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The Arts and Technology: How Educational Technology Can Bring Humanities Further Into Elementary and Primary School Systems

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The Arts and Technology: How Educational Technology Can Bring Humanities Further Into Elementary and Primary School Systems.

A senior thesis submitted to the faculty of Dominican University of California in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the Bachelor of Arts in Humanities and Cultural Studies.

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Abstract

As the world becomes more inclined to implement technology in nearly every aspect of society, the United States Department of Education must find a way to incorporate new styles of modern and high-tech teaching without pushing out certain subjects from its curriculum. I believe technology can be used to bring the Humanities further into the classroom. In today's society American education programs are desperately trying to make up for subpar primary school scores in mathematics and science. According to the government accredited international education forum (the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) the United States was found to be below the OECD average in science ranking 25th, reading 24th and mathematics 41st (Businessinsider.com). With these mediocre scores the United States has been forced to take drastic measure in bolstering its primary education systems. While an added emphasis in elementary math and science curriculum is an obvious route, it seems that the removal or distancing from the arts and other social forms of education has also become part of the solution. While science, technology, engineering and math are all extremely important, the United States Department of Education should be able to recommend modernized approaches that incorporate art history, history, literature, art, music, philosophy and language. In our ever-changing high-tech world, the Humanities are needed in our classrooms to supply equality and perspective. The Humanities widen our thought process, build global understanding, assist in the formation of critical thinking skills, train individuals to communicate and share, bolster moral accountability and cultural sensitivity, support scientific advancements through unique societal perspectives, guide humanity towards a more rational and inclusive way of thinking, and

create a well-balanced 21st century scholar. In today's modern society it is more than reasonable to explore options that involve the intertwining of technology and the arts in our elementary school systems. It must also be mentioned, the goal of this paper is to in now way lessen or devalue the role of the instructor, rather, the research provided is aimed at highlighting certain types of technologies that can potentially assist primary and elementary educators who aspire to further incorporate the Humanities and its core philosophies into their curriculum.

Introduction

The United States is caught in an educational argument, the prevalent issue being what is the most effective way to educate the future generations of American students. "Enthusiasts contend that technology better prepares students for the 21st century by improving their skills with information and communicative technologies" (Johnson et al., 2012; National Educational Technology Standards, 2012) On the other hand, opponents make the case "technology might actually distract children from what is most important to learn" Monke (2006). With multiple answers and agendas coming from nearly every level of society, one thing remains certain, there are multiple resources available to bridge the gap between the U.S. and other academically elite countries. The topics emphasized by the Humanities teach a type of awareness and critical thinking that is invaluable to the real world application of other subjects. These disciplines can be coupled with technological advancements that ensure students receive a well-rounded education throughout their early scholastic career.

As the world becomes more inclined to implement technology in nearly every aspect of society, the United States Department of Education must find a way to incorporate new styles of modern and high-tech teaching without pushing out certain subjects from its curriculum. I believe technology can be used to bring the humanities further into the classroom. In today's society American education programs are desperately trying to make up for subpar primary school scores in mathematics and science. While science, technology, engineering and math are all extremely important, the United States Department of Education should be able to recommend modernized approaches that incorporate art history, history, literature, art, music, philosophy and language. In our ever-changing high-tech world, the Humanities are needed in our classrooms to supply equality and perspective. The Humanities widen our thought process, build global understanding, assist in the formation of critical thinking skills, train individuals to communicate and share, bolster moral accountability and cultural sensitivity, support scientific advancements through unique societal perspectives, guide humanity towards a more rational and inclusive way of thinking, and create a well balanced 21st century scholar. In today's modern society it is more than reasonable to explore options that involve the intertwining of technology and the arts in our elementary school systems. It must also be mentioned, the goal of this paper is to in now way lessen or devalue the role of the instructor, rather, the research provided is aimed at highlighting certain types of technologies that can potentially assist primary and elementary educators who aspire to further incorporate the Humanities and its core philosophies into their curriculum.

