Technology: The Future Classroom

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 In the future, I believe that technology will completely change the landscape of the educational classroom. Beyond a simple iPad station or a SMARTboard, the future classroom will be the evolution of education in the 21st century. From a classroom that encompasses a worksheet and a slate with chalk, education is ready for the next evolution. This new evolution is the end result of the impact of technology in our world today. As discussed by the authors Bain and Weston in *The Learning Edge: What Technology Can Do to Educate all Children* (2012), technology in the form of *edge* technology will transform our classrooms, impact the way children learn, and ultimately shift the paradigm to a classroom that embodies our changing world around us.

 From a classroom filled with worksheets and rhyming songs to now a promise of a revolutionized classroom filled with the newest technology, the landscape of education has the promise to expand and evolve into a new experience for the next generation. As discussed by the authors Bain and Weston, the idea of *edge* technology can transform a classroom from the type A model where a teacher doesn’t use technology but rather is a consumer of the technology to a type B classroom where technology is reused, recycled and repurposed for learning. Through this analogy, the classroom of the future will be a safe place for students to learn and not be limited by a learning disability, special need or a misappropriation of skills. The future classroom will allow students to use technology to master skills and fill in gaps in learning. Technology will be the catalyst for learning, a resource and a tool to expand the educational experience for students.

 Technology will impact the way students learn. From a classroom with one teacher and one whiteboard, now the future classroom will embody the next step in education, which includes meeting the needs of every child. As Bain and Weston discussed in the *Learning Edge, edge* technology can influence and expand knowledge if used as a reusable resource. Instead of a type A classroom with a PowerPoint presentation by the teacher, technology can be transformed into a type B classroom where technology is used through means to learn and explore different subjects. No longer can we as educators teach in the same manner through reciting of a dead man’s words, instead today we need to use technology to solve the world’s problems. As illustrated through STEAM and STEM initiatives, students can now learn to build a bridge, calculate area to design a house and ultimately challenge the idea of how to solve problems such as clean drinking water. Technology in the form of research, graphic organizers, coding initiatives, and graphing capabilities such as 3D printing etc. give means to students to explore and expand their thinking outside of reading a book.

 As technology changes thinking, we as a society evolve in our ways of learning. As technology changes our world through communication, we must realize the impact that technology will have on our education as a society. No longer can we blindly preach reading strategies, when we know we have alternative methods of learning. What if a dyslexic child needs all material to have a blue hue background? This child that would fail in the typical classroom will excel when given a technology application to ensure that he can read given the tools needed. Technology is not a substitute for clear and profound teaching but rather technology is the realization of an evolution of a tired system. If education isn’t keeping up with society, it will ultimately fail the students that it wishes to excel.

 Now as the paradigm shifts, technology is now the driving force in the future classroom to ensure that education is evolving as society changes in the 21st century. As discussed by Bain and Weston, education must switch from the type A classroom to the type B classroom. As schools begin to experiment and change the future classrooms of tomorrow, educators need to understand why we are shifting our ideologies. No longer can we remain stagnate in an educational realm where a projector is seen as an instrument of technology. A future classroom that embodies the technology vision must make every possible ability for students to discover and invoke the idea of creativity. From meeting children’s needs through accommodations in kinesthetic learning, reading issues and different learning techniques, technology can ensure that children are not left behind and “check out” of education. In addition to meeting the needs of children, technology can impact and extend learning for the child that already “gets it.” Technology can give a child the ability to transform and create his plan for the how to make sure that water doesn’t get out of a paper cup. He could sketch, draw and design a plastic cup using a 3D printer that could use less plastic and materials. Using this example, the challenges and possibilities with creativity are endless. Technology can help to accommodate and extend learning in addition to meeting the needs of all children in the classroom. The future classroom has technology, and with that powerful entity comes the responsibility of educators to use those means to help students in the 21st century.

 In conclusion, the future classroom is full of hope. With that hope, educators must learn and realize the ability of technology and how that entity can evolve the classroom. Through the many examples and impacts technology can have in a classroom, we as educators must commit to the realization that what isn’t working will not work without the commitment to technology. Our type B classroom will not exist if teachers do not pledge to invoke the state. As the world continues to evolve, transform and reignite using technology, education must also make plans to revolutionize to ultimately continue to impact the next future generation.

References

Bain, A., & Weston, M. E. (2012). *The learning edge: What technology can do to educate all children*. New York: Teachers College Press.