Teaching to Your Tech Type

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WHY A TECHTORIAL?

What will I learn today?

You'll take a simple quiz to learn what your tech type is; the quiz will help you determine what tech tools you can most successfully.

What hardware and/or software does the techtorial apply to?

This techtorial applies to any PC or Mac.

Which National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers does the techtorial address?

The techtorial will help teachers accomplish standards V.a. and V.c. in particular.

The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) has developed a set of National Educational Technology Standards for Teachers. Standards or Performance Indicators are included for each techtorial to help teachers and administrators improve technology proficiency. For a complete description of the standards indicated, go to NETS for Teachers, click Standards in the menu bar on the left, and then click the arrow to the right of Standards and Performance Indicators for Teachers.

I DON'T UNDERSTAND

"I know nothing about computers, but I want to learn."

"I 'get it' when it comes to computers. Why doesn't everyone else?"

"I want to teach with computers, but I don't have the time...resources...priorities..."

Every teacher has different technology skills and attitudes, yet each teacher can succeed with technology. The key is to know and use your tech type!

Your *tech type* is a profile of your technology skill level and your interest in using computers in the classroom -- a measure of both your technology aptitude and attitude. Knowing your tech type can allow you to determine the tech use that's right for you, and help you decide when to use -- and not use -- technology in your professional life.

THE TECH TYPE SURVEY

Complete the following statements:

1. When new technology is introduced, I
   - am the first to learn and to utilize it.
   - am eager to use it, but need someone else to show me how.
   - use it, but tend to get sidetracked by the '4Ps' of teaching -- paperwork, parents, principals, and pupils.
   - am eager to use it, but need lots of instruction and tech help to use it in the classroom.
   - roll my eyes and sigh, knowing I'll only use it if a supervisor is watching.
2. Having been magically presented with time in a computer lab, I
   - research some really cool Web sites to enhance my curriculum.
   - have my students surf for facts on a content area topic.
   - don't use the time because I forgot, got busy with a student, or needed coffee.
   - ask a tech-savvy student to help me while the rest of the students surf, type a paper, or play content-area games.
   - don't use the time because technology just distracts us from our real job as educators.
3. When a fellow teacher asks me for help teaching with technology, I
   - offer a long list of resources and lesson ideas, showing the connections to state standards and standardized testing, while demonstrating my own tech expertise.
   - share how I've already used technology in my classroom, describe what I'd like to do in the future, and encourage my colleague to share ideas as well.
   - share what I've done with technology, but warn about the challenges of using technology among all the other distractions of teaching.
   - giggle that I'm even being asked, pointing out that I'm really just learning myself. Then share what I know as a new user.
   - laugh hysterically, announcing that computers are distractions -- not enhancements -- to the learning environment.

CHECK YOUR RATING - WHAT DOES IT MEAN?

The Tech Brain
If you answered "A" to most questions, you're a Tech Brain. (You're an expert who leads others). You'll learn as much as possible about technology no matter how much or how

little support is available at your school. You learn technology on your own, through hands-on experience, studying the manuals, or asking questions. You frequently use technology in your classroom. Although your skill level is high and your enthusiasm contagious, your natural ability to "get it" makes it hard for you to teach beginning users. You often overwhelm and even intimidate "newbies."

The Tech Cheerleader

If you answered "B" to most questions, you're a Tech Cheerleader. (You have some skills, but you want more.) You might not have the most advanced skills, but your love of technology and your willingness to learn make up for whatever skills you lack. You use technology in your classroom as often as possible. You're great at sharing your knowledge and excitement with others, but you need more tech training to really understand the hardware and software.

The Tech Struggler

If you answered "C" to most questions, you're a Tech Struggler. (You have some skills, but are easily distracted from using them.) You like technology, you know it could enhance your teaching, but you've never quite gotten a handle on how to use it in your classroom. You're always one step away from a crisis or a deadline, and you find juggling computers with all the other demands on your time extremely difficult. You need tech training and administrative support to provide you with the time and breathing space (as well as a bit of a push) to use technology appropriately.

The Tech Toddler

If you answered "D" to most questions, you're a Tech Toddler. (You have few skills, but you're eager to learn.) You love the idea of technology, but know almost nothing about how to use it, and find learning to use it very frustrating. Tech trainers go way too fast for you, and the manuals make no sense. (Why is software hard and a hard copy soft anyway?) You're too hard on yourself, and don't give yourself credit for learning as much as you have already. You need a patient tech trainer or a peer teacher, and lots of time, to learn the basics step-by-step.

The Tech Trasher

If you answered "E" to most questions, you're a Tech Trasher. (You have few skills and, quite frankly, you don't care.) You're probably being pushed to use technology and you chafe at not having input into that decision. You believe that technology is being overused in the classroom. You have minimal technology skills and aren't interested in learning more. Because technology is part of education today, you need administrators who spell out the bare minimum they expect of you, so you can meet those expectations while focusing your efforts on teaching the way you do best.

RATING PEERS, RATING STUDENTS

Tech Typing Your Peers
Teachers learn from one another. Use the Tech Type assessment to determine how you can best learn from your peers or administrators:

- If your peer is a Tech Brain, learn from him or her!
- If your peer a Tech Cheerleader, learn and share!
- If your peer is a Tech Struggler, learn and share!
- If your peer is a Tech Toddler, feed off his or her enthusiasm and share what you're doing!
- If your peer is a Tech Trasher, don't let his or her attitude drag yours down.

Tech Typing Students

- Got Tech Brains in your class? Don't be afraid to learn from your students, but avoid asking Tech Brains to teach others; they seldom have the patience.
- Got Tech Cheerleaders? Spotlight them so their enthusiasm spreads to other students. Use them to help others in class.
- Got Tech Strugglers? Find sites and activities with lots of bells and whistles to keep them engaged.
- Got Tech Toddlers? Start small and praise big!
- Got Tech Trashers? These are a rare breed among students. Make sure their negativity does not impact the rest of the class.

TELL ME MORE!

Where can I find more information?
Whether you want specific tips for teaching according to your Tech Type or need a crisis management plan modify your Tech Type, specifics can be found in the S.O.S. (Save our Sanity) presentation at Lausanne Collegiate School's Tech Tuesdays page. You'll find it -- in both PowerPoint and HTML versions -- under Internet Tips. Also, see JustInTimeTechnology for another helpful article, as well as links and sites for more ideas on Tech Types.