Technology defined

In this specific context the technology under consideration are computerized devices that have the capability of streamlining information (in this case the arts) from around the globe directly to the classroom. Having readily available information from all over the world seems like a simple solution to the problem of integrating the arts into the education system. However, specifics on what devices to use, and how and when they are used makes the issue more complex. Moreover teachers will now have to find ways to input new styles of teaching languages, literature, philosophy, geography, history, religion, art and musicology while also tailoring their suggestions to the current systems primary goals (i.e. math and science). Luckily there are many devices and learning platforms are multifaceted and readily available: Electronic whiteboards, laptops, word processing applications, 3d printing and styles such as flipped learning, video conferencing, and class blogs are education tools that can be incorporated into nearly every main lesson plan.

Language arts development and Skype

Since America's global ranking in primary level mathematics seems to be the main concern for the Department of Education across the nation, the duty of incorporating non-STEM curriculum falls to the instructors. One way to bring a Humanities emphasis into the classroom can be through the study of language arts. While it has be argued that e-learning has little to no place in language arts development "students mostly complain about their isolation during e-learning courses." (Jamil). The language arts curriculum emphasizes taking the appropriate amount of time to develop a

love of and understanding of proper dialog, if taught in a thoughtful and inclusive manner, students can certainly learn language arts in a fully comprehensive and digital way. While Professor Jamil is correct in believing there is no replacing the benefits of instructor driven in-class discussion; homework, in-class assignments, and research projects can be given a communications element via modern advancements in educational technology. Through products such as Skype teachers can foster a classroom's social skills while simultaneously covering state required branches of learning.

What is Skype

Skype is free to download and easy to use. Owned by Microsoft, this video chat software is currently used by millions of individuals and businesses to enable conversations all over the world. Once downloaded, an account contact list can be created empowering students, teachers, and other instructors to communicate ideas and lessons. While Skype's main function is real-time video conferencing, this application is equipped with instant messenger and is capable of sharing educational videos, texts, pictures and charts (Skype.com). Furthermore, this application is permits the exchange of files between devices and is compatible with computers, tablets or smartphones.

Language arts development and Skype

Instructors can assign pairs or groups of students to meet online and discuss certain topics from home. Topics could range from math review to the personal feelings on the text being read in class. This online exchange can reinforce critical thinking skills necessary for a variety of subjects outside of any one topic. This proposal is given

backbone by Genc Binnur of Akdeniz University, who describes the benefits that technology infused arts can bring into the classroom. "It can be said that technology has a positive effect on children's language awareness when it is used appropriately. Language teacher candidates are aware of this good impact and think the teacher is the key factor in this unlimited world. It is obvious that technology brings real world in front of children. These teacher candidates' ideas demonstrate that technology is inevitable in today's world. Not only does it teach a new language but also it assists young learners gaining new cultural items. Therefore, young learners can be more motivated and active via technology." (Binnur 2004). This statement illustrates the usefulness social technology when applied to the Humanities. Without the perspective that Humanities education brings to the table, students are less likely to receive a well-rounded education.

Geography and Skype

Humanities subsets such as geography can now be introduced in a creative and fun way through Skype. While some educators might shy away from the notion of educating through games, a study done by the National Center For Scientific Research in Athens, Greece, found well-structured game-based learning to have a positive effect on Primary school students. If administered with a clear purpose and direct instruction this entertaining form of schooling can increase attentiveness and compression across a multitude of disciplines. "Research showed that Serious Games are able to keep all students engaged in classroom facilities, scaffolding their learning through increased motivation, independence, autonomy and resultant self-esteem. Serious Games Based Learning (GBL) has proven its added value in almost every aspect of the curriculum."

