

ICT Trends and Issues: ICT in the Music Classroom

Introduction

This research report will focus on the trends issues in using ICT's in years 1 -7 in the music classroom. Four resources are presented here in this report, a video, website, podcast and article.

The existence of ICTs does not transform teacher practices in and of itself. However, ICTs can enable teachers to transform their teacher practices, In OECD countries, (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development) research consensus holds that the most effective uses of ICT are those in which the teacher, aided by ICTs, can challenge pupils' understanding and thinking, either through whole-class discussions and individual/small group work using ICTs. Traditional educational practices no longer provide prospective teachers with all the necessary skills for teaching students, who must be able to survive economically in today's workplace. Teachers must teach students to apply strategies for solving problems and to use appropriate tools (meaningful learning with technology) for learning, collaborating, and communicating (Trucano, Michael. 2005).

Website: [Music Tech Teacher](#)

This website, Musictechteacher.com, was created by Garrett (1992) as a way of connecting other teachers in the music / arts arena, and gathering a host of resources in one easy to access website. This site is an extension of the music technology classroom at Central Park School in Birmingham, AL. where Garrett has taught since the early 1990's.

This website includes lots of lesson plans, videos and information for teachers, and a good selection of quizzes, games, theory sheets and worksheets for students to access.

The advantages are the creation of the website technology by Garrett has meant that more students have had access to the ICT music classroom without the financial barrier of purchasing and repairing band instruments, as most of the students had come from low-income homes. Also, Garrett observed that some teachers would not allow students to be taken out of class two or more times per week for band, so the music technology class was

used to increase the student participation in music and decrease the amount of time students were away from other academic classes. Students work, videos, photos and music compositions are also posted on this website. Parents have the opportunity to engage the work of their children and to also participate in the variety of games and quizzes, and to make contact with teachers through the website contact page. This website is also used to provide music technology links, resources and information to all music teachers to enhance music instruction.

One of the disadvantages of using this music website are the resources required, both hardware and software, and the maintenance to keep those resources working. Different learning strategies, for example, cooperative groups, are also need to control the music classroom, and teachers need to be confident in this learning approach. A real issue for schools are the Wi-Fi or Internet capabilities. Depending on whether classrooms have computers set up in the learning environment, or students' have access to individual laptops and iPads (provided by the school), connecting to websites, and search engines for example can be an interesting task! Jonassen, (2008) suggests that technologies can support meaningful learning when students learn with the technology, not from it. Technology cannot teach students, rather, learners teach the technologies (p. 10).

Scholarly article: [How Music Teachers Got Their Groove Back: Music Instruction Goes Digital](#)

This article was found on 'The Journal' website and was written by Jennifer Demski in 2012, who writes about how music educator Carol Broos from Sunset Ridge School in Northfield, Illinois, USA, is using technology to change the way music students are engaging music in the classroom. Broos writes, "Music educators need to reexamine themselves," she says. "Why are we not engaging kids? Why are we not reaching 80 to 90 percent of the student population? Students are listening to more music, creating more music, and playing more music, but we are not involved. It's happening at home, on their home computers" (The Journal, 2012).

The benefits: This article contains information and insights from an experienced practicing teacher. It is relevant and contemporary for today's teaching. There are other links to

websites and quality teachers with experience in teaching music. The article discusses the work of other dedicated teachers who are moving music into the 21st century. One the main strengths of this article is the use of various technologies to engage students in the music classroom. Freedman (2010) writes, "How do we get students who've never participated in band, orchestra, and chorus; who don't want to be in band, orchestra, and chorus; to learn about music by creating music. That's the opportunity that the electronic music class affords" (The Journal, 2012).

The issues: This article doesn't look at the limitations of uses or the issues associated with various technologies in a classroom environment. Schools often have limited ongoing resources and staff who are experienced or trained to 'deal' with technology problems. Although the authors in this article have identified where education (and music education) should be heading, it doesn't introduce any support or scaffolding for any new teachers to gravitate to. Some links to educators in helping others to use and understand ICT in the classroom would be helpful.

Video Clip: [Music Technology Curriculum at Sunset Ridge School](#)

The video clip resource was found on YouTube is a wonderful resource technology for every music teacher! Founded in February 2005, YouTube allows billions of people to discover, watch and share originally created videos. YouTube provides a forum for people to connect, inform, and inspire others across the globe and acts as a distribution platform for original content creators and advertisers large and small (YouTube, 2012). The video is the creation of Carol Broos (2012), a music educator in Illinois, USA. This video; Music Technology Curriculum at Sunset Ridge School, is a good example of how schools and teachers can transform a simple learning environment into a ICT learning centre, without major resources or renovations to the classroom.

