Shake Up Learning®

QUICK-START GUIDE

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WHY IT'S TIME TO SHAKE UP LEARNING

Rapidly-evolving technology and the demands of the digital age are transforming not only the way we live but also the way we learn. One thing is for certain-educators cannot continue the status quo if they expect to equip young people for the world to come. The tools students are using are newer, sleeker, and faster than ever before. The Internet age has reshaped the way the world works and the way the world learns. Technology is NOT a solution. It is an opportunity, an opportunity to move learning from static to dynamic!

MOVE FROM STATIC LEARNING TO DYNAMIC

Is the learning in your classroom static or dynamic? Are your students spending time on orderly, one-and-done activities, or are they getting a little messy and exploring and evolving throughout the year? With digital tools such as G Suite for Education, which are available around the clock, learning doesn't have to start and stop when the bell rings. Learning can take on a life of its own. The focus shifts to the process and not just the end product or assessment. This concept alone can change the way we facilitate all learning in the classroom. Be boundless!

Static learning is characterized by an overall lack of movement, growth, and action. It's learning that happens in short bursts and is most often demonstrated by the learner completing one-and-done activities, short-term assignments, and stand-alone worksheets-all confined within the bounds of the traditional school day.

WHAT IS DYNAMIC LEARNING?

Dynamic Learning is characterized by constant change and activity. This learning takes place organically, growing and evolving through more unconventional means, with the learner collaborating, creating, and communicating to demonstrate progress and mastery. Dynamic Learning also extends beyond the boundaries of a traditional school day, beyond the physical location of the classroom, beyond using tools as digital substitutes, or even the traditional notion of hard-and-fast due dates.

THE DNA OF DYNAMIC LEARING

Technological advancements present us with a unique opportunity to rethink education and the types of learning experiences we design for our students. This is an opportunity for learning that is more dynamic. The game of school has created many barriers and bad habits in education, but with a willingness to take risks and a continuous learning mindset, we can find new ways to move learning from static to dynamic.

Below are the foundational ideas behind the concept of Dynamic Learning

- Get Comfortable with Being Uncomfortable
- Breaking Barriers and Bad Habits
- Always Be Learning
- Uberize Your Learning and Curate Resources
- Unleash Creative Thinking
- Connect and Share
- Share Your Voice, and Share Your Story
- Go Global
- Empower Your Students

THE DYNAMIC LEARNING MODEL

I created this learning model first for myself as a way of seeing how each component fits together. I like learning models that help illustrate important ideas. Enter the Dynamic Learning Model.

