

There is a difference in using a technology tool in the classroom and integrating technology into a lesson. Use this as a guideline when evaluating the use of technology in a classroom. The first thing to do, when observing a classroom, is to ask yourself a series of questions in the four areas below concerning the use of technology in that classroom.

- 1 Is the technology being used “just because it is there?”
 - o Uses edutainment software.
 - o Uses piece of technology because it’s in the room.

Using technology in this manner has No real focus or impact on the learning process.

- 2 Is the technology allowing the teacher/student to do old things in old ways?
 - o Using Word rather than hand writing a piece.
 - o Using a digital projector or an overhead projector rather than a whiteboard.
 - o Researching on the Internet rather than an encyclopedia.

These are great uses of technology, but they are replacing old ways of doing the same things.

- 3 Is the technology allowing the teacher/student to do old things in new ways?
 - o Watching a speech or listening to a recording.
 - o Reading an original piece on the computer.
 - o Visiting a battle site via Google Earth.

Nothing here is new, just the method of delivery is different.

- 4 Is the technology creating new and different learning experiences for students?
 - o Learning from people they otherwise never would have been able to learn from without the technology. (Virtual field trips, Skype video conferences, etc.)
 - o Interact with information in a way that is meaningful that could not have happened otherwise (Virtual Museums, Virtual experiences, etc.)
 - o Allows students to create and share their knowledge with an audience they never would have had access to without technology (Blogs, Podcasts, Multimedia projects, Web authoring, Social Media Virtual Worlds, Wikis, etc.)

Many of our teachers are still in areas 1 & 2. The teacher you describe in your email sounds like she is in area 2-- She is simply using technology tools to do OLD things in NEW ways. We should encourage our teachers to move along the spectrum to area 4 -- This is where true technology integration into lessons take place. This is not to say areas 1-3 are not relevant. They are steps to integration and are useful in the process. They should be used at times as a foundation or a type of scaffolding to build up to integration.