(Papanastasiou 44). Sinse games are a key tool in capturing the interest of students in fundamental education, Mystery Skype is an application that will introduce students to areas and cultures all over the world. This useful teaching tool brings teachers and classes together from anywhere on the planet. Created by schoolteachers, Mystery Skype is enjoyed between by two classrooms that communicate with one another through Skype. The goal of the activity is to determine the opposing school's location through a series of yes or no questions. Guided by the teacher, the game requires learners to lace their questions with subject-dependent language like equator, landlocked, altitude, hemispheres, and metropolis.(Education.microsoft.com) Not only will students be shaping their communication skills by conversing with peers from all over the globe, through Mystery Skype children will be expected to work cohesively using atlases and maps. With multiple countries well within US schooling-hour time zones, this game would be a useful tool for opening a section on Ireland, india, Canada, Brazil, Australia, Mexico, Philippians, or Puerto Rico (all of which have less than a five hour time difference). "The emerging movement identified as Serious Games aims to meet the needs of a new generation of learners that use digital devices frequently to communicate, express themselves, and understand the world around them. Digital games possess intrinsic learning qualities that challenge and foster pupils who are pragmatically minded to learn by doing, learn from their peers and improve their skills. Digital games are based on the principle that playing is learning in a challenging environment where students can make mistakes and experiment with them involving a process of trial and error."(Papanastasiou 52). Mystery Skype seems fitting for instructors seeking to increase cultural study in a group setting.

Literature/philosophy and Skype

Video conferencing can give literature study a whole new dimension. Through applications such as Skype experts and specialists can lecture on an array of topics in a fresh and simplified way. Students can sometimes become uninterested with certain teaching methods and classes, which is why instructors should continuously look out for ways to break up the monotony of a book review with a special guest speaker. Not only can this method help illustrate key points of a text but it will also help alleviate the issues that accompany the traditional way of inviting a guest speaker directly to the classroom. Penguin publishing has a direct link to a list of authors who they publish that are willing to meet online completely free of charge. Students will have an option to interview the authors, gaining an invaluable look into a story's theme, message and inspiring factors. Using Skype to advance children's understanding of literature is an important and innovative idea due to its potential to lecture on a range of topics from behaviors and feelings to animals and locations across the world.

Skype is a unique tool, if used correctly, teachers can implement distanced learning that effectively promotes communication as well as the open exchange of ideas and cultures. Skype is perfectly formatted to combat virtual-education's major flaw, a feeling of student isolation. A study done by the Department of Learning and Teaching at Rutgers University found "one of the greatest challenges for learning institutions and instructors when designing and implementing online courses is to "provide a sense of community with constructive feedback and provide open forthcoming communications as well as recognizing membership and feelings of friendship, cohesion, and satisfaction among

learners" (Domingo 2016)." It's real-time response system coupled with its creative and inclusive educational formatting, Skype is purposely designed to diminish the feeling of disconnect between those interacting. With resources and features specifically designed for cultural education and literature review Skype is well worth consideration for any instructor interested in promoting The Arts.

Interactive whiteboards (IWB)

Subjects like geography, music, and history can all be studied with ease using an electronic whiteboard. As known as an interactive whiteboard or smartboard (IWB/ SB), this instructional tool can function as a standalone computer or an expansive touchpad. Providing literal hands-on learning and full Internet access, smartboards have the potential to add interactivity and collaboration into a variety of learning opportunities. Cheaper than supplying an entire class with computers, IWB's also benefit teachers by the way of lesson differentiation. This pedagogical tool accommodates all different learning styles. Tactile learners can go touch and move things around the board. Visual learners can benefit from a clear view of what is happening on the boards and audio learners can participate in a class discussion.

