Book Review

Using Technology with Classroom Instruction that Works

Krista L. Bowen

Pitler, H., Hubbell, E.R., Kuhn, M., & Malenoski, K. (2007). *Using technology with classroom instruction that works*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. $24.00 (paperback), 242pp. (ISBN: 1416605703)

Do you feel like you need a guide to help you become an effective teacher in the digital world? I see many of my colleagues struggle with incorporating technology into their classrooms, as do I. I believe that technology should be integrated seamlessly into the curriculum; it should not be taught as an isolated subject. I have found a book that helps teachers slowly move toward the integration of technology into the curriculum.. *Using Technology with Classroom Instruction that Works (*2007) takes Robert Marzano's book, *Classroom Instruction That Works* (2001), and connects Marzano's nine instructional strategies with available technologies.

Using Technology with Classroom Instruction that Works (2007) was written by Howard Pitler, Elizabeth R. Hubbell, Matt Kuhn, and Kim Malenoski. Pitler is an Apple Distinguished Educator and National Distinguished Principal. His experiences as an educator and principal at a technology magnet school helped to form the team of authors for the book. Elizabeth R. Hubbell is a former Montessori educator, who brings her expertise in discovery learning to the team of authors. Matt Kuhn is a former secondary science teacher and administrator, who brings his passion for using technology in teaching. Kim Malenoski has experience with education at the school, district, state, and national levels. Her experience helps provide practical guidance to help make busy teachers' lives easier. These authors collaborate to create a useful and supportive guide to move teachers slowly into technology integration.

Pitler, Hubbell, Kuhn, and Malenoski take Marzano's nine instructional strategies and offer ways to take these strategies and incorporate technology. Pitler et al. (2007) use research conducted by Schacter and Fanano (1999) when they state that "applied effectively, technology implementation not only increases student learning, understanding, and achievement but also augments motivation to learn, encourages collaborative learning, and supports development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills." By using

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Marzano's instructional strategies, Pitler et al. make technology implementation simplistic and relevant for teachers with little to no technology experience.

Pitler et al. use applications such as *Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Kidspiration,* and *Gizmo* to help in the lesson planning process. They walk their readers through planning for lessons, the different types of software applications that can be used in the lessons, websites to support lesson planning, and suggested lessons for certain skills. Each chapter in this book is structured in a very similar way: a short overview of the targeted instructional strategy, as suggested by Marzano, suggestions and examples for using the strategy in the classroom, and many examples of, or references to, technologies that support the strategy.

The authors start the book by focusing on graphic organizers, websites or tools that help in gathering data, and the creation of objectives and rubrics. Moving into chapter two, the focus is on tips to help you provide feedback for your students. They explain to the reader how to edit in the *Microsoft Word* program, designing questions for classroom response systems, grading software, and the uses for blogs and wikis. Chapter three offers ways that teachers can give their students recognition. Recognition may include awarding a certificate or displaying their work through showcases or picture galleries. Chapter four focuses on graphic organizers that can be created in programs such as *Kidspiration*. Nonlinguistic representation is addressed in chapter five, covering many areas of the curriculum. This can include charts, graphs, pictures, movies, and even video clips that can be created by the teacher or the student. Summarizing and note taking tips follow in the chapter six, which was the most enlightening chapter for me. There are many functions mentioned in this chapter that I was not aware that my computer could perform. The authors give teachers many examples of how *Inspiration* or *PowerPoint* can be used to take notes. Chapters seven and eight address cooperative learning and reinforcing effort. Cooperative learning is very important for helping students to construct new meaning or understand content with the help of their peers. Reinforcing effort is another important strategy that I feel most teachers overlook. It is important that students recognize their efforts and how it effects their achievement. The last chapters address the higher order thinking skills, homework, and planning for technology in the classroom. The appendix stresses the importance of providing your students with Internet safety instruction and instruction about fair use and copyright laws. All of these chapters cover how to use technology while using Marzano's instructional strategies. However, it is still important to keep your focus on the state standards and make technology a seamless part of your classroom instruction.

Of all the books that I have read dealing with technology, I feel that this was the most beneficial for me as a classroom teacher. It is easy to read and goes into great detail in the steps to follow in order to complete tasks that the book suggests. The book offers many websites, and the few that I tried were all still available. This book can be considered a guide that assists teachers in how to plan for technology use in their classrooms with a high level of confidence. By

using technology with effective instructional strategies, students' motivation and achievement should increase. This book is a great guide for teachers who need support and also provides ideas for teachers who are already doing a good job of integrating technology in their teaching.