Ashlee Gray

CEP 800

A Guide to Technology, Teaching, and Learning

As a teacher, technology plays an important role in my planning and delivery of content. I am fortunate enough to have a SmartBoard in my classroom. However, in order to utilize that technology to the fullest, I had to learn basic skills. I attended conferences where I gathered with other instructors to practice and learn skills in a hands-on approach. Also, our staff shares a different technology tip and demonstration at each staff meeting. These social settings for learning work just as well for us educators as they do for our students. I am able to watch, and learn how different technology components work, and then practice with a group of colleagues. This type of learning environment is best supported by Lev Vygotsky, who was an advocate for social learning. However, the developmental stages noted by Piaget also have play a part in the success educators can have with technology. As grown adults, we have progressed to the Piaget’s final stage- formal operational. We are able to conceptualize complex ideas and conduct abstract thinking. Granted, technology is not always an outlet to apply abstract thinking and complex ideas. However, we can utilize technology as a tool in which we can more efficiently tackle abstract ideas and concepts in learning.

In my classroom, my students are exposed to a variety of learning styles and methods. Several of which include technology. In order to adapt to today’s technology driven society, it is necessary to incorporate technology as much as possible. Many of my students could be labeled as falling in Piaget’s concrete operational stage. They understand a variety of problems involving addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. I am able to include technology into math instruction by incorporating my SmartBoard. Here, students are able to collaborate as a class to work through problems providing them with a social learning experience. Other times they are able to practice skills on a laptop using a program called Study Island. This program provides them with meaningful practice for the state achievement test, while providing immediate, yet meaningful feedback to each student. It is noted by the Behaviorism theorists that random feedback is very effective in learning and remembering skills. Either way, they are able to relate to the technologies they are familiar with, while gaining skills in mathematics.

Many of the skills my students’ use in math can relate to other subjects as well. As mentioned above, they are in Piaget’s third developmental stage meaning they are capable of learning from experiences and begin to conceptualize things. When using the computers in class, students are given time to practice skills. When looking at spreadsheets in math, they have had multiple opportunities to practice using a pattern of keystrokes, and ways to use the mouse. These skills can be adapted for a variety of uses in the future, including other subjects, and social or entertainment aspects as well. Any way you look at it, technology is a vital part of the learning process.