

Focusing the Digital Brain

I read an excellent article titled "Focusing the Digital Brain" by Marilee Sprenger in the September issue of **Educational Leadership**. The article stated that our students spend most of their time skimming through things. It was stated that the average adolescent spends two seconds on a web page and then moves on to the next while skimming through their ipod music and text messages. Their brains are conditioned by viewing information on screens.

The problem is they will not be able to succeed in the 21st century world by skimming through it. If we want our children prepared for the life skills the 21st century will demand of them, we

must teach them how to balance technology and people skills. An average adolescent believes they are multi-tasking when they are listening to their ipod, while doing homework, e-mailing and texting a friend all at the same time. When in fact, they are not completing any of those tasks.

The article addresses the need for educators to help teach students how to balance between being connected with technology and being connected with real people. Seven strategies they recommended to accomplish this are: provide reflection time, take away their technology occasionally, let them teach you or their classmates something they do well, use interactive white

board (since they like to view their world through screens), teach them emotional literacy (teach students how to recognize peoples emotions and use that to help guide decisions), teach mindfulness (an inner awareness of what they are feeling and thinking) and finally encourage face to face storytelling.

It is true our students are digital natives and their brains have been trained to view the world differently. I believe it is our duties as Catholic educators to teach them to balance the gifts technology brings with the gifts God gave humans so they will have everything they need to succeed in the 21st century.



Technology Integration Lesson

There are some great real time and collaborative projects on the Stevens Institute CIESE Web site <http://www.ciese.org/collabprojs.html> . All of the projects align with our science curriculum. My favorite projects were the *Musical Plates* real time data project that has 8th grade students track earthquakes and make a hypothesis, observe the data and conclude why and where the earthquakes are most occurring. *Down the Drain* project is a collaborative project that I used in 6th grade. In this project students use data collection on water consumption in their homes, and use that data to compare and make observations. Another project I liked to use with younger students is *Square of Life* project. This is also a collaborative project that has your students observing your school grounds, typing the data and posting the results online to compare with other schools around the world. If you go to CIESE site you will get all the lesson plans, student activity sheets and links you need to complete the project.

I Need Your Help!

Each month I have tried to offer some integration lessons that I used when I taught. I love to share my ideas, but I would like to share some of your ideas! If you have a technology integration lesson you would like to share, please submit it to me so I can share with others the great things that go on at your school!

In order to make this monthly newsletter fit your particular needs, please take a moment to contact me at dbruno@dioceseofcleveland.org with any suggestions for the newsletter.

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WVIZ IdeaStream

Check out these awesome FREE resources from WVIZ!

Go to <http://www.wviz.org/education/index> and checkout:

- PSI is an online source that provides games, lessons and video clips for 5th-8th grades.
- News Depth is an online source of current events for third through eighth grade students. NewsDepth helps teachers meet state academic content standards in language arts and social studies, while linking students with the world.
- Biz Kid\$ is a new TV series that shows students how to make and manage money.
- Instructional Media catalog: a resource of hundreds of digital resources for FREE!!
- One of my all time favorites -PBS for kids! An early

childhood site filled with games, lessons, activities and so much more!



Funding Opportunities

I know that your budgets have shrunk and you are always searching for funding opportunities. I have listed some sites below that have some great funding opportunities! The Classroom Improvement Technology Grant <http://www.turningtechnologies.com/studentresponsesystem/turningfoundation/>

[k12grants/?cid=grant_announcement_09](http://www.k12grants/?cid=grant_announcement_09)
Deadline is October 25, 2009.
Braitmayer Foundation
www.braitmayerfoundation.org.
This foundation supports curricular and school reform initiatives. Deadline November 15th.
Coca-Cola Foundation has many educational grants

- check it out! There is no deadline, grants are awarded throughout the year. www2.coca-cola.com/citizenship/foundation_coke.html
Dominion Foundation
- awards grants in their service area: www.dom.com/about/community/foundation/index.jsp
There is no deadline, grants are awarded year round.



Professional Development

Office of Catholic Education

Check out our new Professional Development site. You can find details on all after school and day long sessions.

<http://www.oce-ocs.org/oce/register/>

Don't miss the SMART and ACTIV board sessions in October!

FREE Online Courses for Diocesan Teachers

WVIZ IdeaStream

www.wviz.org/teacherline

Must enter code "Fall for Catholics" in comments

BCL

<http://www.bclsite.com/Menu-Pages/trainingmenu.htm>



Resources

OCE Ed Tech Page

http://www.oce-ocs.org/oce/teachers/teacher_resources.shtml

Willoughby Eastlake Tech Page

<http://www.willoughby-eastlake.k12.oh.us/classroom/technology>

Free 30 day subscription to United Streaming Distance Learning videos

www.unitedstreaming.com

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