While subjects like math, science and reading can be the main focus of this technology humanities subjects can be incorporated. With today's advances the blackboard and its chalk clouds can be replaced with skylines from Google Earth. Once installed in a classroom the interactive whiteboard can help give students visual assistance when learning about historical events. With complete and total Internet access whole group lessons regarding art history and the cultures that engulf them can be

displayed almost effortlessly. Lastly and most notably, it's popular! A survey taken by the Canadian Journal of Learning & Technology of over 11,600 students and 1,100 teachers in Quebec Canada reported "The IWB has been introduced en masse into schools across Quebec over the last five years. It appears that students appreciate having this technology in the classroom: 99.2% preferred the IWB over the traditional blackboard ". (Karsenti 5) Implementing a device so widely appreciated is exactly the type of reform a underappreciated field of study can use to capture the minds of students while also appeasing the country's push for an technologically advanced next generation of learners.

IWB Music

Interactive whiteboards now have applications on which music can be taught. Staff Wards is a program created to assist beginning and intermediate musicians observe, review, and lean the names of notes. Implemented during tinker-time/free-create would be a low cost way of incorporating this into the classroom.(themusicinteractive.com) Rhythm Blocks is another smartboard accessible app that teaches rhythmic diction in a group setting. RB can be incorporated into stationed class work; stationed lesson is a common strategy used in primary education.(themusicinteractive.com/classroom-apps) Musicians who specialize in stringed instruments can also benefit from this type of modernized learning; String is a classroom-friendly program that assists beginning artists on introductory methods of playing. Interactive fingering charts that show positions on the string can be performed as a classroom kinetic exercise. An excellent mixture of cultural study and technology-infused music can be found in the simulator Drums From Around The World. When uploaded to the classroom's smart-board, the application

displays a variety of drums, there geographical origin, the physical style of the drum, and each types particular sound as well as a brief tutorial on how it would be played. This app's ability to teach about different cultures, customs, and norms makes it a perfect tool for interdisciplinary teaching.

IWB Cultural Awareness

A subcategory of Humanities taught in elementary education is history. By studying history young scholars can further understand cultures from all over the world. By understanding values and mindsets from civilizations across the globe, student will be better suited to appropriately interact with other countries and the business that reside within them. This is particularly important due to the fact that in 2017 alone the United States Census Bureau estimated well over three billion dollars in goods were traded into or out of the country. (census.gov) Excluding a basic understanding of today's most notable societies can eventually lead to a disconnect of sorts between the next generation of Americans and their international business partners. However, Technology such as IWBs, give educators a fighting chance to incorporate social study into modern curriculum.

IWB History/ geography

Through smart-boards teachers can easily download and project hundreds of historical sites from within their own classroom. Google Earth's newly updated program Voyager takes the learner far beyond simply admiring the planet via digitally chartered imagery. With its specified search engine that includes sections such as nature, culture,

travel, history, sports and education, students can now go on informative and engaging virtual field trips. Through the use of 360-degree videos, information texts, and photos students will now learn about an area's culture, not just its geographical location.(earth.google.com) For example, when studying India, classes will be educated on not only on what Taj Mahal looks like, how and why it was built.

IWB ART HISTORY

Another benefit from this progressive style of learning is accessibility. It is not always simple or feasible to take field trips; cost, transportation, staffing, time, and destination can potentially deter students from receive proper Art History education. IWB's create an opportunity for entire classes to take a close up look at famous works of art hundreds or even thousands of miles away. Both The Smithsonian and the Metropolitan Museum of Art's official websites provide virtual tours that are IWB accessible. Each site allows classes to "walk" around their gallery examining the various rooms and exhibits. If one were to step away from American fine arts and gravitate towards lessons in European culture The Louvre also provides school systems with simulated tours. Applied in a variety of ways Art Education can lecture on Western, African, European, or Eastern culture while simultaneously informing young minds about social actions such as The Women's Rights Movement, The Abolition Movement, The French Revolution, or even the spread of Confucianism.

What is 3D printing?