At the heart of dynamic are the 4 C's: Creativity, Communication, Collaboration, and Critical Thinking. The ring of icons represents the Dynamic Learning characteristics discussed in the next section. And the outer ring is the process.
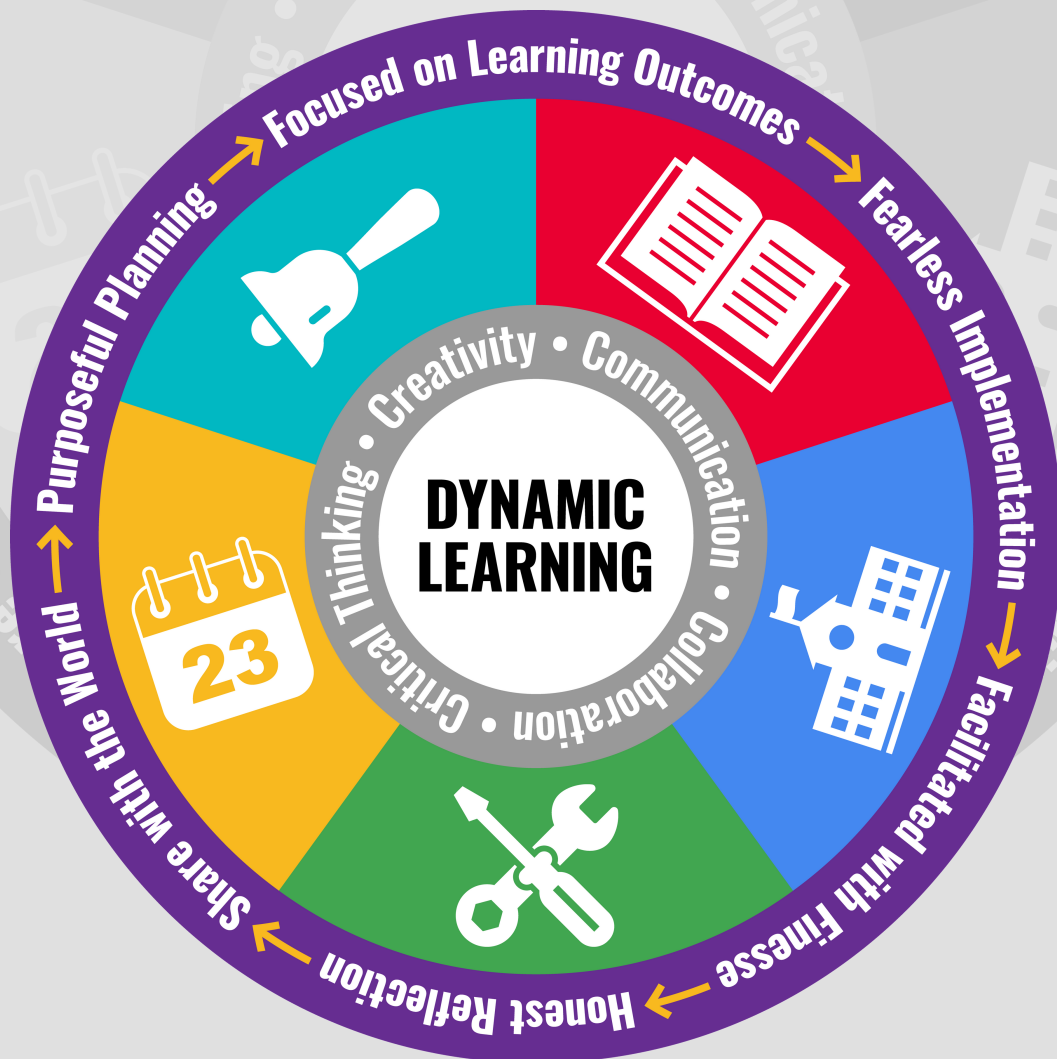
ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS OF DYNAMIC LEARNING

THE 4 C'S:

- **Creativity**: The use of imagination and original ideas to solve problems and create. (Examples: Cultivate creativity and innovation with projects that require students to design original solutions, invent something new to solve a problem, or integrate art and design with room to fail.)

- **Communication**: The ability to effectively and clearly communicate for a variety of audiences and using a variety of tools and mediums. (Examples: Give students opportunities to interact with adult experts, authors, and real-world audiences. Let them experience speaking and presenting.)

- **Collaboration**: Learning and working in groups or teams, locally and/or globally, to achieve a goal. (Examples: Ensure there is purpose to the collaboration and not just group work. Form partners and teams strategically with assigned leadership roles, include team-building exercises, establish collaboration guidelines and shared decision-making.)

- **Critical Thinking**: The ability to conceptualize, analyze, synthesize, and evaluate information for the purpose of deeper understanding, problem solving, and guiding action. (Examples: Create learning experiences, such as mock trials or debates, scientific investigations, interpreting events in history or literature, or design challenges.)

Every dynamic learning experience should integrate one or more of the 4 Cs.

(To learn more about the 4 C's: shakeup.link/p21 and shakeup.link/neaguide)

THE ISTE STANDARDS FOR STUDENTS:

Another crucial component for dynamic learning is including the ISTE Standards for Students. While these standards are not explicitly part of the Dynamic Learning Model, they align very nicely to the 4 Cs but take things to a more specific level and definitely align to the ways we can go beyond old-school assignments.

To view the standards in their entirety, please visit: shakeup.link/istes.

The seven strands (topics) of the ISTE Standards for Students are listed below.

- Empowered Learner
- Digital Citizen
- Knowledge Constructor
- Innovative Designer
- Computational Thinker
- Creative Communicator
- Global Collaborator

DYNAMIC LEARNING CHARACTERISTICS

When you think DYNAMIC, I want you to think BEYOND!

- BEYOND the Bell
- BEYOND the Grade Level and Subject Area
- BEYOND the Walls
- BEYOND the Tools
- BEYOND the Due Date

DYNAMIC LEARNING

Use these strategies to go BEYOND traditional learning and make it more DYNAMIC!

