

Technology

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"Curriculum tells you what to teach, but doesn't tell you HOW you have to. Make the shift to the 21st century learning environment."
- Stacy Behmer

An Apple for the Teacher

And for students too!

With GISD's Apple footprint getting bigger, it is time to take a look at iPads and iPad Minis to see what they can do for you and your classroom. These portable tools are so much more than mobile gaming devices, especially in a classroom setting. There are plenty of great apps and games

for educational purposes but it is time to think outside of the iPad box and see what else you can do to

...what else you can do to get that "aha" moment...

get that "aha" moment you have been waiting for.

Jessica Smith at GHS has been teaching her Theatre students all about facial expressions and emotions, which is key for a good actor. However, students cannot see the facial expressions they are making unless they all bring a mirror or go to the bathroom which, let's admit, is not good classroom management. So, Miss Smith came up with a better way and is using technology available to her at the high school in the form of iPad Minis. The iPads and Minis have a camera that allow your students to take photos and videos of themselves. Miss Smith's classes use those cameras to take pictures of themselves after she calls out an emotion or expression she wants the future actors to "try on". Once that lesson is complete, she then instructs her students to open an app called Story Me (no longer available in the App Store), add the pictures they took and sprinkle in some text to make their own comic book strip.

Students can also use the iPads to record themselves to check for understanding or to teach other students. If a student can teach peers over a subject they have recently learned they

generally know the subject matter very well. By allowing this type of instruction, a teacher can assess the teaching student without your typical pen and paper. This also solidifies the subject with the teaching student and they become invested in the lesson.

The Explain Everything app can help students with narration of a topic. Some students may have a difficult time writing to explain, however with this app, and others like it, they can tell what their understanding is by adding the verbal aspect. For those quiet or shy classmates, this is an effective way for them to speak up and share their knowledge. This is also an age appropriate app for our youngest students who cannot spell or write just yet, however they are still able to tell you what they know. While this

know how to use technology, sometimes better than we do, it is imperative to do a training with the students early on so frustration does not set in for either party.

21st Century Learning

This issue's quote is regarding the shift into the 21st century learning environment. But, what IS it? A 21st century classroom is one that enables students to learn in real world contexts. Where students can practice skills needed for their futures with project-based learning and technology. It is not about teaching TO students any longer, it is now a collaborative effort, giving students ownership of their own education, and supporting our students with the skills and knowledge they need to be successful.

Occasionally building a 21st century classroom involves a complete overhaul of the class structure and layout. However, it can include more immediate changes in regards to using technology. Step away from the usual iPad and technology use and allow your students to create their own lesson. Engage students with lessons that they need to teach, have them create videos over topics to present to class...just get them involved.

Explain Everything App:

- ★ Explain Everything is an easy-to-use design, screencasting, and interactive whiteboard tool that lets you annotate, animate, narrate, import, and export almost anything to and from almost anywhere.
- ★ \$2.99 in iTunes

particular app is not free, look in the App Store or iTunes for some similar to it that are free.

There are always some warnings when working with students and technology. Our students, although "digital natives", could have a difficult time creating videos (with iMovie) or building a mind map with audio. Due to the fact that our students are of the digital age, it is easy to forget that many of our students do not have this technology at home and they only time they are around it is here at school. While our students

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Number of work orders closed since 8/18:

 **506**

Since teachers reported back to school on August 18th, the Technology Department has closed out 506 work orders; an average of 14 per day. Although that tally is impressive, you have to keep in mind that many of our daily "fixes" are not even put into Eduphoria. We know you need the technology in your classroom and office working the best it possibly can, therefore we try and take care of your work order in a timely manner. Because the first of the school year is busy we appreciate your patience as we work hard to get to your request. We are running better than what we did last year in regards to average work orders closed per day and are thrilled by our numbers!

Myth Busters

Sometimes a reboot is all your macbook needs.

This is TRUE! Occasionally your computer can get overwhelmed with everything you have done on it lately. You notice that a program is not working quite right and you decide your best bet is to call us or put in a work order. The first thing we usually tell you is to “reboot your computer”, which probably sounds silly and cliché but it sometimes works! Think of it like a power nap for your mac. So, next time you notice your mac a little wonky, reboot it and see if that works to freshen things up a little.

Tech Tips and Tricks

Let's talk about those teacher websites, shall we? Every Principal requires their teachers to update their website at least once a year, others ask that it be done more often. So, you get logged in and would like to make a link to either another website (like a Google site or YouTube), a document for the students to download, or even a Google Form so your students can take a test online. That's awesome and a great use of your site...but how do you do it?

- * If it is a document, you will need to upload it in the file manager first and remember where you put it.
- * For a website or a document, type in the words you want clickable (like “click here”) and highlight them.
- * Click on the hyperlink button (hint: it looks like the Earth with a chain under it).
- * Type or paste a URL in the field, or click “Browse” to link to a file or image in the File Manager.
- * Click OK and then save and preview your website to make sure the link is good.

One final note about linking, if you do not do these steps, the link will not be clickable. It will be just a pasted URL (web address) and the user will have to copy and paste the address. If you have any questions or need screen shots, you can download the Webpage Training Guide here or you can contact Melanie at patem@gladewaterisd.com.

There's an App for That

Way back in our first Technology Department newsletter we had an article with great sites and apps for classrooms. As you know technology changes often, so a year and a half in “tech time” is more like ten human years. Not only have technologies change and updated but we have more iPads in our district than ever before. So, let's break down some iPad apps, shall we?