Some of the advantages of this video are the brief mention of how Carol Broos is using technologies like Sound Shape for recording their stories and Garage Band for creating podcasts for their music compositions. Students who are involved in the school band use Sibelius to write, compose and perform for the whole school. Students also use Keynote to

present major learning projects, which they link to their classroom website and communicate through the blog site to other local schools in the community. The author of this video, Carol Broos, gives a good demonstration of how students are scaffolding their learning, developing their skills as they move to their next year level, engaging different technologies to complete their learning tasks. Students in year seven are also able to create their own projects, based on what they have learned from previous years. These students are intrinsically motivated to learn, engaging with the technologies they are confident with.

Some of the disadvantages of this video are the lack of content of the resources mentioned, and the implications of using, maintaining and developing these technologies. Although this website showed it was an authentic learning environment, it did not mention in any detail how effective performance assessment is achieved through assessing students skills. Assessment is the process of gathering and analyzing data to determine if intended learning outcomes have been achieved (Gagne, Bridges, & Wayne, 1998, cited in Jonassen et al. 2008).

Audio Podcast: [Our First Podcast](#)

This podcast is the work of Richard Colosi's first year class. In this podcast, the Internet, iPhones, YouTube, Microsoft Word, and a sound recording program called Garageband are used to create this presentation on the student's iPads. This podcast reinforces project-based learning and working cooperatively with others while supporting the content areas of Arts, Music and English. On this podcast, students share how they created podcasts about books using the software Garageband on the Macbook (Colosi, 2012).

The benefits of this podcast presentation are clear, with students learning in an exciting environment. They are motivated learners, working and collaborating together in a social constructivist environment in cooperative learning groups. Each individual in the group had a specific task to do, allowing for individual creativity. There are also examples of scaffold learning, as students review and assess each other's podcasts. It is obvious to see the engagement the students have using various technologies, creating podcasts, and uploading their class work onto their own classroom website. Students are able to review their own

podcasts to focus on better speech skills, and to review other student's work. Student's podcasting in this classroom become independent producers and distributors of audio and / or video content that can be offered worldwide through the Internet.

Jonassen, D., Howland, J., Marra, R., Crismond, D. (2008) advocate that, "Podcasts can also be an important component in collaborative work by enhancing the connections between students." (p. 162) The authors also suggest that, "While there is much to be gained by listening to others' podcasts, it is an even more valuable experience for students to create their own broadcasts...student created popdcasts give students a chance to broadcast to an authentic audience and can motivate them to become experts in preparation for podcast development" (p. 161).

The disadvantages of this podcast are that it doesn't discuss the many available programs available for podcasting like, iTunes, iPodderX, Juice, Playpod and Podspider. It also doesn't offer any tutorials or application challenges that can exist in a technology world. Attaching a link like "[How to Podcast](#)" would help anyone considering using podcasts in the classroom.

Jonassen, D., Howland, J., Marra, R., Crismond, D. (2008) write that while online communication technologies like iPods and iTunes present opportunities for connecting people, it can also result in isolating and disconnecting us. Technologies that join us with those at a distance may interfere with our immediate relationships if they are used thoughtlessly. The authors suggests that when we ignore or neglect family members while maintaining online relationships with people at a distance, we neglect the benefits of communication technologies (p. 165).

Conclusion:

If technologies are used to foster meaningful learning, then they will not be used as delivery vehicles. Rather, technologies should be used as engagers and facilitators of thinking. Jonassen, D., Howland, J., Marra, R., Crismond, D. (2008, p. 7). Using technologies in this manner creates an authentic real world learning environmentfor students in the music

classroom. Websites are being used in the music classroom to engage students and teachers for lessons, theory, recording applications, videos, music creation and best practice. Other technologies like [YouTube](#) open up a world of teaching and learning tools that are visually engaging and informative. Free audio software such as [Audacity](#) or [Easypodcast](#) can be used for recording and editing podcast material. For Macintosh users, [Apple's Garage Band](#) is an excellent technology for students to create and compose (p. 161).

Teachers need to be aware of both the advantages and the disadvantages of using ICT in their classrooms. There are implications for both teachers and students. In order for students to learn with technology, teachers must accept and learn a new model of learning and relinquish some of their authority in their management of learning. If teachers relinquish authority, learners must assume it (Jonassen, D., Howland, J., Marra, R., Crismond, D. 2008, p. 242-243).

Technology use allows many more students to be actively thinking about information, making choices, and executing skills than is typical in teacher-led lessons. Moreover, when technology is used as a tool to support students in performing authentic tasks, the students are in the position of defining their goals, making design decisions, and evaluating their progress. The role of the teacher will change as well. The teacher takes the role of facilitator, setting project goals and providing guidelines and resources, moving from student to student or group to group, providing suggestions and support for student activity (The Effects of Technology on Classrooms and Students, 2012).

Traditional educational practices fall short of providing students with all the necessary skills needed for today's technical world. Using ICTs in the classroom equip teachers with great resources, and 'connect' teachers and students to a global community and best practice learning. It is important to know that, "The more powerful technology becomes, the more indispensable good teachers are." (Fullan, 1998)

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Reference:

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