

Technology Tips

High School Of
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Planning for technology in the classroom

The most important thing we can do to utilize the tools we have available to us with regard to technology in the classroom is... planning. Mind you, not just the standards based planning we should be doing as a matter of course, but planning for the inevitable failure of components (computers, printers, VCR's, DVD players, etc...) as well as those four magic words from the students, "But Mister, I'm done".

The initial planning for a single lesson is, and should always be, a natural extension of a unit plan. Individual lessons are very similar to the layers of flavor in a good gumbo. You wouldn't try to cook a roux without some kind of oil/butter just like you wouldn't want to discuss Macbeth without covering Shakespearean language. It's that simple.

My point is this, you should always plan time to discuss the mechanics of using tech-

nology (i.e. using laptops, using the library, sharing resources) before actually doing it. Additionally, making sure students know what you expect from them, both behaviorally and academically, because they're using a very powerful set of tools is very critical to the success of the lesson as well.

All that being said, things do go wrong with technology. There are times, generally the worst possible times, when things will not work right no matter what you do. You have to plan for that as well. "AETU" or, "Always expect the unexpected". If you have a backup plan, things will almost always go far smoother

That brings me to my

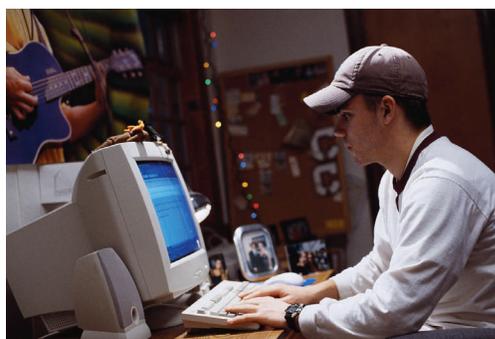


final point (in this article anyway) students should never, I repeat, never be able to say, "But Mister. I'm done with my work". If they can meet the standard, have them exceed it. If they exceed the standard, have them master it. There is no "But Mister...". Our work can't be finished. There's always another gumbo to make.

Using TrackStar

One of the things that HSC teachers have made abundantly clear is that they want to use the incredible potential of the Internet for research. One of the best ways to initially get students used to thinking in specific ways is by guiding them using a platform called [TrackStar](#) (click the link to go there).

TrackStar allows a teacher to set up a "guided tour" of certain sites on the Internet. The big bonus is, it's free. Also, it's easy to use once you're on the inside. Sign up today for free.



Quick and Easy

- Sign up for TrackStar for free.
- A web resource evaluation track is available at [TrackStar](#) by searching out Track # 297993
- Ask Mr. Musiak about planning for units and individual lessons that help meet state and federal standards for technology use.
- Mr. Musiak is also available to help co-teach specific lessons and model some of those lessons you plan together across content areas.
- Collins Writing is especially compatible with the use of technology. *See the article for more info.*
- *Project Based Learning* is a fun, and very rigorous, method of helping students buy into their own education and stimulating the desire for success.
- While making phone calls home to the parents is something that we all do, the next time you speak with Mom or Dad, consider asking if they'd like to be updated via e-mail. You could send lessons and things of that nature over the "net. Because of confidentiality we can't send any grade information over the Internet.

Improving your computer's performance-Part 2

There's so much that we can do to make our computers work for us that much more efficiently and error free. This week's tip is something that you should do at least once every month or so (less than a month if you use the machine more and you can let it go a little longer if you don't use the machine very often). It's called, you guessed it, "error checking".

Just as with "Defragmenting", "Error Checking" helps your computer's brain (processor) work better by mak-

ing sure it know where the "bad sectors" of the hard drive are and correcting them if possible. Also, there are sometimes physical problems with the



hard drive that could create issues. Error checking (Scan Disk) can either correct the flaws or circumvent them.

1. In Windows XP, click **Start**, then click **My Computer**.
- OR -

In Windows 2000, double-click the **My Computer** icon.

1. Right-click the hard drive that you want to check for errors, for example Local Disk (C:), then click **Properties**. The *Properties* dialog box opens.
2. Click the **Tools** tab.
3. Click **Check Now**. (cont. page 4)

Technology and Collins Writing

Using technology with writing prompts in the classroom, just like using any tool in a teaching situation, is a hit or miss proposition in most instances. When you find two classroom resources that compliment each other in a variety of ways, somewhat similar to chalk and blackboards, then we tend to try to use them in the most effective ways we can to aid in the learning process. Or... we would if we knew how to.

Using Collins writing strategies, we can aid in the development of many of the skills our students need to improve on the upcoming DFA's in October, the MCAS retakes in November, and the end of the first term (also in early November). When we add using technology (and this is more than just stomping away at the keyboard or touch-pad of a laptop) to the mix, the critical thinking and organizational skills are enhanced greatly.

