



Teaching Writing in Technologically Advanced Schools



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In a tech-savvy society, English teachers may worry that mastery of the English language has become obsolete. This is far from the truth. Now, more than ever, students need to master their ability to communicate with people on the Internet. Employers require that individuals have a mastery of English grammar to professionally communicate through chat mediums, email and instant messaging. When a student arrives at college, he or she may be expected to create blog posts or online research publications as part of a homework assignment. Even though society may utilize virtual communication methods, people still need to know how to write and read to make use of these online communication tools.

Some English teachers may take the viewpoint that the use of text messaging on smartphones and tablets has ruined the English language. Instead of viewing innovations in this negative manner, teachers should look for ways to incorporate technology in the classroom. Infusing technology into a lesson plan can provide students with a hands-on approach to learning. Students may also enjoy real-time learning and retain information from lesson plans that incorporate technology.

The Importance of Mastery of the English Language in a Tech-Savvy Society

In a world that is more connected than ever, English continues to be one of the primary languages of communication. Politicians negotiate important treaties and foreign policies by speaking English. Companies require the development of catalogs and social media posts in English for customers around the world. Students have an advantage in the business, political and academic worlds when they fully understand how to speak, read and write English. Knowing how to effectively communicate in English is also important in service industries. Even if one plans on working with his or her hands, such as within the construction industry, an employee may still be required to read English instruction manuals for operating machinery or warning signs on a construction site. Thoroughly understanding English will benefit students for the rest of their lives.

English is still one of the dominant languages that is used on the Internet and social media forums. As the world becomes increasingly dependent on smartphone apps and cloud computing, English will likely still be a primary language influencing the development of these technologies. Students will need to know English in order to use these technologies.

Students can also thrive in social situations when they understand English. If English is not a student's first language, then learning this language may help students to assimilate into a culture or even partake in a study abroad program. A non-English speaking student may also need to know the language if he or she plans on working or pursuing a summer internship in an English-speaking country.

The Role of English Teachers

English teachers play an important role in inspiring, motivating and ultimately teaching students how to speak, read and write. Teachers help students understand English grammar rules, proper sentence structure and how to effectively convey thoughts in writing.

An English teacher should be mindful of the varying abilities of his or her students before creating lesson plans. An English teacher who is instructing ESOL students will need to create lesson plans that are very different from a teacher instructing a room full of AP Honors English students.

English teachers may also have varying responsibilities depending on the content of the course. Some English teachers may be required to focus on instructing students in mastering English grammar rules, such as the proper placement of commas or proper use of pronouns. By using iPad apps, a teacher may make the experience of learning about grammar rules exciting and engaging for students. Learning about grammar and punctuation rules can feel annoying, embarrassing and boring for students. Non-English speakers may be intimidated by the many grammar rules that exist in the English language. Teachers may make the English language more accessible for ESOL learners by exposing students to apps like Grammar Up, Grammar Girl or Grammar Police. These apps offer quizzes that can test the knowledge of students and ensure that they are on the path to mastering grammar rules. An English teacher may want to award extra credit for students who play these games and show improvement on quizzes. Teachers may also allocate ten minutes of time during the day to give students the opportunity to use these apps with tablets in the classroom. This may pique the interest of students and encourage them to use the apps in their spare time.

As a teacher instructs students about the rules of grammar, he or she should make it a point to serve as a source of support and guidance for students. Students should feel encouraged to ask questions about rules that they do not understand. Teachers may also want to set up office hours to give students an opportunity to raise any questions that they have about content. Office hours often provide students with a less-intimidating atmosphere to ask questions about grammar rules, sentence structure and punctuation use.

English teachers typically focus on instructing students in grammar rules or writing. An English teacher who instructs students in writing may be less concerned with strictly adhering to grammar rules and interested in a student's ability to clearly express his or her thoughts. A creative writing course may focus on abstract and artistic concepts. On the flip side, English teachers who are instructing students in the creation of memoranda and formal research papers may need to remind students about grammar rules.

A writing teacher should be available to support students and help them understand how to organize their thoughts, create outlines, create rough drafts and ultimately create final drafts. The writing teacher should help students understand that writing is a continual process. A writing teacher should encourage students to create and divide formal research paper assignments into separate tasks. The student should not try to write an entire 10 or 20-page paper the night before it is due. The writing teacher may want to make sure that students understand the benefits of revising work and editing it at later dates.

Writing teachers can help their students develop a passion for writing by exposing them to some of the amazing writing iPad apps that exist. Students who are interested in writing a full novel may want to try My Writing Spot. My Writing Spot helps aspiring authors create novels in a space free of distractions. Students will be less inclined to surf Facebook and will become immersed in a writing project when they try using My Writing Spot. A Novel Idea is an example of another app that is designed to help the aspiring novelists. Writing teachers can show that they believe in the abilities of their students by holding them to high standards. Giving students the opportunity to create their own novel with an app like A Novel Idea may help students find their voice and may even inspire a few students to pursue writing careers.

Writing teachers who work with young children may want to expose them to Story Builder. This app helps students integrate their ideas into their writing. They can also learn how to form paragraphs. The app is aimed at assisting students in achieving a high level of abstract thinking.

Becoming Successful in Teaching Writing

English teachers can also use tablets for their own needs while they instruct students. English teachers can create a classroom environment that is more interactive with tablets. Tablets may help foster literary discussions amongst students. Teachers can carry a tablet with them at all times and write down interesting thoughts that students share in a literary group. Tablets can make a teacher's life easier as he or she grades the contributions that students make in a classroom discussion.

Another fun way in which teachers can provide valuable knowledge to students is to use tablets for nurturing relationships with pen pals. By having a pen pal, a student learns how to master interpersonal communication skills through writing. A teacher may want to use tablets in the classroom to give students an opportunity to video chat with pen pals after they receive letters from one another. Teachers also show students how to integrate themselves in an increasingly global world through this exercise too.

English teachers can succeed when they realize the numerous ways in which tablets can improve English speaking, reading and writing abilities. Infusing this technology in the classroom engages students. Students relate on a more personal level to lessons that feature tablets. Whether they are drafting their own novel or enhancing their presentation skills by creating a digital presentation, students benefit from access to technology in the classroom.

Incorporating Tablets and Other Technology in Teaching Writing

Tablets now present numerous learning opportunities for students in English courses. Creating presentations, drafting reports, engaging in the global world and accessing e-books are all some of the benefits that students can enjoy by having access to tablets in the classroom. English teachers can embrace an increasingly interconnected world and show students the numerous ways in which they can use their English speaking and writing abilities in the real world.

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