3D printing also referred to as additive manufacturing is a procedure of creating solid three-dimensional objects that enables individuals to manufacture fully functional and intricate materials from a digitally stored file. Printing multidimensional objects is accomplished through using an additive processes that replicates a digital image by laying down continual levels of material (primarily plastic) until the object is shaped. The process, which takes less than a few minutes, displays finely sliced horizontal cross-sections of material being fastened together sheet by sheet.(globalcitizen.org) With this almost futuristic style of educating, students of all ages will be enamored with the idea of literally watching their thoughts and ideas became tangible works of art. While seemingly a device primarily for engineering projects, its marketability for a classroom tool stems from its ability to be used in an array of subject. History, science, art, mathematics, social studies, even geography and ecology are all subjects that can be taught through the use of 3D printing.

Students will find a new appreciation for learning about any region on the planet with 3D printing. With multidimensional models of states and countries available for creation, classes can now study coastal plains, valleys, plateaus, and mountain ranges in a completely new way. In a cyber-centered world this tech provides a relatable lens with which learners can find a new appreciation for the study of geography. This digital connection has the potential to provide learners with the want to devise management strategies about how certain climates should be managed. This project's hidden yet tangible value comes from its potential to shape upcoming generations to have empathy and view the earth as the motherland of humankind. Understanding humanities interdependence and to become a better global citizen can be taught through 3D printing.

Art mathematics

A 3d printer is a justifiable expense due to its versatility. 3D printing can enhance lessons on STEM subsets and the arts. Fractions, geometry, and basic algebra can all be enriched through this technology. Historical monuments, tools, and other artifacts can now be forged by the individuals studying them. Students can create a literal pie chart as a means of studying fractions. This type of manipulative mathematics will assist students with visualizing the various parts of a fraction as it pertains to a whole, establishing which segmented unit is smaller or larger, as well as understanding the connection between decimals and fractions. Common core state standards regarding geography can be fulfilled with this hands on tech. 3D printing caters to students who learn through a more hands on style of education. Through this type of kinesthetic learning process students can create a deeper understanding of the differentiation between the many types of quadrilaterals. By digitally creating a shape students have a 21st century way of studying area and volume.

Going-cross curricular has never been easier. Under the title of Art-History / engineering and mathematics, students can be asked to recreate significant cultural works of art. Think about how memorable a section on ancient Greece or Egypt could be if one was able to create Zeus's thunderbolt or hold the Pyramid of Giza in the palm of your hand. Geometry lessons can now incorporate the construction of the cylinder towers and rectangular walls found in 17th renaissance castles. By recreating certain historical masterpieces students will be able to appreciate the efforts that were made by civilizations long ago.

History Scholastic

Scholastic.com is a series of common core aligned history websites that introduce classes to the discovery of the new world. Through its state certified lesson plans students will use tablets, an IWB or personal computers to take a more captivating and modern look at the historical significance of the pilgrims settlement (Scholastic.com). With modified curriculum for grades K-8 students can review a number of historical processes through descriptive texts that are filled grade appropriate terms. Specifically students will learn about the first harvest and delve deeper into the relationship between the pilgrims and Wampanoag's and take a closer look at the historical significance at the pilgrim's settlement.

History Based Websites

While some might argue the validity of the native-explorer relationship documented, the tools used for such migration is undisputed. This site at the very least can serve as a portal in which the history of transportation is examined and appreciated. While a history lesson in itself may not capture the hearts and minds of today's learners, a section on 17th century sailing and its impact on the founding of American might. Though Scholastic's virtual tours of a fully reconstructed Mayflower, young minds can get a better picture of what life was like for a sailor in the 17th century. These video testimonials with historian commentary are accompanied with pictures and audio-supported diagrams that illustrate the specifics on how a ship of this type was able to function by wind powered sails, wooden lever steering star position guidance systems.

Through maritime archaeology students will be taught about how 17th-century mariners operated without radar, electronic rudder systems and high-tech global positioning. This enhanced review of primitive and dangerous travel should awaken some interest in how the United States came to be. In an age where children carelessly operate tablets that house more technology than what was previously needed to send a man into space, it is a teachers obligation nah, duty, to preserve the sense of appreciation for not only how far society has come but what it took for previous generations to lay the groundwork for the world we live in today. This style of learning has the ability to increase appreciation for how far society has come from a technological/societal standpoint.

