

## Modern Technology and Old Favorites

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When we are told to utilize technology in our classroom we usually depend on computers. I would like to suggest that there are other technological options along with that of computers that should also be used in the classroom.

One technology option, the cassette tape recorder still offers students a great amount of fun and learning opportunities and is now very affordable. Not long ago my students were asked to record themselves reading in the language lab and to evaluate one another afterwards.

Once the students were past the initial barrier of listening to their own voice on tape, the students were asked to create a reading tape that would be paired with a storybook. The students had a great time creating this assignment. Some added sounds as to when to turn the page. Other students added a sound track to enhance the story while reading/listening.

A second technology tool is a regular camera. There are also throwaway cameras available that make the use of this tool convenient. The majority of people like to take pictures. I assigned my French students a project, which was presenting a fashion show using pictures. We went to the local mall and the students were to try different outfits and pose for the camera. If you are to do this project, make sure to talk to the store manager ahead of time, remind your students of the school dress code to avoid possible conflicts, and bring a parent along. Once the pictures are developed the students were to research typical phrases used in a fashion show in the target language (French) and apply them in their presentation. I must add, if you were to use PowerPoint to present your photos, I would strongly suggest asking the photo-finishing store to give you a copy of your photos on CD to save scanning time and ensure a better resolution.

For modern technology I enjoy the use of the Internet; however, I find students often waste time when asked to do research on the Internet. Often when a student goes from one site to another, it seems that they cannot help but take a short cut via Yahoo or Hotmail. Another distraction is using Messenger to communicate with several friends all at once in lieu of doing their assignment.

My suggestion is to reintroduce the library to the students using the scanner. Have your students scan photos and newspaper clippings from the vertical files and like media. The students will learn to use a variety of sources and still be connected to technology when transferring some of their documents using a scanner.

A last technology tool I would like to address is the video camera. Few are those who do not like the movie industry. I often use a video camera when asking my students to present an interview and/or a commercial in a target language. When recording, the students can see and hear their errors and correct themselves improving the outcome of their project.

In conclusion, the tape recorder, the camera, the scanner, and video camera are excellent options that may be coupled with a computer and enhanced software to provide students with broader media use. The computer will provide the teachers and students digital sound and video recording, text manipulation and

editing, the ability to safeguard photos and documents, and create great learning opportunities and teachable moments. Using these tools helps to stimulate student's inquisitive imagination and creates ways to explore and acquire knowledge.