BEYOND THE BELL

Learning doesn't have to end when the bell rings. With digital tools and devices that are available 24/7, students can continue to learn, collaborate, grow, and dig deeper into their learning on their own terms. This doesn't mean homework. This is a mindset for students that means learning can take place anytime, anywhere, and students can own it.

BEYOND THE GRADE LEVEL & SUBJECT

Let's take kids off the conveyor belt of education and give them opportunities to learn about the things that interest them beyond the subject areas we teach and even beyond what it says they should learn in each grade level. Learning doesn't have to fit inside a box.

BEYOND THE DUE DATE

Consider allowing students to continue the work that interests them beyond the final assessment of the assignment or task. Thinking, learning, and exploring, shouldn't be stifled simply because it was time to turn it in.

Dynamic Learning Wheel

Purposeful Planning → Focused on Learning Outcomes → Fearless Implementation → Facilitated with Finesse → Honest Reflection → Share with the World →

DYNAMIC LEARNING

Creativity • Communication • Collaboration • Critical Thinking

BEYOND THE WALLS

Bring the world to your students, and bring your students to the world! Every student in every grade should have opportunities to connect and learn globally as well as publish their work for a global and intentional audience.

BEYOND THE TOOLS

Think beyond using digital tools to do traditional things like typing a paper. Use digital tools to do NEW things! Just going paperless or digital isn't enough; use tools to go further, go deeper and extend the learning, and consider using tools in alternative ways—beyond their original purpose.
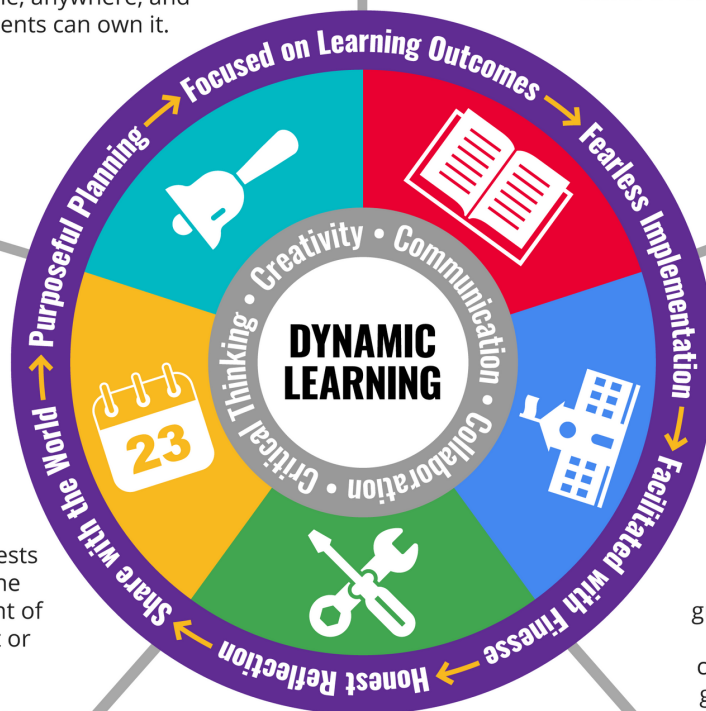
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Shake Up Learning

BEYOND THE BELL (a mindset)

Learning doesn't have to end when the bell rings. With digital tools and devices that are available twenty-four hours a day and seven days a week, students can continue to learn, collaborate, grow, and dig deeper into their learning on their own terms. And by extending learning beyond the school day, I don't mean homework. This a mindset that's based on a belief that learning can take place anytime and anywhere. This doesn't mean simply working after school. Homework and working past the bell is not what this is all about. It is a mindset.

To become dynamic learners, students must take ownership of not only their learning but their time. They must resolve to move beyond the Game of School and realize they have the power to connect to other resources to teach themselves new concepts and skills. They must take responsibility for learning how to solve their own problems.

BEYOND THE GRADE & SUBJECT AREA

As Sir Ken Robinson tells us in his Ted talk on creativity in education, the education system we have today is still based on a factory model in which students are basically placed on a conveyor belt. What they learn is what fits inside the factory "box," all dictated by their ages and grade levels. Why can't we work within the confines of the system to allow students to pursue their own interests and give them more voice and choice? Can't we allow teachers to collaborate to create more interdisciplinary activities and projects? Let's take kids off the conveyor belt of education and give them opportunities to explore the world and move beyond the subject areas we teach. Learning doesn't have to fit inside a box.