WEBSITE SOCIAL STUDY/CLIMATE CHANGE/ NASA

A vital part of humanities instruction is preparing learners for the future. "Social Studies is defined as a course that uses the information and method from social sciences to train effective citizens who can make decisions and solve problems in cases of changing conditions" (Ozturk, 2009). Regardless of age or level of education educators of the arts should strive to help the next generation live more sustainable lives. This includes developing strategies for reducing and managing the risks of climate change. Early education on environmental science can play a vital role in advancing environmentally sound technologies and provide the groundwork for sound infrastructure that promote sustainable living. By acknowledging society's pollution problem in primary schools we can create a more socially and ecologically considerate world. While adults openly worry about how the next generation is going to survive, one question remains. How can we get children to care about the environment? To show children the

problems they will face in the real world, the problem must be presented in a familiar and captivating way. The solution, Technological integration. Through education websites, the study of co2 admission and its effect on our planet's atmosphere becomes a sort of game, filled with relatable and age appropriate terms and diagrams.(climatekids.NASA.org) To capture the imagination of the technologically dependent generations to come, it makes more than enough sense to used technology of their time.

The government funded site ClimateKids.NASA is a web page predicated on educating elementary school students on the importance clean energy, water, and atmosphere. This type of humanitarian teaching can easily be intertwined with Common core state standards. With a variety of easily digestible sections on climate change and the greenhouse effect an instructor can meet state mandated reading and literature standards. For example, a third grade class (as a whole) would read the section on the greenhouse effect, what it is, how the earth is a greenhouse, and ways modern civilizations can make it better or worse. After the reading and a brief recap of the main points and terms students will be asked to describe the relationship between industrialized cities, C02 emissions, the atmosphere, the heat from the sun, and the earth rising temperature. For homework, students would go to the game section for the website and play the game labeled "meet the greenhouse gasses". Students would the write a brief 3-4 sentences describing gases, climate change or what they think the bad things are about a rising temperature.

What it is BPJ?

BrainPOPjr is an K-3 educational website that assists classrooms in teaching subjects related to Social Studies, Reading, Writing, Art, Health, Math and Science. This site is educator-focused and aims to give students a more global perspective. The Brain POPjr site creates animated, curriculum-based content that aims to engage young learners. All subjects are aligned to Common Core standards and with lessons accessible by computers, tablet, or smartboard instructors have the option of individual or whole group study.(BrainPopJr.com) While this site is not free (135$ yearly) once subscribed educators are given codes to administer to students. BrainPOPjr and its wide array of lessons can be a vital tool in bringing The Arts to the attention of young students.

The site has a variety of tools from which the learners can demonstrate their understanding. Each lesson has a variety of videos, after each video students will be instructed to complete any number of the following tasks. The tasks range from quizzes, vocabulary review, written responses, a drawing of the subject, a physical activity or craft. The task page even has one kid friendly joke pertaining to the subject discussed. By incorporating humor and all four styles of learning (visual, auditory, kinesthetic and read/writing) into the assessment section students can potentially see learning as a joyous unrestrictive activity.

RAZZKIDS

For teachers who still seek the benefits of digital education but wish to reduce their classes time spent in front of a screen the educational website Razzkids is the perfect compromise. With Razzkids teachers will be supplied with a large variety of interdisciplinary lessons. While this site is not free (100$ for the school year) an

instructor will have access to a diverse library of science, reading and writing samples.

