

Revitalize Student Learning with iLife!

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Sometimes technology receives negative press in regard to its affect on our students and their academic performance. Are the latest offerings of the technological world really enhancing student learning or has technology become more of a distraction and a leading “competitor” against quality education?

In education, every good teacher immediately recognizes the value of stimulating creative thinking, inspiring students to learn, and motivating students to stay focused in class. We also hope students develop some critical thinking skills, problem solving strategies and data management techniques. These “essentials” of education don’t just happen on their own, but are the result of careful planning and experienced teaching.

What does this have to do with iLife? These are some of the benefits you and your students can experience by incorporating digital media projects into your teaching. Both your in-class presentation of curriculum to your students as well as how the students research, compile and present their class work can be greatly enhanced by the iLife suite

What is iLife?

The iLife suite consists of five integrated applications that are designed to meet the needs of the digital media world. It includes the following:

iPhoto allows you to import, organize and share your photos, complete with advanced editing tools; also features fully customizable slideshows

iMovie allows you to import and edit video footage to create your own movie; you can easily add your own digital pictures, narration/commentary, music and effects to create a professional final product

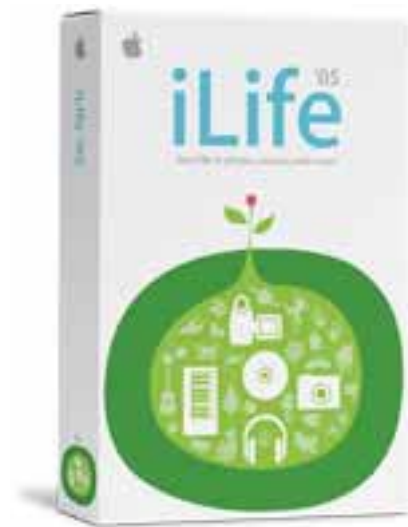
iDVD formats your digital media for quick and simple access on regular DVD players; you can readily create impressive DVDs to store and share digital projects, complete with menus and chapters

GarageBand you can record and create original music by combining a series of pre-recorded musical performances; the program also allows you to plug in a guitar, keyboard, or microphone and record your own music, and view full music notation as it records

iTunes your sound library; download, store and organize music, audio files (famous speeches, voice recordings, audio books, podcasts) and create CD’s

iLife in the Classroom

Need some ideas to get you started in the world of digital media? Here are a few suggestions:



1. To help students gather and retain more information on field trips, take a digital camera along and capture meaningful pictures that can be used to create a class presentation or to develop a “news report” for parents; then, publish it on the school website.
2. For a science class, students could prepare a scientific documentary style movie or provide visual records of experiments.
3. I’m sure a poetry project is not a new idea, but what about writing a poetry photo book and printing it in a professional manner. Or the poetry could be illustrated in a movie format, with a student reading the text and adding appropriate background music.
4. Most schools have newsletters. This communication tool could easily be expanded to a monthly production of a school news video. This video could be shown at assemblies [a great way to build school spirit] and also be posted on the school’s website so parents could view it.
5. What a great way to bring history alive in social studies. In a biographical or other historical report, students can include relevant photos, representative music and real voice recordings.
6. Other ideas include things like interviews, commercials and public service announcements.

What makes working with digital media a powerful learning tool is that it encourages students to express themselves with images, movies, music, and text. For less effort than it takes some students to research and write a report, they learn far more because they are having fun doing it and end up with a professional looking product they can be proud of. Furthermore, when students are learning in this manner, they often work harder, are more creative and put in more time and effort on their work. Students learn differently today, and they need us to provide them with new tools to help meet those needs.

More than ever before educators are challenged to be creative and innovative in their teaching. Teachers should consider using iLife because it provides students with the opportunity to “hone important skills such as researching, reading, writing, and speaking. They also build higher order thinking skills, including problem solving, collaboration, and the ability to gather and analyze data.” It allows teachers to capitalize on many students inherent interest in technology, so students are more engaged in learning.

Additional Information:

1. Apple offers FREE training sessions on the iLife products.
2. For more on iLife see <http://www.apple.com/ilife/>
3. There are many lesson plans and example projects for Math, Science, Socials, Language Arts and other areas at <http://www.apple.com/education/ilife/>
4. Basic system requirements:

- Macintosh computer with a PowerPC G3 (400MHz or faster), G4, or G5 processor
- 600MHz G3 or faster required for GarageBand
- G4 or G5 required for GarageBand software instruments and advanced photo editing in iPhoto 5
- 733MHz G4 or faster required for iDVD
- 1GHz G4 or faster required to use HD features of iMovie HD
- 256MB of physical RAM (512MB recommended)
- Mac OS X v10.3.4 or later
- Display with at least 1024 x 768 pixel resolution

Resources

- Product descriptions and quotation taken from Apple's website www.apple.com