One example of this is in Social Studies. Discussing Roman architecture and rattling off facts might lead to a student being able to repeat back those facts in a Type 2 quiz situation, but if we were to show a detailed web cast or video, of the Pantheon and present the same facts, do you think it is possible the student might be able to tell you why those facts were important in a type 3 essay with these 3 FCA's (Focused Correction Area's):



1. Relate three reasons why the Pantheon is so important. (2 points)
2. Have at least 3 paragraphs. (1 point)
3. Use 3 vocabulary words (from a word wall) correctly to answer the question. (1 point)

Having the students use MS Word to create their documents would be easy for self-correction and revision, in addition to being able to track changes and highlight in different colors. Also, archiving is also considerably easier when creating students folders for electronic portfolios. (To Be continued...)

Planning for technology in the classroom-E/LA

| | |
|---|---|
| Play Title- Shakespeare's "As You Like It" | Focus- Act I, Scene ii and iii |
| School- S.A.F.E. Carew Campus | Subject- English 12 |
| <p>Scope and Sequence</p> <p>Demonstrate an understanding of the functions of playwright, director, technical designer, and actor by writing, directing, designing, and/or acting in an original play.</p> <p>Identify how an author's or script writer's use of words creates tone and mood, and analyze and evaluate how the choice of words advances the theme or purpose of the work.</p> <p>Use effective rhetorical strategies and demonstrate understanding of the elements of discourse (purpose, speaker, audience, form) when completing expressive, persuasive, informational, or literary writing assignments.</p> | |
| <p>Essential Questions</p> <p>How is the human condition portrayed by Shakespeare's characters? Could it be considered to be fairly accurate?</p> | <p>Content and Skills-Discuss</p> <p>State of mind of the main characters of excerpts.</p> <p>Determine the accuracy of the range of human emotion then & now.</p> <p>Discuss motivation as a means to advance plot and mood/tone</p> <p>Theme as a means of communicating the universal nature of the human experience.</p> |
| <p>Assessment Evidence</p> <p>Portfolio-Hand written 250 word essays based on reflective open ended questions given daily- (Rubric for MCAS is applicable)</p> <p>Class Participation-Classroom discussions on the relationship of Shakespeare's themes with today's culture</p> <p>"As You Like It" Project-Cooperative learning Projects. Student groups present modernized version of a specific scene.</p> <p>Weekly Quizzes-Vocabulary and General Content Knowledge Quizzes</p> | |
| <p>Learning Activities</p> | |
| <p>They Do What? - theatrical techniques for acting and rehearsals are discussed and worked on from the perspective of the production crew and cast.</p> | <p>Teacher Modifications</p> <p>Scene Cutting- Students will take essential ideas from the script and "modernize" them using current language and stage direction (Use MS Word for "Track Changes")</p> <p>Choreographing-Step by step creation of theatrical technique of choreographed sword fighting and dance (create 10 slide PPT presentation using digital camera to document movements and explain visually as well as in a written format).</p> |
| <p>Standards Addressed</p> <p><i>Students will</i> pose questions, listen to the ideas of others, and contribute their own information or ideas to group discussions and interviews in order to acquire new knowledge.</p> <p><i>Students will</i> plan and present dramatic readings, recitations, and performances that demonstrate appropriate consideration of audience and purpose</p> | |

And so dear readers...

Humor is the great thing, the saving thing. The minute it crops up, all our irritations and resentments slip away and a sunny spirit takes their place.

Mark Twain

Please contribute to our webpages!!!



Improving your computer's performance-Part 2 (cont)

4. Click the options to use, then click **Start**. For help, press F1. Windows checks the drive for errors. This process may take several minutes.

5. Correct any problems that are found by following the on-screen instructions. After Windows has finished checking the drive for errors, it provides a summary of the problems that it found.

6. Click **OK**.

This will, along with the techniques we spoke about last week, help your machine stay a bit healthier for a bit longer. For many of the machine we have here (most in fact), I would do this maintenance only just before leaving for the day. Because it more than likely hasn't been done in a very long time, if ever at all, the process will probably take several hours.

There are so many things to say about the first two weeks of school.

- The web page will be absolutely amazing with all the contributions from folks I've spoken to so far. I would recommend that, with the exception of your personal pages (for those on the staff that would prefer one) have your students design the pages for the clubs, organizations, teams, and events. We want to have as much input from them as we can possibly get. I mean, to paraphrase a bit here,

"it's all about them". We're here to guide them, not to drag them along. Let them "take the reins".

- Sitting in on a couple of department meetings has been a great way to reconnect with some folks and meet my new colleagues.
- Planning for the use of the laptop carts has been far easier than I thought it might be

considering the desire of teachers and students to integrate their use into their classes.

- We will be moving forward with many projects and planning for even more as the dust begins to settle. I'd just like to take this chance to say thank you to the staff and students who've made my first couple of weeks back at Commerce amazing!!!