BEYOND THE WALLS

Every student in every grade should have opportunities to connect and learn globally. I ask this question regularly across the county: "How many of you allow your students to publish online for a global audience?" The answer is almost always the same: Very few hands go up.

Now flip that around. How many of you are bringing the outside world into your classroom through global collaboration, social media, video chats, and more? This is growing, but I don't think educators realize how easy it can be to connect their classroom to global resources. The possibilities are endless!

BEYOND THE TOOLS

Think beyond using digital tools to complete only traditional assignments such as papers and reports. Use digital tools to do new things. Just going paperless or digital isn't enough. Use some of these new tools to go further, go deeper and extend your students' learning. Reach beyond what you think a digital tool can do and should be used for, and challenge your students to demonstrate their learning in a new way.

The Digital Tool Continuum

Using Digital Tools to Do **OLD Things**

Using Digital Tools to Do **NEW Things**
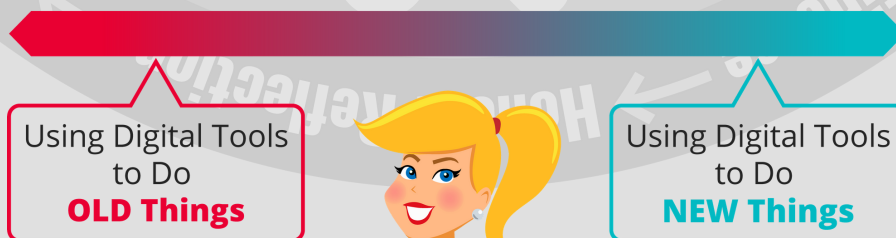
BEYOND THE DUE DATE

Allow students to continue work that interests them beyond the final assessment of an assignment or task. Thinking, learning, and exploring shouldn't be stifled simply because the submission deadline arrives. This idea might be the one that teachers struggle with the most. I agree students should learn to turn in their work on time, that is a life skill, but moving toward more dynamic learning experiences means moving away from the one-and-done mentality.

Consider how dynamic today's workplace has become. We can immediately connect with colleagues across the globe, no matter the time zone. Many workplace projects are not one-and-done tasks. How many jobs do you know that require you to complete a worksheet every day? How many give workers extra points for bringing in a box of Kleenex? Often the work environment is cyclical, like the school year, where we get to improve, try new things, and make revisions each year. Real-world learning doesn't end.

PURPOSEFUL PLANNING

Be goal oriented. Begin with your learning outcomes, not the technology. This is perhaps the most important tip of all. Everything we do as teachers should always come down to student learning and doing what's best for kids. Just because you are using technology doesn't insure you are meeting any objectives or standards. Is your why strong enough? If you cannot explain how the digital tool enhances or improves the learning experience, you are just using technology for technology's sake. If this is the case, start over!

Beginning with the desired learning outcomes is essential to insuring your learning experience will help you reach the end target. Before you start to plan, ask the following questions:

- What are the learning outcomes?
- What will learners learn and be able to do?
- Where do the Four C's fit?
- Will this activity meet any of the ISTE Standards for Students?
- Do you want learners to create and publish online?
- What does the end of the experience look like?

I can't tell you how many conversations I've had with teachers that start with, "How can I use [insert digital tool name] in my classroom?" The question should never be how to fit this awesome new tool into your learning experience. The question is always, "What are the desired student outcomes?" Start with the concepts and skills you want your students to walk away with, and find the best tools to make that happen.

On the next page is a one-page Dynamic Learning Template to help you process your ideas as you plan, as well as give you a format that can be shared with others. It is also available as a Google Doc that you can access here: **shakeup.link/DLonepage**. I want to encourage you to share your ideas with others by adding to the Dynamic Learning Database of lessons here: **shakeup.link/DLdatabase**.

ONE-PAGE Dynamic Learning Template

Directions: Please provide the following information to help you process your ideas for planning and share with other teachers.

