

Management of Web 2.0 Tools

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Introducing Web 2.0 Tools

Within the school setting, technology has evolved from a privilege to an expectation. Both teachers and students are held accountable for using devices to build knowledge and understanding. Web 2.0 tools have emerged as a resource that helps enhance the learning experience for teachers and students. These interactive tools allow for the creation of instruction, sharing of content, opportunities to provide practice, and engage with others - all online.

While there are tens and thousands of web 2.0 tools that have come into existence for classroom use, “It may not be the tool itself that defines Web 2.0, but how it is used to support teaching and learning, both in individual classrooms and as part of a school's or district's larger vision” (Light & Polin, 2010). This essay will focus on detailing two different web 2.0 tools, Canva and Quizizz, that can be used in the classroom to support the learning environment.

Canva

Canva is an online graphic-design tool that allows educators to make presentations, activities, note sheets, and more resources for content. This resource allows for teachers to create instructional materials that can be presented digitally or printed on paper. Canva has quickly become popular among educators due to its user-friendly interface and wide range of templates available. The tools available on Canva are visually appealing and easy to navigate when using a template or creating materials from scratch.

Additionally, Canva has created a built-in organization system for educators to use when collaborating with their peers or students. This “Ease of use is important to teachers and students. Teachers make decisions about which websites, tools, activities to use with their

students based on how easy it is to access, use, and embed those sites or the final product into their virtual class website” (Light & Polin, 2010).

While Canva has become most teachers' first choice for creating materials, it does bring challenges when being used. With the amount of templates, shapes, stickers, images, texts, elements, graphics, apps, and more that are presented as choices to users - it can easily become an overwhelming experience. Canva is also not a free tool to use. There is a base free version available, but it then limits what teachers can do with the tool. Lastly, Canva is not usable when offline. This means that the tool can only be used when connected to the internet.

Quizizz

Quizizz is an interactive instructional tool that allows teachers to make lessons on new content or create assessments to determine student understanding on any given topic. This allows for teachers to share and practice content with students, either as brand new information or as a review. An and Williams in their article, “Teaching with Web 2.0 Technologies: Benefits, Barriers and Lessons Learned” state how using these collaborative tools help, “build a sense of community, increases interaction and communication among the instructor, students, and other people, and promotes collaboration and resource sharing” (An & Williams, 2010). Many teachers are choosing to use Quizizz in their classrooms as it brings a new level of engagement for their students due to three major elements: choice of instructional pace, immediate feedback, and gamification.

When using Quizizz, a teacher can choose the instructional pace. This means that they can create a whole-class lesson, independent practice, or a competition style lesson. The choice of presentation allows for teachers to differentiate the learning for what students need with a given content. No matter which instructional method is chosen, Quizizz also provides immediate

feedback to students on each question that they answer. This gives students the opportunity to immediately reflect on their understanding of the question. Lastly, Quizizz formats all of their instructional methods in various modes that allow competition and collaboration.

While the added element of competition brings a unique learning experience for students, one disadvantage of this is that the focus can easily become too focused on winning rather than learning the content. Educators have been fighting this battle of using gamification to boost engagement while also keeping it all centered on learning. Another disadvantage of Quizizz is that it has a limited question and response availability. This is a function that has shown improvement over the last two years as they upgrade the website, but there are still options not available to educators. The biggest flaw of using Quizizz, in similarity to Canva, is that it is only available for use when connected to the internet. This means that the instructional material may be completely useless if the internet becomes inaccessible.

Conclusion

Web 2.0 tools, such as Canva and Quizizz, are impactful to the classroom as they help deliver instruction in a variety of ways to improve student understanding. An and Williams emphasize this point by stating, “Web 2.0 has the potential to create more interactive and powerful learning environments in which learners become knowledge creators, producers, editors, and evaluators” (An & Williams, 2010). With the power of web 2.0 tools available to teachers and the benefits it can bring to students, it is important that they evaluate each tool they use to ensure that it is being used with a purpose and that they are implementing the tool properly.

References

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