Is it right to equip kindergarten through eighth grade students with digital technology devices (such as tablets and laptops) in the classroom?

Position: Students from kindergarten through eighth grade should be equipped with digital technology because it helps them in math, helps build their confidence and motivation, and exposes them to how the real world works.

Word Count: 897

<u>Reason 1:</u>

Students who understand technology and use it daily have proven to be better in math. Erhan Delen stated a study done by Lee et al (2009) which showed students who use computers for at least one hour a day for educational purposes or for entertainment have better math scores. Most parents and teachers are against students playing video games because it is a waste of time. However, playing video games, whether they on tablets or computers, forces students to focus on many different tasks. Some games also teach students to look for clues to solve a mystery, calculate math problems or make an object, such as a car engine, which also helps with enhancing their skills.

Delen also performed a study in the classrooms and found that students who used the ICT (Information and Communication Technology) Program at home and at school had higher scores in math and science than those who did not use the program. This program is now being used in many classrooms; and students who have access to this program, or a similar program, are more advanced because it allows students to practice what they learned inside the classroom in their

own homes and get immediate feedback. When students who might not excel in math have assignments from a textbook, it can be difficult for them because they do not know if they are doing the work accurately. Nevertheless, with online programs on computers, students are able to see what they are doing wrong and what they need to practice more.

According to Susan O'Hara, an author for Pearson Allyn Bacon Prentice Hall, "Boster's study of 2,500 sixth and eighth graders in Los Angeles showed a statistically significant increase in math achievement scores when students used digital video." Not all students understand the lesson the first time they listen to it. Most students need to have the lesson explained to them multiply times before they can comprehend it. Digital videos allow students to replay it many times when they do not understand the instructions or the process for solving a problem. Furthermore, most students like to play the video while they are working on a similar problem from their assignment.

Reason 2:

Using technology in classrooms has also helped increase a student's confidence and motivation levels. Timothy Huneycutt states, "When technology is integrated into school lessons, learners are more likely to be interested in, focused on, and excited about the subjects they are studying." Technology enables students to be interactive with the material by using more of their senses. For example, if students are being taught just through a lecture, they will get distracted because they are not being active. With technology, they have to listen to the instructions and respond quickly to the information on the screen.

Technology creates a comfortable environment for students who are shy and afraid to voice their opinion or questions. "The computer has been an empowering tool to the students.

They have a voice and it's not in any way secondary to anybody else's voice. It's an equal voice. So that's incredibly positive. Motivation to use technology is very high," (Effects of Technology on Classrooms and Students). Technology permits students to express their answer and get positive feedback from their teacher or peers. When students are working on a problem on the computer and they get it right, a simple "correct" or a green check next to the problem gives the students a sense of accomplishment. They gain confidence and are excited to get another one correct. They start to try harder because they want that validation for their achievements. When it is wrong, they want try even harder to make sure they get that green check.

Students spend around one-third of their day at school, and when they are not enjoying their experience, they tend to not want to show up anymore. They especially want to give up when they feels as if they are not learning the material or think they are not capable of getting their work done. However, with the tools on digital technology, they can be taught a lesson in many different ways. According to Susan O'Hara, the use of technology in classrooms decreased the amount of student absences, drop out rates and encouraged students to go to college because it made them excited about their futures. In addition, since they understood they assignment, they were not discouraged.This gave them more confident, which motivates them to continue learning.

Reason 3:

Students who use technology in classrooms will be more prepared for the real world in the future. "Technology helps the teachers prepare students for the real world environment. As our nation becomes increasingly more technology-dependent, it becomes even more necessary that to be successful citizens, students must learn to be tech-savvy," (Ashley Wainwright). The

use of technology in the real world is inevitable. Students want to be prepared for and want they environment at school to look like their future work environment. Students "gain a sense of empowerment" when they get to use technology that mirror what they will be needing later in their life (Effects of Technology on Classrooms and Students). Students tend to pay more attention in the classroom when they know they can use the information in the real world. They want to learn how to use the tools now rather than later.

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