible to develop a lesson plan that could more effectively accommodate those variations.

ZacharyW: they'll be there but in varying levels

ZacharyW: so we still have to decide what direction to go

PaulDB: Right Zach!

MelissaRR: but without the smartboard we could plan a lesson based only on auditory cues and neglect the other learning styles

PaulDB: However, because learning styles is but one part of the picture, I was also thinking that the smarboard would seem to offer the chance to design a multi-level instructional activity as well.

PaulDB: It is the tactile-kinesthetic element that appeals to me.

LeslieH: Has anyone had or heard about any successful activities using the SmartBoard in a way that addresses all learning styles?

PaulDB: I have not. I didn't even know anything about them until this evening.

TeresaHi: No, I have never used a SM.

MelissaRR: how would you do a multi-level activity?

PaulDB: Could we create such an activity in this group?

SusanR: seen them..not used them

SusanR . o O (played with one for a few minutes)

ZacharyW: you'd presumably throw audio, visual, kinesthetic all into one activity, but I'm clueless on the ins and outs of it

BJB2: would work for digital storytelling

PaulDB: Yes, that would make good sense BJ

BJB2: either as a round robin type story

BJB2: or as individual projects

ZacharyW: would throwing all the styles in together create a demonstration that is a little hard to follow?

PaulDB: No, that is where the structure of the lesson plan comes into play.

BJB2: another use would be to use primary resources to construct a report on a topic

LeslieH: It was nice to meet everyone, but I must move out of the theoretical into the actual.

MelissaRR: in a round robin type story, what would you put on the screen? just write out the story?

BJB2: Melissa, I'd have the kids do image searches or enter text

BJB2: or even find clip art that they can insert

PaulDB: With each child responsible for a sentence to further the story along.

ZacharyW: Id be playing with map games or even constructing maps (I like geography)

BJB2: when I was at the national gallery of art this summer we did an exercise in a couple of the exhibit rooms...

BJB2: where each teacher chose a painting...

BJB2: and then we did a round robin story based on our painting

SusanR: a wonderful idea, Bj

PaulDB: That would be a great way to recognize the individual contribution of each member!!

BJB2: teaches visual literacy, understanding symbols, aesthetics

PaulDB: It would also promote collaborative thinking.

BJB2 agrees

SusanR: must use that for my "Looking at Pictures" programme

ZacharyW: Well it was great talking but I'm headed off

BJB2: thanks for joining us, Zach

PaulDB: Generating a sense of shared beliefs but could also demonstrate differences of opinions.

PaulDB: Bye Zach

ZacharyW left the room (signed off).

BJB2: absolutely, Paul. Each person brings their own experiences to a piece of art

MelissaRR: I see. I think it would help me to actually use a SB. Then I could see the full potential for it

PaulDB: I agree Melissa. I will be learning more about it myself.

BJB2: there are two short demos at http://www.smarttech.com/

MelissaRR: thanks

BJB2 . o O (tutorials)

SusanR: I think we as teachers need to spend at least a half day exploring and putting our hands on one of these smartboards

PaulDB: I could see a classroom with a different chair arrangement when using the smartboard.

TeresaHi: I am going to go the University and use a SB there. I will see the different ways in which it can be used in the classroom and then perhaps ask for one at school.

PaulDB: I like your style Teresa!!

BJB2: smartboards are a good item for grant writing

PaulDB: They must be new and would likely garner support.

MelissaRR: isn't most technology usually fairly easy to get through grants?

PaulDB: I can't help but think that they could be used very effectively for meeting the Annual Performance Goals so necessary under NCLB.

SusanR: will they eventually replace chalkboards?

PaulDB: Good question.

BJB2: what's a chalkboard?

SusanR: old fashion blackboard

BJB2 . o O (most chalkboards are being replaced with whiteboards...no chalk dust)

SusanR: or replace whiteboards

BJB2 . o O (just the fumes from dry erase markers   )

SusanR: yep

SusanR: I came from the era of "blackboards"

PaulDB: Such a device could also be very beneficial for kids who have physical disabilities I would think.

MelissaRR: here's a link to an article where they used SB in a school for the deaf: http://www.thejournal.com/magazine/vault/A5316.cfm

BJB2: thanks, Melissa

TeresaHi: My children become very engaged when they are allowed to use the white board or chalkboards. It sounds like the SM will engage students to a higher level. It sounds exciting.

PaulDB: Melissa, you are a fountain of info this evening.

MelissaRR: ha! too bad I never used a SB!

PaulDB: I will be going to each of the sites identified when I receive my copy of the transcript of this session.

PaulDB: I was also thinking about the kids who are wheelchair bound or those who are otherwise mobility impaired. Using the smartboard seems to move to the child.

TeresaHi: This session has given me lots of information.

MelissaRR: after hearing all this information, I'd like to go back to my college and play with the one they have there to see what it does

MelissaRR: I think it allows the child to have more ownership for their learning

PaulDB: Well said!!

MelissaRR: which in turn gives the spec ed child more confidence

PaulDB: And it would seem to do so by allowing for engagement in a very public fashion.

SusanR: Donna Hendry...Tech in the Classroom facilitator here at TI has access to one..could she speak about the benefits?

PaulDB: Perhaps she could do a summary that could be posted on the discussion board for this forum?

BJB2: or, perhaps someone in the group would like to contact a Smartboard vendor

BJB2: who could attend the next Sped discussion and give us a demo

BJB2: speaking of which...the next SPED meeting is October 17

PaulDB: That sounds like a plan!

PaulDB: I'll take on that task with your help BJ.

TeresaHi: Thanks BJB

BJB2 . o O (third Monday)

BJB2: great, Paul.

BJB2: any last minute comments?

PaulDB: I have learned a great deal from this session and I am appreciative for all the knowledge shared.

BJB2: thanks, Paul, for leading the discussion

SusanR: This was an engaging discussion.

MelissaRR: thank you everyone for the info!

TeresaHi: Thanks. I learned a lot. Have a great week.

SusanR left the room.

BJB2 waves goodnight

BJB2: be safe, Paul. Keep away from hurricanes