

Understanding Generation M

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Our Question to Explore:

Many of today's kids are immersed in a world of technology.

How can teachers use their students' interests and skills to develop 21st century learning skills?

Disclaimers –

- “Kids are kids”
 - Times change, people don't.
 - Still interested in pets, fun, friends.
- Teenagers – a breed apart
- Certain condition – “biologically doomed.”
 - Want to be different.
 - Want to connect.
 - I have two teenagers.
 - They're always right.
 - “They're not all hoodlums”.
 - Urban – rural.
 - Access to technology?
 - Ethnic background.
 - May be more about cell phones and video games than computers.

The World of Generation M:

Relating to Generation M:

“We need to understand how digital media has changed how young people play, learn, relate to others, get information, and create knowledge and culture”.

Mimi Ito

Technology immersion

Online and connected

Mobile technology

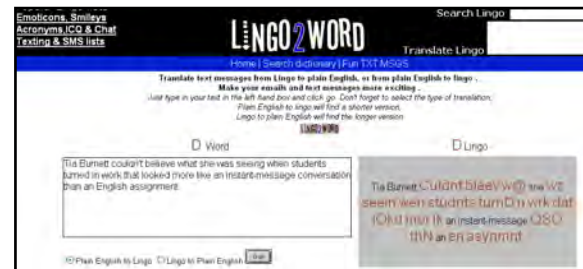
- Cell phones
- iPods
- Game consoles

Mobile computing

- iPhone,
- gPhone,
- Zune

Kids language

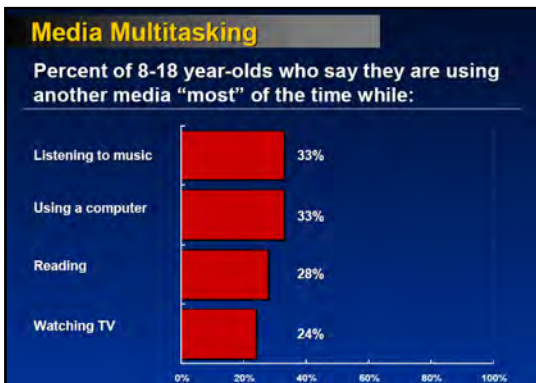
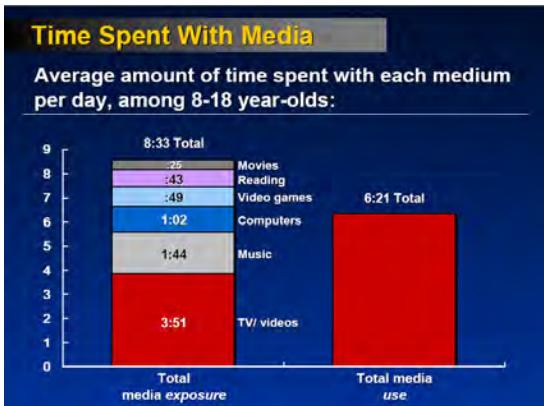
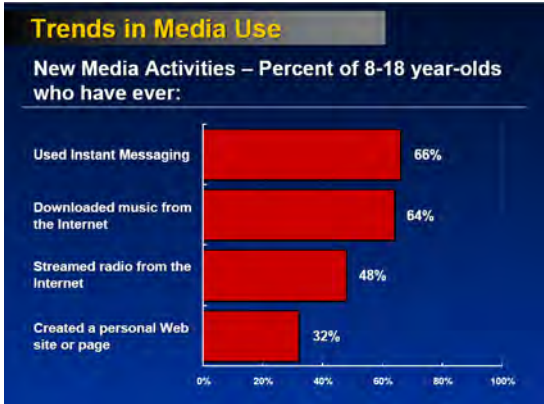
Communication



“Teens main interest in technology is more about being connected than retrieving information.”

Research Projects:

- Kaiser Family Foundation – *Generation M – Media in the Lives of 8-18 year-olds.*
- “*Rethinking Learning in the Digital Age*” -MacArthur Foundation
- Project Tomorrow
- America’s Digital Schools



Source: Kaiser Family Foundation Study, 2005

How can teachers teach Gen M?