SUMMARY

Please write a brief summary of the learning experience, including grade level and subject area.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Always start with the why? What will students learn or be able to do at the end of this experience?

DYNAMIC CHARACTERISTICS

- ❏ BEYOND the Bell
- ❏ BEYOND the Grade Level & Subject Area
- ❏ BEYOND the Walls
- ❏ BEYOND the Tools
- ❏ BEYOND the Due Date

Explain:

4 C's & ISTE STANDARDS

- ❏ Communication
- ❏ Collaboration
- ❏ Critical Thinking
- ❏ Creativity

- ❏ Empowered Learner
- ❏ Digital Citizen
- ❏ Knowledge Constructor
- ❏ Innovative Designer
- ❏ Computational Thinker
- ❏ Creative Communicator
- ❏ Global Collaborator

IMPLEMENTATION

Please briefly explain how you implemented and assessed this experience, include relevant links to activities, hyperdocs, rubrics, websites, etc.

shakeup.link/DLonepage

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DYNAMIC LEARNING

Here are a fifteen digital learning tips any teacher can use in the classroom:

1. Get Technology into the Hands of Learners, Not Just Teachers

Modeling is great, especially when it comes to technology use, but it is far more important to get technology into the hands of learners. Often and with good reason, teachers can become overprotective of the technology in their classroom. Sticky fingers and clumsy hands can make you resistant, particularly if a piece of equipment was purchased with your own money. But if you really want to see an impact, give your students a hands-on experience. Lay out the guidelines, show them proper use, then trust them. I see this a lot in one-iPad classrooms or even in classrooms with a single interactive white board. Teachers become super savvy with the new technology, and their learners are engaged and excited to see something new, but the overall learning stalls if students can't get their hands on the technology. Don't forget your purpose. Get technology into your learners' hands, even at the cost of giving up control.

2. Always Have a Plan B

No matter how much you prepare ahead of time for any lesson, even those not using technology, things don't always go as planned. We have all experienced those moments when technology doesn't cooperate-the Internet connection or Wi-Fi is down, the website you were using crashed, the video you were going to play is blocked. It happens to all of us. That is why it is crucial to not only think on your feet but to have a Plan B. It doesn't mean a completely new lesson plan, but it does mean knowing what you will do if the lesson just isn't working out. Sometimes you might go back to pen and paper. Other times you might rely on a tried-and-true tool such as Google Docs. Being flexible is nothing new for teachers, and integrating technology is no different. Be prepared to transition to Plan B before you lose an entire instructional period.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DYNAMIC LEARNING

3. Get Organized

One of the best things you can do as a facilitator of digital learning is to organize information, directions, objectives, and resources online for your learners. Make life easier! Giving them one central location or website will make your life so much easier, and will allow learners to focus more time on their tasks. Provide just one link to write down, bookmark, link inside of Google Classroom, share with parents, whatever. I like to call this, "One link to rule them all", and a few always appreciate my Lord of the Rings allusion. Multiple links confuse things. Use this central hub to contain all the links and information so it's organized in one place. This approach also keeps the learning experience as paperless as possible, which is a nice perk for any teacher. A central location serves as a one-stop shop, and it can take many forms, depending on the grade level, subject, and the digital tools at your disposal. A well-organized plan doesn't ensure success, but it sets a firm foundation.

In the primary grades, something simple like a Google Doc with directions and links work very well. Many primary teachers are fans of using Symbaloo to set up visual bookmarks. If you have a teacher website or blog, that could also work well for your learners and give you the flexibility to add different kinds of content. Make things even easier by bookmarking the link on their devices or shortening the URL so they can enter it with ease. If you are using mobile devices, a QR code to the central website can make your journey much easier.

Upper elementary and secondary learners have a plethora of options. Google Classroom is becoming a go-to resource for many Google-using educators to manage digital assignments and improve communication and collaboration. While Google Classroom might not give you the flexibility of a full website or blog, it is a great starting place for learners to get familiar with clicking on the link to find additional information and resources necessary for the assignment.
Don't forget that some of your more tech-savvy learners can offer other suggestions for website creation and sharing resources online. Encourage these learners to voice their input!

