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Topic 1

It's 2020, and you walk into a classroom. The classroom includes students with and without disabilities. Tell us the age/grade level of the classroom you're describing and, if a secondary school, the subject area that is being taught. What do you see in this classroom? What technologies are students using? How do they use them? What opportunities do these technologies afford.

I have just arrived in 2020 into a sophomore biology class at a public high school. The amount of technology in the classroom is staggering. Students of all abilities are using different technologies. For starters everyone is taking notes on lap tops. The teacher is using a smart board and the lecture is full of videos and other online components.

No textbooks are found in the classroom. All of the worksheets, tests, quizzes, and the text book are online. These Electronic books allow students to bookmark, highlight, and comment in their Electronic books. When students click on a bold term or picture the book gives them an actual example of the term or figure. This example could be a real life situation or verbal description.

When taking tests students have a remote in which they can click the answer choices. For the essays they type them on their laptop. The test program assorts the

questions so no one has the same test questions in the same order.

Students using the laptops allow students to more easily take/type notes and keep up with homework. Also if a student misses a class all the teacher has to do is email that student the information. Moreover all of the computers are equipped with webcams. In the event a teacher is absent but is still teaching a previously recorded lesson at home with students watching it on their webcam can be produced. Also if a student is absent if they feel well enough they can view class on a web cam.

Furthermore the teacher told me that they assign a lot of group homework which students work on from the comfort of their own home. The students live chat and talk on their webcams and do the work. This way class time does not have to be taken up because they work together via webcam. Also the teacher requires all students to keep up an active blog of what they are learning. The teacher comments on the blog and so do other students. This creates a fun learning community for the students.

The lap tops possess a smart pen and smart screen. With this pen and the program the Biology teacher has the students can perform almost life like dissections on the computer. The pen allows you to touch the digital image

and choose what tool you want to use in the dissection.

Now a whole world of science resources is available at the touch of a button.

I noticed one of the students sitting with the special education teacher in the back. The student had the newest version of a nokia phone. This phone allows the individual to take a picture of an assignment or part of the book and the phone will read it for the individual. Obviously being in the classroom the students had on ear phones.

Importantly the students were still following along on the phone screen as it was highlighted. With so many difficult scientific terms for students with literacy challenges this is a breath of fresh air.

Another student was using a pen to take notes on this special paper. This paper is a new innovation in 2020 because it is made from recycled goods. No longer does Americas forests have to be chopped down for the pulp for papers. This paper has special technology that allows what the students writing to linked to a recording. The pen records while it writes therefore when reviewing the notes the student can hear what the teacher stated. The pen is named the pulse model 15.

On a cosmetic note many of the students had varying versions of USB ports on their flash drive. Some of the

student's flash drives were mini models of themselves. Others had models of famous people. These customized flash drives make students more likely to utilize and keep up with them because they are a fashion statement. Also the flash drive is good because all a student's work is saved in one place and they do not have to keep up with as many things. Even if the computer crashes the flash drive should still be intact.

Another amazing technological innovation I saw on the teacher's desk is a grading tool called grade cam. With grade cam all the teacher has to do is take a picture of a multiple choice test and the saved correct picture properly grades the exam. Importantly the teacher said most of the assessments and homework are turned into digital drop boxes online that already have a saved key which grades the papers automatically. Technology not only makes life easier for students but teachers as well.

Another note is the teacher posts their resources completely on the web. They operate using a database called ANGEL 7 that was piloted at Michigan State. This is where the teachers store all the lessons and assignments. Now parents and students alike have all of the class information at their fingertips. On this program the teacher has conference hours via web cam. All parents have

to do is log on during the set up hours and have a conference. This makes parent and teacher communication better than ever before.

One of the newest inventions I noticed is a 3-D dictionary. With this dictionary program when students do not know a word they verbally speak into their laptops microphone and the dictionary shows them a 3-D example of the words meaning as well as application. Also for certain words the meaning is acted out in a digital skit or movie example.

Although technology has changed the way education occurs at its heart education is still the same. The students who to learn and get the most out of their education will. The students who are lazy and want to find shortcuts will find them. Good teachers will work hard to meet their student's needs. Poor teachers will simply do the minimum to get by. Regardless of what invention is made nothing can change the heart of what a person has on the inside.