With a reasonable cost and thousands of downloadable, projectable, and printable

projects teachers will have the option to have their class work online or complete

assignments in class by hand. This site shows its versatility in is ability to have the

teacher choose whether or not students will learn online.(raz-kids.com)

For K-8 instructors who wish to fuse Literature review with STEM subjects sites like

Razzkids may be the solution. With all books and resources correlated to state common

core standards teachers will have little to no issue justifying a classes assignment that is

centered around a Razzkids poetry book. Multilevel books differentiate reading

instruction and allows for the blending of science and Humanities, students can

strengthen vocabulary and reading skills while consuming information about zoology, the

cardiovascular system or even the solar system. With printable quizzes and hands-on

activities teachers can closely monitor individual comprehension. Razzkids is unique in

that it actively attempts to find a place for the arts. With this site one can instruct on the

practices of the scientific method one day, and have students self-explore through reading

and creating poetry the next.

Linguistics and reading comprehension have also been given a modern touch by

Razzkids. While the site still offers many printable worksheets and whole-class activities,

Phonological awareness and phonics lessons can be taught via projector or discussed by

educational video. These games and video promote peer-on-peer dialog and

collaboration, helping students who may learn from a more interactive lesson. Teachers

can also allow students to work independently on phonics flashcards found online. These

virtual cards come with visual and auditory aids that help young learners reinforce

sounds, letters, and grade appropriate words. The site's Language Arts section allows students to strengthen the fundamental skills that are necessary for a 21st century learner. As for literature review, this site has over 400 texts all of which are categorized by grade level and has a filter option that allows for finding books with common core lesson supplements attached. Attached to each story students have a list of text related vocabulary words as well as a printable worksheet full of objectives that should be met after reading. All stories are available to print making a computer free book discussion complexly possible. The stories can also be projected on a whiteboard for those who need visual assistance. Sites like Razzkids give linguistics and literature review an extra dimension that not only has the capacity to make the instructors life easier (with all its additional features) it increases the number of ways students can intake information.

Literature/philosophy through Storybird

Critical writing and reading embody a portion of the humanities. To be educated in The Arts is to build skills that focus on creative thinking. 21st century educators must teach to think with reason and inquire about the world around. "We depend on schools to foster leadership and to produce responsible citizens. Students with stressful lives and inconsistent role modeling at home are particularly at risk for conflict prone behavior (Camilleri, 2007). Creativity is crucial to developing positive coping skills for these students because it empowers the individual, promotes new ways of thinking, bridges different learning styles, and heals the effects of cultural trauma (Bruce, 2001). " Through literature and deep thought the Humanities cultivate cognizant and morally driven people. Creative storytelling is an important part of the humanities discipline

because it is a gateway for self-exploration and future growth. Through creative

storytelling we can construct or reinforce morality. A new way for the youth to construct

an idea of virtue is through virtual storytelling.

Storybird is a language arts website designed to assists students who are working

on creative writing assignments. This platform provides a digital book in which students

can easily find illustrations and input text.(storybird.com) Easy to save and completely

free of charge, with Storybird kids can choose images and invent their very own unique

story to go along with the pictures. Students must use their inference skills to depict an

image. What is the character feeling? Where does the story take place (setting)? What's

the plot? It's up to kids to decide after carefully examining every detail of their image.

Teachers can use Storybird to reinforce common core state standards. In 5th grade

it is a Literature requirement for students to be able to "Analyze how visual elements

contribute to the meaning, tone, or beauty of a text" Through Storybird, teachers can

assign fun and purposeful creative writing assignments that require students to find

illustrations that match their story's theme or message. The assignment can be geared

towards finding pictures that represent a theme found in a book that was previously read

by the class. Also, this site can help students who are having trouble coming up with

topics to write about. These pictures have the potential to unlock thought provoking

emotion from students.

Affordable Technology

While it can be argued that the cost of modernizing a classroom is too expensive, for the innovative and resourceful teacher there are ways to ease the burden of paying for state of the art teaching equipment. Many educational websites and apps (including the ones listed above) are free to download and operate. Other devices such as IWBs and 3D printers can be obtained through grants, contests and scholarships. Integrating The Arts and other nonSTEM subjects may give an advantage to those applying.

