Tablets For Use in Schools

Curtis Kula

English 111 Ivy Tech

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Abstract

Many people believe that when new technology comes along it should be used in the best possible way. One way this can be done is by using tablets for educational purposes. If these devices are used learning and teaching can be improved and a smarter and better world can be achieved.

Tablets for Use in Schools

Technology in recent years has been making great improvements. Some of these great improvements include smart phones and pc tablets. I would like to look into the benefits of the tablets because there seems to be a trend with more and more people owning a tablet. In the United States almost a third of the adult population owns tablet device.(Zickuhr) These tablet devices include Samsung galaxy tab, Microsoft surface, Kindle Fire, and Ipad’s. With so many people starting to use these devices it is time to start thinking about using this technology for education. I feel that tablets should be used in schools starting at a lower grade. From my own personal experience I have seen children much younger use these devices with ease. If they can use tablets that easy at a young age why not use tablets to teach them.

The first thing when someone thinks about this topic is the cost associated with the tablets. Yes tablets may be expensive at the beginning costing anywhere between $200 and $1000. However after you have paid for the tablet the only cost that comes with them is cost of buying books to read on that device. I recently looked on amazon.com to look at prices for their Kindle Fire. Most of the novel books were about 75% cheaper than the print and bound version. When I looked at a recent textbook that I purchased this semester I found that the Kindle price was half the cost of the print and bound version that I have already purchased. The textbooks that are being used in schools now come with a very high cost and most the time when they are used for grade school they are rented and returned every year. When you purchase the Kindle version you own it and have access to it forever.

With the improvement of technology in recent past and lifestyle changes people are trying to become more eco-friendly. People are driving hybrid cars, saving energy and water, and wasting less. With that said Tablets are very eco-friendly. They can eliminate a great deal of paper usage in the world. Using less paper would help by saving trees and forests around the world. Which would lead to more oxygen and a better and healthier planet. On the other hand you have the traditional books that are print and bound. These books use massive amounts of paper that has led to the mass consumption of trees to produce the paper needed. Most people in today’s world are starting to worry about things like trees and the well-being of the planet and one way to start saving the planet is to switch to tablets for school use. Another way that tablets are good for the environment is students can take notes on them this would eliminate notebook paper. Which again would greatly cut down the amount of paper used and the trees consumed.

Many schools across the United States and the World are testing tablet devices for everyday school use. In these test situations every student in the school receives a tablet and they keep it for the entire year. The tablets are used for everything from research to taking notes to doing homework and turning in assignments. In the United States schools are only testing the Ipad for everyday use by all students of a school. This is actually being test very close to home in the last couple of years. Garrett which is a small town in Indiana has had good performance reviews for testing. With these good performance’s they were given grant money. They used this grant money to obtain enough tablets for every student in the school to have their own tablet. The students rent the tablet at the beginning of the year and they get to keep the tablet for the entire year. The students can take them home or where ever they want as long as they don’t break them.

Tablets I feel would be great for students to help teach them about being better organized. I myself way the messy type all throughout grade school. My desk was always messy and many times papers and assignments would get lost or crumpled. When it came time to have a locker instead of a desk it was again the same way papers would get lost or ruined and many times I only cleaned it out at the end of the school year. If I would have had a tablet many of my missed or late assignments in middle and high school would not have happened. I would have had the work on my tablet and not had to look through the disaster I called my locker.

With the use of tablets and the things that they can do teachers can use them to teach better. On the tablets you would download an application like I have done on my phone with the BlackBoard app. Every time the teacher gives an assignment they could post it to the app then the students would have access to the assignment whenever they needed it. These app alert the owner when a new assignment is added to the class. Students then would have no reason to say that they didn’t get one because it was posted to the class site and everyone has their own tablet to use so they can access. Teachers can also use them to better communicate with the students. This can be done in a number of ways like sending feedback to the student faster or even sending little reminders that things are due.

In recent studies done on tablet use has been tested to see how well it helps you learn. This was done by looking at three different teaching styles traditional teaching, online learning and a mixture of both using tablets. Traditional teaching is your normal teaching style where the teacher teaches and students take notes and do their class work with pencil and paper. The online learning is done completely online with no teacher, these are pretty much self-taught. Lastly you have the combination of online and traditional. These studies showed that students that were using devices were spending more time working on the work. Because the students were spending more time on the work they were able to retain the information better and scored better on the test.

I feel that tablets should start being looked at closer as a way to teach and learn better. I know that if I had this technology when I was younger I would have done better in school. It would have made it more enjoyable and easier on the whole. Tablets allow for better communication between all parties including teacher’s students and parents. Tablets are they new fad in today’s world and we should use them to their fullest potential and use them for education.

Tablets in school

Seven people were surveyed

Do you own a tablet or e-reader device?

1. Yes 4
2. No 3

If so how much time a week do you spend using this device?

1. 0-2 1
2. 3-5 2
3. 6-9 0
4. More than 9 1

What do you use this device for?

1. Reading 4
2. Learning (Youtube how to videos count) 3
3. Social media 3

Do you think tablets should be used in schools K-12 and college?

1. Yes 3
2. No 3

Answer the next set of questions if you have taken an online class

How many online classes have you taken?

1. 0-1 2
2. 2-3 1
3. 4-5 0
4. More than 5 0

Do you feel that you learned better from the online class or the tradional class and why?

The results of the survey are similar to many other studies that I have seen. People are split on whether or not to use these tablets for classes. But the survey does show that more people are starting to use these devices.