



Laptops in the Classroom: How the Teaching Environment Changes

What is it?

When technology is integrated into the classroom, educators are taking a more constructivist approach to learning, which argues, learners construct meaning from current knowledge structures and apply them to newly introduced stimuli.

Students learn best when they can address knowledge in ways that they trust. If their orientation to the world draws theory from concrete experience, then they will learn best through doing rather than reflecting. Technology provides new capabilities to reconstruct learning around specific learning styles.

Why is it important?

Changes in the teaching environment and classroom can be many things, from bringing in laptop technology, to changing lectures into student-guided lessons and action learning.

Classroom discussions using Socratic techniques and using technology for inclass research and analysis of data can increase students' critical thinking skills; creating an environment where students can be more collaborative and have a "voice".

Pros...

Essentials for problem-based learning:

- Collaboration allows deeper thinking on the part of the student requiring more discussion and consensus with peers
- What students learn can be applied back to the problem with reanalysis and reflection
- The activities carried out in problem-based learning provides more value in the real world
- Student can learn in a style they are familiar with and supports their problem-solving style(s)

Cons...

- It may take additional work on your part to develop multiple teaching techniques and use multiple tools. It may also take time to learn each students learning style and adapt your teaching style.

How to Use them...

When presenting new content, exercises, tests, or projects, give students a choice on how they would like to learn, be evaluated and/or measured, for example:

- Utilize Electronic assessment tools for self-tests, exams, review and practice quizzes
- Utilize Blackboard Discussions for reflection, online journaling, peer review, debates, group work
- Integrate electronic peer editing tools with documentation or research papers
- Offer options for student presentations and/or demonstrations in class using PowerPoint, multimedia, and simulations
- Utilize group assignments using blogs, wikis, or GoogleDocs

Who tried it...

Fred Driscoll: <http://www.wit.edu/td/spotlights/driscoll.html>

Madhu Dutta: <http://www.wit.edu/td/spotlights/dutta.html>

For further reading...

David Jonassen, "Computers In the Classroom"

David Jonassen, "Learning With Technology"

Web sites to visit...

Identify your teaching style. Take the Instructional Design and Teaching Style Inventory:
[assessmenthttp://www1.indstate.edu/cirt1/facdev/pedagogies/index.html](http://www1.indstate.edu/cirt1/facdev/pedagogies/index.html)

View examples of using technology in the classroom:

<http://bhartiyaavidya.com/democapsules.htm>