In regards to 3D printing The Hearst Foundation, Educators of America, First Energy and Formlabs all offer grants specifically to elementary school teachers that are in need 3D printers. For these particular grants teachers must provide a written statement complete with a detailed description of objectives, implementation methods and potential effects on student collaboration. While these contests are centered on supporting teachers passionate about advancing lessons in science, mathematics, and engineering, these contests are looking to advance all areas of learning. Proposing the idea that a 3D printer has the potential to enhance subjects beyond math and science may become an advantage when applying. In addition to submitting well-thought and decisive STEM projects, applicants can also include potential 3D lessons on social studies, language art, music, and art.

As for interactive whiteboards and tablets there is a long list of organizations dedicated to supplying electronic devices to financially disadvantaged classroom. There are also grants completely centered on getting IWBs and Tablets into the hands of learners. As for interactive whiteboards Turning Technologies presents grants and scholarship packages to aide teachers and school districts that wish to incorporate polling technology into their classrooms. If chosen, Turning Technologies will award certain classrooms with an array of educational devices. The materials being awarded include: a fully interactive portable

smartboard, a complete collection of software for grading and creating interactive polls, and thirty-two miniature-keyboards that allow students to directly submit their responses to the teacher. The Digital Wish Foundation regularly promotes Tech giveaways and is currently offering a grant that will bring Google's Chromebook to the classroom. Once again a written statement in which the instructor describes determines the recipients of these grants their classes needs and supplies full and comprehensive outline for how the devices will be used.

 While the odds of being awarded these specifics endowments are slim, the vast amount of charitable foundations (found in the US) makes applying for grants a more realistic option. Here is a list of other possible options

Digital Wish teamed up

NEA Foundation

Department of Education

Toshiba America Foundation

ING Unsung Heroes

Intel Community Grants

Target Education Grants

American Honda Foundation

Fund For Teachers

Elmer's Kids in Need Foundation

Lego Children's Fund

Prudent Foundation

Walmart Local Giving Program

Verizon Foundation

Conclusion

For Humanities to flourish in the 21ˢᵗ century, educators must adapt their teaching methods. By bringing specific devices further into the classroom educators should be able to instill the valuable teachings The Arts has to offer. Regardless of grade or age, students should be able to collaborate, critically think, and solve problems in a creative manor. With modern advances in educational technology the fear of students going through their scholastic career without learning to be culturally aware or globally sensitive can be put to rest.

While some might be hesitant to implement certain teaching styles into the classroom. Its is an educator's duty to constantly be looking for new and better ways to educate. With organizations such as CUE completely devoted to training teachers on classroom technology, the task of modernizing and implementing the study of Art, History, linguistics, religion, ethics, and social studies can be far less complicated. The purpose of this paper is in no way to reduce the role of instructor's involvement in lesson planning but to show how certain devices and programs can be used by instructors enhance the arts while still meeting the state or federal standards in education. Objects such as IWBs, educational websites, and other devices have the potential assist students in understand the core philosophies of Humanities. The arts can help students form connection to people and cultures from around the world. Without the vital lessons the Humanities have to offer, students run the risk of losing a means of morality or self-

knowledge. "The chief obstacle to that education today is not an emphasis on skills but an impoverished or one-dimensional conception of skills as merely technical, as detached from questions of character formation, and as serving no larger role in the turning of souls to a consideration of the good. With that detachment, education risks reinforcing various kinds of bondage of the soul and becomes blind to the truly liberating power of the humanities."(4, Hibbs) Educators must push students to use their imagination and think critically about all the possibilities a situation has to offer. The humanities teach understanding, from the individual, to the collective. Teaching the Humanities aims to reinforce how to listen empathetically, speak thoughtfully, write clearly and promote an inquisitive nature. Humanities are a value system, and the best way to uphold this system is through modern advances in educational technology.

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