Technology in The Classroom Causing A Generational Dilemma

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Once upon a generation, perhaps things were quite different. The helping hand that we call technology today was essentially nonexistent to our parents, or at least in the way that we use it now. Today, that generation often pleads the fifth regarding technology use and the uphill battle between Google and the old-fashioned dictionary remains. You'd think Siri would've told them whose boss by now.

Let's face it, technology is vastly important to our generation. Unfortunately, the days of love letters are over and now emojis and effects take the stage in expression of one's emotions. The problem is that previous generations refuse to accept it, causing a bit of a generational gap when it comes to schooling. This crucial acceptance is not going anywhere. Either we accept it now, or we accept it later when robots take our order at the local diner, the choice is yours. The bottom line is that technology is a part of life, and it is not going away whether we like it or not. Can they at least just admit that google maps makes life 10x easier?

The British Library helps us go back a little bit in their article titled *A Brief History of Writing Materials and Technologies.* So, let's rewind a bit and take a trip down memory lane. First, we had clay. Yes, clay. This was used for incising and scratching. Most well known in Mesopotamia, which happen to be where the first writing was developed. Next, we made a dramatic shift towards more familiar tools- Ink, pens and brushes which were first discovered in Egypt. Then we take a bit of a modern turn, with printing. Yes, all of our professor's favorite invention, typically located in library where all students waste their university coins. Blame ancient China. Finally, we slowly but surely made our way to typing- where we are now, and you can thank England for that one (Clayton).

The U.S Department of Education states in an article titled *Use of Technology in Teaching and Learning*

> "Technology ushers in fundamental structural changes that can be integral to achieving significant improvements in productivity" (U.S Department of Education).

It goes on to say, "···Used to support both teaching and learning, technology infuses classrooms with digital learning tools, such as computers and hand held devices; expands course offerings, experiences, and learning materials; supports learning 24 hours a day, 7 days a week; builds 21st century skills; increases student engagement and motivation; and accelerates learning" (U.S Department of Education). So basically, the learning and navigation of technology is essential for students now. Technology is everywhere you look, and let's be honest, is practically the way the world goes 'round at this point.

Steven W. Anderson states in an interview "··· I had an epiphany that I could make a bigger impact. By teaching teachers about how technology can be utilized in the classroom for learning. So, I got a master's degree in instructional technology and worked in a couple positions at the school and district level" (Anderson). When asked what the biggest challenges are for implementing change in education Anderson speaks regarding 'school leaders' and responds,

> "…What I've seen more times than not is because they don't understand why the learning environment needs to change, or why every kid should have access to a device, that's when we see some disconnects between what is happening and what should happen" (Anderson).

It is evident that the implementation of technology tends to plummet when higher orders are preventing the ability to make this change in the classroom which reiterates that generational dilemma we are having. It is safe to say that those situations are essentially hindering students' abilities to progress with any work past their academia.

Figure 1 Students practicing respectful learning using technological advancements in the classroom

It is now obvious to the majority of us how important it is to implement technology in the classroom. So, what is the reason why some professors still only allow paper and pencil? In an article titled *Why Some Teachers Are Against Technology in Education,* Terry Heick states "Now, 'technology' seems all lumped together, the iPads with YouTube with social media with mobile learning" (Heick). He goes on to state "Further complicating matters is the difficulty of effectively integrating technology in the classroom. This is hard for some educators (who do it well) appreciate. You have to understand content, teaching, and technology on nearly equal terms, and when you don't it all has an awkward way of illuminating the holes in a teacher's expertise" (Heick). Heick does have a point, so maybe we'll give them that- it could potentially hurt the curriculum when interrupting the original lesson with technology, or it might just simply not work or even be needed. In that case, maybe technology isn't the best for a specific lesson. With that being said, it is not reason enough to cut it out completely or not allow it at all in the classroom, when thinking about the long-lasting benefits for their students.