- Employ digital content
- Develop visual literacy
- Use real world problems
- Encourage interactivity

More ways to teach Gen M:

- Encourage digital production
- Access to cameras
- Software at home – Picasa, Photo Story
- Peer teaching
- Audio production -Podcasting
- Digital video
- Digital storytelling

Advice from Teachers:

“Set up student Tech Time, when students create mini-lessons to demo their tech savvy.”

Judy Harris, Middle School Teacher, Ambler, Pennsylvania

“I never stop learning. My summer vacation consists of attending three conferences and several other training events.”

Melynda Ross, High School teacher, Moss Point, Mississippi

“The best way to relate is to listen. If we truly listen, we can then communicate. Real communication leads to understanding. Once we begin to understand each other, we can then relate to each other.”

Themistocles Sparangis, CTO, L.A. Unified School District

User Contributed Material

- YouTube
- MySpace
- FaceBook
- DIGG
- Yahoo You Witness News
- Second Life

Mark Zuckerberg

Second Life:*“A Child’s War”*

Global Kids – Virtual Video Project

Wikipedia*“ Wikipedia contributors have detected a large number of mistakes in the Encyclopedia Britannica, including the name at birth of Bill Clinton and how to calculate leap years.”***Curriki.org****TeacherTube****Using Web 2.0 to reach Gen M for communication and opinion sharing****How can students share and publish their own digital work?**

- Learn multimedia production.
- YouTube.
- Blogging.
- Acrobat

Some Lessons to be Learned:

- What is the role of video games?
- Don’t mistake activity for achievement
- Motivation is a key benefit.

Address challenges and issues

- Privacy
- Creativity
- Copyright
- Accuracy
- Digital ethics

Fitting into the system

- Learning outcomes
- N.C.L.B.
- 21st century skills
- N.E.T.S.
- Media literacy

The Emphasis should be on:

- Learning
- Teaching
- Productivity
- Creativity
- Vocational

What about N.C.L.B.?

- Develop rubrics.
- Tie to standards.
- Integrate other skills
- Need to be creative.
- Proposed revisions include tech skills and 21st century skills.

21st Century Skills

- Scientific and technological literacy.
- Visual and information literacy.
- Cultural literacy.
- Adaptability/managing complexity.
- Curiosity, creativity, and risk taking.
- Sound reasoning.
- Prioritizing, planning, and managing results.

What about N.E.T.S.?**Learning happens**

- Learning with digital media involves more than “educational technology.”
- It is in their homes, backpacks, pockets and cars.
- Learning happens with digital media even if it is not explicitly educational or academic.
- Configuring an iPod, exchanging IM, or posting to a bulletin board are all learning moments.
- Learning with and about technology.
- Bring popular culture into an educational context.

Need some formalized learning

Media Literacy

“If students aren’t taught the language of sound and images, shouldn’t they be considered as illiterate as if they left college without being able to read or write”

George Lucas

The Future of E.T.

America’s Digital Schools 2006 survey

We still need to...

- Include digital media projects in lesson plans.
- Adopt authentic assessment methods.
- Develop measurable outcomes.
- Align projects to local, state and national standards.
- Develop rubrics and evaluation instruments.
- Conduct and apply more research.

Remember the digital divide:

- 40% of Americans don’t have internet access at home.
- Loan out equipment.
- Tech nights and open labs.
- Invite parents in.

Need teacher and administrator training and current equipment:

- Perhaps single largest factor for success.
- Can be costly.
- Needs to be ongoing.
- Curriculum integration.
- Build capacity.
- Tech-savvy teachers.

Tech-savvy teachers:

- Have a laptop, camera & software.
- Classroom with a projector.
- Listen to & learn from students.
- Stay up late.
- Explore Web 2.0.
- Continue learning.
- Read Wired magazine
- Get books
- Attend workshops

For handouts, links, publications, workshop and presentations contact:

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