What is Digital Literacy?

“Digital literacy is the ability to understand information and – more important – to evaluate and integrate information in multiple formats that the computer can deliver. Being able to evaluate and interpret information is critical […] you can’t understand information you find on the Internet without evaluating its sources and placing it in context”.

Paul Gilster

Resources


For a complete list of references and a copy of my report check my website at: http://www.mrstruittspage.org/digital-literacy-in-elementary-schools.html

Digital Devices in Elementary Classrooms

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Research

Digital Literacy allows students to apply their reading, writing, speaking, and listening skills in authentic learning situations (Donohue, 2010).

Recent research into literacy and technology is showing that digital devices have an impact on student scores. (Harmon, 2008).

The level of technology that is used changes with each situation and group of kids, but the goal of technology use remains the same: to enrich the classroom experience and enable students to reach and exceed grade-level expectations. We need to engage students if we want to keep them engaged in school (Talley, 2012).

Digital environments provide opportunities for children to not only make meaning but to reach new audiences and express themselves in new ways (Burnett, 2009).

It is important to use a balanced approach of technology alongside regular classroom tools. Small mobile devices have become a routine part of day-to-day life for people of all ages (Erickson, 2012).

The view of multiple literacies from a social constructionist framework is not a curriculum approach it is viewed as multiliteracies. What counts as literacy? A variety of texts are now offered in both print and media; able to locate and retrieve information in print or digital form; being critical readers; being purposeful composers; classroom interactions and collaborations (Kitson, 2007).

Focus

The focus of my study was on using Digital Devices such as iPads, iPods, and Amazon Kindles in the Elementary Classroom.

Research was completed on the use of these devices because I have had an interest for several years to implement their use into the elementary classroom.

According to the National Reading Panel (NRP) even though the use of technology for reading is a relatively new field, the NRP reports positive results for using technology for reading instruction (NRP, 2000). The NRP feels that the addition of the text to speech component available may be beneficial to reading instruction, as well as word processing may benefit reading. “The current analysis has found general agreement in the experimental literature that computer technology can be used to deliver a variety of types of reading instruction successfully” (NRP, (Big Book) 2000, p.6-9).

The State of Alaska has a technology component in the State Standards (2006). Students should be able to:
(A) operate technology-based tools;
(B) use technology to locate, select, and manage information;
(C) use technology to explore ideas, solve problems, and derive meaning;
(D) use technology to express ideas and exchange information; and
(E) use technology responsibly and understand its impact on individuals in society. (p.31-32)

Application

Communication is an important part of literacy.

In my classroom students will be in small collaborative groups using their devices for reading, research, writing, and responding. The devices will be used along side our StoryTown Curriculum for reading and writing activities. They will listen to stories that extend their activities, complete fluency readings and respond to stories and write.

Gather Information • Collaborate • Share

Test scores have risen in classrooms and schools where digital devices are being used.

Student engagement increases.