

How Can Instructional Design Be Used In Pk-12 Schools?

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Introduction

The field of instructional design (ID) has evolved throughout the years and has since, been elevated to be a key component of education (Melhuish & Falloon, 2010). During the past 10 years, innovating changes in technology have led to more devices being developed specially for educational purposes. As it relates to K- 12 schools, a recent report reveals that in the United States, forty- five of the fifty states have an online school initiative, with twenty- four of those states having full-time online schools (International Association for K- 12 Online Learning, 2009). When considering this growth, it is important to note that instructional designers play a significant role in this growth.



Technology Embedded in Curriculum Instruction

To assist in facilitating the Common Core State Standards, teachers are incorporating using technological tools in their curriculum and have extended learning outside the classroom into online environments. Integrating the course tool WebCt has been shown to improve reading engagement and critical

thinking skills. With the significant increase in Internet access and computers in and out of classrooms, there are numerous options for learning to take place. The most popular learning environments include: Bring Your Own Device (BYOD); Blended Learning, also known as hybrid courses; Flipped Classrooms and Online Learning. The focus must not only be on the introduction of new technologies, but how technology can be integrated into effective, evidence-driven, innovative practices, so that the learner is empowered and enriched by the learning experience (Melhuish & Falloon, 2010).

Instructional Support

Teachers and administrators must decide on the best ways to integrate technology into curriculum and instruction. One method is for schools and/ or districts to purchase the hardware, software, insurance and infrastructure throughout their classrooms for their students. However, because many districts are currently coping with significant budget shortfalls, purchases of devices, and maintenance of those devices, for all students in a school or district is sometimes not feasible. Media specialists are essential in that they can provide resources for teachers and learners. Media specialists can provide creative digital guides and instruction to support quality instruction. In order to assist teachers and learners, media specialists also have the skill and expertise to create engaging learning events. This approach allows learners to see the importance and connection between information- fluency, reading, thinking, and writing skills.

Professional Development

Cheong (2006) reported that many educators in the field have emphasized how instructional designers should develop themselves professionally so that they can confidently respond to design challenges. Life- long learning habits should be encouraged for instructional designers, as well as, teachers. Cheong (2006) identified 2 reasons why professional development for teachers involving new instructional design strategies does not occur regularly. One reason is the lack of priority given to ID- related professional development. The second reason is budget restrictions and funding. However, teacher positivity toward the new strategies aligned greatly with their teaching philosophies.

Making Accommodations in PK- 12 School

Having different instructional choices makes it easier for appropriate instruction to be presented in the inclusion setting. It also provides an opportunity to be successful in the learning environment (Mercer, Lane, Jordan, Alsopp, & Eisele, 1996). Some educators cling to a particular method of instruction but instructional design has been effective in developing an assortment of useful and effective instructional materials. When considering the academic needs of an inclusive classroom, there are above average learners, average learners, at risk of failure learners, and learners with special needs. Learners with special needs represent a large population of learners that have exceptionalities that include attention disorders, learning disorders, social disorders, physical disorders, and/ or mental disorders. Enhancing student's learning should be the primary focus for all instruction strategies and implementation. Accepting a broader range of instructional methods is beneficial to learners that are considered average, above average, at-risk of failure, and learners with special instructional needs.



References

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