

ENHANCING STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT WITH TECHNOLOGY

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Take your students beyond the ordinary. This is a subheading in a letter from Follett Software Company. There is no doubt that the computer provides an opportunity for students to go beyond the ordinary. Reports on various topics in science and social studies for example done on the computer are an incredible contrast to handwritten documents. The availability of graphics allowing the student to use pictures, graphs, various sizes of lettering, and spell check, provides a level of sophistication not as easily attainable without technology.

One of my grade four students completed a report in science a few weeks ago that was definitely beyond the ordinary. The report contained scanned pictures in colour. The entire report was a work of art, and every word was spelled correctly.

Correcting and refining rough drafts of paragraphs, stories, or reports, is an easy chore on the computer. My experience has been that students actually enjoy the process.

One of my student's favourite social study software programs is "Oregon Trails". It is amazing the information they have learned about the pioneers, the geography of the trail, as well as developing critical thinking and good judgement skills.

Our students, under the guidance and direction of one of our very capable teachers, are doing the entire layout for our yearbook on computer. It will be placed on a CD and sent off to the printers. (Way to go, Kristy and yearbook staff!)

Technology has created an equal opportunity for students and teachers in small schools and rural communities because of internet access and the myriad of software that provides amazing innovative curriculum solutions for both teachers and students. The resources of the world are only a keyboard touch away. Whether one is studying mathematics, science, social studies, French, or any other subject, an abundance of excellent resources are readily available.

Perhaps the following statement by Ellen White in the book *Education* page 13 takes on a new relevance for educators today. "Our ideas of education take too narrow and too low a range. There is need of a broader scope, a higher aim."

"Big dreams begin with information power" is another one-liner by Follet. Teachers are in the business of helping students achieve their dreams. Therefore as teachers we must do every thing possible to provide the best opportunities for student learning, which means we must be literate in the use of technology so we can pass on to our students the information and tools they will need to achieve their highest goals and dreams.

Resources:

- Ellen White, 1903, *Education*, Boise, Idaho, Pacific Press Publishing Association, p. 13

- The first one-liner was on the cover letter that accompanied the 2001-2002 *Follett Software catalogue*. The second one-liner is on the front cover of the catalogue.