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DYNAMIC LEARNING

4. Don't Get Swept Away by the Next New Thing

I am guilty of this one. I am usually the first to sign up to try something new, but if you are always trying to integrate something new, you run the risk of focusing too much on the tool and not enough on the learning. Give new tools time to grow and evolve. Often you will find new tools that start off as free might suddenly require a fee the day you need to use it in the classroom. Or worse, the company didn't survive, and the tool is no longer accessible. New technology is part of what makes the twenty-first century so exciting, but always be cautious with a new tool that hasn't been proven or tested. It's smart to consider the source. Is it a new tool from a trusted company like Google or Apple, or was it released by a new company? Many teachers find out the hard way how tools can come and go. If the tool is in what's known as the beta testing phase, the company is still working out some kinks. I don't mind testing things out, but using tools in this phase isn't something I recommend for every teacher. When an app or website is less stable, it's more likely to crash or have glitches, so you might want to wait until it's out of beta.

5. Shop for Digital Tools Like You're on Amazon

With so many devices, digital tools, and gadgets for educators to choose from, it pays to be thorough and even a little picky. Shop as if you're on Amazon! In fact, you will likely find yourself on Amazon, the App Store, Google Play, or the Chrome Web Store. Read reviews, talk to friends, and take ideas from blogs and social media. Shopping is no longer a blind act. We can gather information on just about any idea or product, and we should find out what other teachers recommend. Ask about cost, effectiveness, and any glitches they may have encountered and how they were resolved. Gather as much information as you can before you ever click download. If you teach older students or have a teacher's aide, this could be a great research task for them!

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DYNAMIC LEARNING

6. Be Consistent

In the current climate, the temptation to try something new in the classroom every day is great, but learners need consistency. We have all known the frustration of investing extra time into a new tool and having it disappoint. Risk taking with new tools is great but not appropriate every day. To make the most of your instructional time, stick with the dependable tools your learners already know how to use. Sprinkle in the new stuff every now and then. You don't want your classroom to be so unpredictable that learners start to feel lost. While you don't want to become mundane, consistency does allow for in-depth learning and gives students the opportunity to grow more adept at using specific digital tools. Balance is key.

7. Don't Integrate Too Many Tools at Once

Resist the urge to integrate too many different digital tools at the same time. App-smashing is fun when done with purpose, but if you try to do too much at once, you risk shifting the focus to the tool and using technology for technology's sake. If you love tech like I do, it can be easy to keep adding more ideas and tools to your lesson. But integration should happen gradually. Build your students' digital toolboxes over time. It doesn't have to happen in one day.

8. Let Go

Remember how we are trying to get comfortable with being uncomfortable? As teachers, this means stepping out of the way and letting our learners take some risks, stretch their creative legs, and learn to solve their own problems. Of course, this is easier said than done. A good way to start is posing thought-provoking questions designed to lead them down a path of discovery. Resist the urge to give them a one-size-fits-all answer. Some of the most surprising and innovative projects come about when we just let go!

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DYNAMIC LEARNING

9. Use the "Yes, and..." Approach

This strategy comes from the improv community. As students begin brainstorming and trying to find creative solutions to problems, use the "Yes, and. . . ?" approach. When a student shares an idea or thought, teachers and students respond with, "Yes, and. . . ?" This forces the student to keep going deeper and thinking of other options, connections, and scenarios that may be better and more innovative. Repeat as they continue to dive deeper.

The "Yes, and. . . ?" approach in the classroom forces teachers and learners to be more positive and collaborative and stop saying no to ideas they don't understand. This strategy also promotes active listening. Try this in collaborative projects where learners are problem solving together. Try this as a facilitator to help guide and add ideas without negating a student's original ideas or thought process.

10. Ask Three Before Me

Teachers often become the keeper of the knowledge, the official question answerer, the first place that learners go for help with everything. That's a huge burden, especially when you're juggling countless other tasks in the classroom on any given day. Encourage your learners to rely more on each other during class. Make sure they know it's okay to not only collaborate but to ask one another for help when they get stuck or have a question. The ask-three-before-me strategy is brilliant and has saved me a lot of time. It can be used in a number of collaborative settings that might or might not involve technology. The greatest benefit is that it frees up a teacher to focus on facilitating the learning. (TIP: You can also make YouTube and/or Google Search one of the "three" options to ask for help.)

