



2010 FEA National Conference High School Essay Competition First Place Essay

2010 Essay Prompt

Over the last several decades, we have witnessed incredible technological changes that have impacted the very nature of the way we work, live, and interact with one another. These changes have inspired those in the fields of business, healthcare, and social services to examine—and in some cases, to fundamentally alter—the way they go about their work. The field of education must be next. Think about how technology advances have affected your life and made our world more interconnected. Now, apply that thinking to education and write an essay describing how these changes may alter the way we teach and learn.

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Failure is Not an Option

At 7:30 a.m. on October 5, 2020, I walk into my classroom and click on my computer. I open my vital desktop programs: iPod, Skype, Kindle, Webcam, Progressbook. While everything is loading, I walk over to my SmartBoard and check that it is ready for me today. As the clock strikes 8:00 a.m., I notice all 22 of my 5th grade students are logged on, eagerly waiting to begin today's lessons. We begin class via Skype, and all 23 of us openly discuss last night's homework. I set my students free to work on their individualized lessons. Each student logs on to our class's chatroom, beginning the assigned work.

After I view Thursday's online reading test, I see the twin sisters Casey and Stacey both needed help on their pronunciation. I upload their Kindle program that will expand their phonic skills. I log onto Sam and Miranda's chatroom conversation to see if they are doing the Biology worksheet over Fungus and Bacteria I assigned earlier that week. As they are working diligently, I allow them to open up iTunes as a reward. According to Quantum Learning, with the right music, a student's pulse and blood pressure decrease, brain waves slow down, and their muscles tend to relax more, leaving the mind alert and able to concentrate on the curriculum.

Suddenly a flashing pop-up window hits my desktop saying, "WARNING: Webcam program denied from Jason's computer." Quickly logging onto my email, I send him detailed instructions on how to reboot his Webcam. In the classroom, I am no longer just the fountain of knowledge; I must also become the facilitator, the mentor, and the technology mechanic.

Teachers are always trying to find the best way for their students to master their curriculum and grow as individuals. According to Ted McCain and Ian Jukes, authors of *Teaching The Digital Generation*, students need multiple tools for success in the modern world, including critical thinking skills, technical reading abilities, and writing techniques. Students will require these skills to use software that is beyond one dimension. The software of the future will be no longer based on drill, practice, and worksheets; it will be interactive software that is going to require a range of cognitive communication and social processes for use in the classroom. Thus, teachers will utilize technology to push their students to higher levels on Bloom's Taxonomy and students will become masters of technology in their daily lives.

The worldwide culture is based on cutting-edge technology; teachers are ultimately the core of successful learning. Technology is merely a resource to facilitate efficient learning in the classroom, whereas teachers are the constant fundamental to every student's success. Despite technological

advances, the teacher will be held responsible for illuminating the hearts and minds of the individuals in the classroom. Power goes out, memory sticks are deleted, computers freeze, but a teacher's impact is forever.

Works Cited

DePorter, Bobbi. Quantum Learning. Broadway: Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc., 1992. Book.

McCain, Ted and Jukes, Ian. Teaching the Digital Generation. Los Angeles: Dream Maker Software., 1988. Book.