

Position Paper

**Position: I'm pro electronics in k-8 classrooms. I believe it helps with reading comprehension, provides benefits to students with learning disabilities, and helps teachers be more effective.**

Word Count: 746

Claim 1: Electronic devices in the classroom help students with their reading comprehension. According to a new survey conducted by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, an astounding 66% of 4th graders in the United States don't meet basic reading requirements (aecf.org, Sue Lin Chong). Many of these students are using standard educational tools and textbooks, not electronic learning tools. Teachers and parents throughout America are trying to figure out how to resolve this problem, and more and more see the solution in switching to tablets. Skip Johnson is an elementary school principal at El Crystal Elementary school in California, and he's implemented tablets into his school over the past few years and has seen vast improvement in his students reading comprehension. His program started out small with a handful of audio books downloaded onto a single iPad, but once the kids began reading they couldn't stop. "It was motivating to the kids, and they would be back in a day or two wanting another book," Johnson said. the numbers speak for themselves, now in its 4th year his school has over 50 tablets with over 400 audio books downloaded into them (thejournal.com,

Stephen Noonoo). Ever since the usage of iPads were implemented into Principal Johnson's school, there has been a ton of improvement in reading comprehension at El Crystal Elementary over the past four years, Johnson was quoted as saying "If you look at the overall data from our district, which has seven elementary schools, we read more words per year than some of the schools that have more readers." (thejournal.com, Stephen Noonoo)

Claim 2: Tablets in the classroom have shown to work wonders for students with disabilities, who are struggling to read as well. Meredith Soddy was amazed at how much an iPad had helped her 6 year old daughter with her school work. Meredith's daughter, Amanda, has ADHD and has a difficult time staying on track in class. Her mother says "They (an iPad) hold her (Amanda, her daughter) attention better than any book." (Attitudemag.com, Karen Barrow) An iPad is a creative way to help Meredith's daughter learn how to read, she says her daughter prefers to read an iPad rather than a paperback book. She is very grateful for the educational success the tablet provides her daughter, knowing that falling behind in reading comprehension at school can be very embarrassing for her. Tablets and other electronics in the classroom are an amazing tool for children with disabilities to learn how to read. Not only is it a fun and exciting way to learn, its also very interactive and helps them open the door to learning with fellow students as well. This is how one teacher put it, "Because the iPad is a "cool tech device" that doesn't immediately mark a child as different, many see it as a more attractive option than the more traditional devices. This is of huge benefits to a child's self-esteem." (Huffingtonpost.com, Robert Whent)

Claim 3: It's not just students who have fallen in love with new educational technologies, teachers really appreciate their benefits as well. The teachers have noticed a substantial difference since implementing tablets into the classroom. Jennifer Smith, a 5th grade teacher at St George's School in Spokane, Washington, had rave reviews for tablets in the classroom. She said this about what the addition to tablets in her classroom has meant for her and her students, "They are flexible and portable. We can take them outside if we need to. We use them for social studies and science. They are great support for what we are already learning." (Spokesman.com, Jody Lawrence-Taylor) A couple of Mrs. Smith's colleagues love how tablets can give the kids the immediate hands on tools they need for certain assignments. They also enjoy the instant feedback they can give their students using tablets. Derek Duchesne, Gonzaga Prep's vice principal of academics said, "Teachers have seen great things they've never seen before...Students are embedding photos and graphics into their homework because they can do it all electronically." (Spokesman.com, Jody Lawrence-Taylor) Not only are the tablets helping children learn, but the students are also becoming increasingly more creative because of the tablets. There's a high probability that if these students were given a normal assignment, they wouldn't have added extra photos or graphics to the project. With the tablets it looks as if once students get going on a project they just pick up steam and go the extra yard that they normally wouldn't have in the past.

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