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DYNAMIC LEARNING

11. Don't Be Afraid to Let Your Students Teach You

Our students have a lot of knowledge and skills, especially when it comes to technology. Long gone are the days of the teachers being the gatekeepers of knowledge. It's okay if you don't know the answer when it comes to the technology, and students will love the chance to help teach you. As you are designing your learning experience, and you wonder about how a digital tool works or if there's an app for that, ask your students! Even if they do not know the answer, they will be willing to help you figure it out.

Another thing I love about talking to students about technology is they always show me some new app, some new trick or shortcut my adult world hasn't seen yet. A lot of our students have their finger on the pulse of what's hot, and while that might not always be of value in the classroom, sometimes it can be a huge benefit. Don't immediately dismiss a tool because you think it isn't educational. Pokemon GO, or whatever the latest tool is, will prove you wrong every time!

12. Utilize Tech Experts

Depending on how many tech-savvy students you have, you could establish a permanent role or group or even a rotating job for students in your class. Keep in mind you don't want to force this role on any student who is uncomfortable or shy. At least initially, it should be used on a volunteer basis. You can even have an application process if you have enough interest. Whatever route you take, encourage students with potential, and help them hone their leadership skills. This idea can even be taken a step further by establishing a student help desk, genius bar, or Chrome Squad for your school.

PRACTICAL TIPS FOR DYNAMIC LEARNING

13. Don't Assess the Bells and Whistles-Content Is King

Technology can inject excitement into students' projects, but when it's time to assess their work, remember to go back to your original learning goals. What was the purpose of the lesson? Was it to include three animations in a PowerPoint? I hope not! The fun little extras (the bells and whistles) can add something special to a project, but they're never the end goal. Steer clear of rubrics that rely strictly on numbers-such as the number of slides, videos, or photos included; instead, use a rubric that focuses on the content and skills the lesson was designed to teach. Step back and allow your students to surprise you. They just might demonstrate their learning in a new and unexpected way!

Ann Witherspoon, Instructional Technology in Midlothian ISD and participant in my Dynamic Learning Workshop, asks, "Is the rubric for the teacher or the student?" I think this is a great question as we ponder how to assess the learning and the use of rubrics. Most of the rubrics I have seen were designed to help a teacher grade, not assess for learning.

14. Use Checkpoints to Monitor Progress and Provide Meaningful Feedback

We all get off track from time to time. It's important, particularly with long-term projects, to give students checkpoints or milestones along the way. I learned this the hard way in my classroom. I might have visually observed the work taking place in class, but if I didn't take the time to confer with my students and insure they were on the right path, the final product was often far off. That was my fault. Remember to monitor progress and discuss learning goals throughout the entire project. Students need reminders at every grade level!

15. Peer Feedback

Remember that peer feedback can be just as meaningful-sometimes more powerful- than a response from the teacher. This can be verbal, although some students will struggle with verbal feedback. Online feedback through something like comments in a Google Doc tend to get the more reluctant students (i.e., the ones who won't share aloud) to share, collaborate, and give feedback to other students.

I like the "TAG" strategy to get them started. T for tell the creator something you like. A for ask the creator a question. G for give the creator a positive suggestion. This strategy is short enough that it doesn't seem too daunting but can help get them engaged in the content. The burden of feedback doesn't have to fall solely on the teacher. Remember to get kids communicating about their work.

ARE YOU READY TO SHAKE UP LEARNING?

Don't be afraid to go against the grain, try an out-of-the-box approach, or look a little crazy to your colleagues. We all learned to teach in a certain way, but that doesn't mean there aren't new and better ways to reach our learners. Don't assume everyone has heard the message. There are so many educators that simply don't get it, who haven't heard the news. Think of yourself like a learning evangelist. Each voice has the power to reach someone new.

You. You have the power to make a difference in the lives of hundreds of children and the future of education as we know it. You. You have the power to cultivate passions, new ideas, and new perspectives. **You. You have the power to Shake Up Learning!**

THANK YOU!

Thank you for downloading and reading the Shake Up Learning Quick-Start Guide. I hope you have enjoyed the ideas and tips.

If you want to explore these ideas more in-depth, and get ALL the tips and tricks, be sure to pick up your copy of the book, *Shake Up Learning: Practical Ideas to Move Learning from Static to Dynamic*.

ShakeUpLearningBook.com