Primary/Elementary Student:

Play School Art Maker: The Play School Art Maker app is a fun way for kids to freely create pictures, animated movies and story slideshows using their favorite Play School toys and craft items. They can even add their own audio narration, upload their own photos as backgrounds, and save photos of their art. FREE Ages 5 and under.

Sight Words List - Learn to Read Flash Cards and Games: We believe that educational apps should be ridiculously fun, immensely educational, and affordable for all. A fun, simple, and fully customizable app to help with beginning learning and sight words. You can even add your own words and record your voice! FREE Ages 6-8

Our Story for iPad: Reading, even in the digital age, is probably one of the most important skills that children acquire. It can be an important source of pleasure which also develops vital language and social skills. It is fundamental to most school activities, it can also open up new worlds and give access to the wealth of human knowledge. FREE Ages 4+

Intermediate/Middle School Student:

Sushi Monster: Strengthen reasoning strategies for whole number addition and multiplication by helping monsters make a target sum or product. Earn points with each correct answer... but watch out for distractions! To be successful, plan ahead and strategically select numbers from the sushi counter. FREE Ages 9-11

MindJot - Mind Mapping, Brainstorming and Visual Thinking: 'MindJot' allows users to plot their

'ideas' in a mind map at the speed of their thoughts. Whether, you want to create a business presentation or wish to learn complex theorems in a classroom, 'MindJot' for iPad and iPhone is the “must have app” rightly suited for your needs. FREE Ages 11+

High School Student:

Science360 for iPad: The National Science Foundation's (NSF) Science360 for iPad provides easy access to engaging science and engineering images and video from around the globe and a news feed featuring breaking news from NSF-funded institutions. Content is either produced by NSF or gathered from scientists, colleges and universities, and NSF science and engineering centers. FREE Ages 13+

Today's Document: Explore American history with 365 of the most fascinating documents and photos from the collections of the US National Archives. Today's Document is an interactive gallery that displays a significant historical document or photo for each day of the year. You can learn what happened on your birthday, search for a document by keyword, or just browse at your leisure. FREE All Ages

There are so many apps not only for your students but for teacher productivity that a recurring article in future issues will focus on an app or two. If you have any suggestions, share them with the Tech Department.

Here are some app warnings:

- * This list was verified in September 2014. It is possible that the app price has changed or even that the app is no longer available.
- * Please read the compatibility before downloading and know your OS that you are running on your product. This can be found on an iPad by going to settings>general>software update.



Upcoming Events

October

21
GPS TLC Meeting

22
BES TLC Meeting

28
GMS TLC Meeting

29
WIS TLC Meeting

November

4
GHS TLC Meeting

7
End of 2nd 6 Weeks

10
Technology Lesson Forms due by 4pm. Remember, two are due each six weeks!

21
Early release

24 - 28
Thanksgiving Break

Next issue:

Teacher Feature

Our Teacher Feature column is back! Have a teacher in mind or do you want to be featured, email Melanie (patem) and let her know

Tips and Tricks

We had a lot to tell you about Google this time, so our Tips and Tricks will be back for the April newsletter.

We're talking apps

While this issue was pretty "app heavy", there's just so many great ones that we have to keep sharing! Look for this new regular article in future issues.

A Huge Success!

We are ecstatic over the success of TechPalooza 2014! Our all-day technology training was a fabulous idea from Glenda Hickey and Darryl Dans to bring a conference type atmosphere to make required technology professional development more fun and personalized.

Technology training can sometimes be boring or a little overwhelming, however with the TechPalooza format, learners were allowed to choose the classes and topics they wanted to attend. To help keep the day fast and upbeat, and to keep attendees moving around, sessions were 45 minutes long. By the feedback the department has received, this format was liked by most attendees. We had numerous sessions to choose from, covering assessments to webpages, to everything in between.

This day would not have been possible without the presenters. These teachers, staff and Region 7 employees, took time out of their lives to prepare for and present on their topics. Let us thank the following people again for making this day a success;

Gay Avenue - Emily Brown, Dawn Easley, Kerry Hradecky, and Tess Nichols; Broadway - Linsey Loftis, Phyllis Thompson, and Cindy Rowe; Weldon - Darline Hampton, Debbie Reyna, and Stephaney Wallace; Middle School - Jamie Cook, Vanessa Johnson, Candy Keller, Angie Glenn, and Suzanne Welch; High School - Kevin Clark, Holly Dunklin, Pam Gill, Ann Grimes, Michelle Ingram, Kelly Langley, Keisha Lewis, Galvino Medina, Renee Steele, and Tracy Wells; and staff/others - Andy Adams, Chrissie Allen, Holly Curry, and Melanie Pate.

The TechPaloozas of the future will be bigger and better. We are already working on 2015 and are pleased that it is coming to you during the in-service week in June. This allows teachers the summer to practice what they learned during this fun-filled day and get their new tech skills polished for the first day of the 2015-16 school year.

If you want to be a part of next year's day, start thinking of what you would like to show off to your peers. We will be sending out a request for presenters before you know it, so be ready to rock!

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"How come Lewis and Clark didn't just use MapQuest?"



If you have any ideas for articles or anything you would like to see in future Technology Department newsletters, please email Melanie at patem@gladewaterisd.com. She reads each submission and looks forward to your feedback and suggestions.