
TEACHING, TECHNICALLY



Mahatma Gandhi International School located in the commercial capital of Gujarat is a successful and award winning Public Private Partnership between educationalists Dr. Pascal Chazot, Ms. Anju Musafir, and the Ahmedabad Municipal Authorities to set up a landmark in quality education; a torch bearer of inclusive and progressive education for the city and the state. Founded fifteen years ago, the school albeit its limited resources has always strived to provide the best technological tools to give wings to student expression. Opting for Apple Technology at a time when PCs were the only currency in technology in the state, the school has come a long way in establishing itself as an example of innovative pedagogy.

Class work done by students as they cover the mandated curriculum through hands on projects, has won national and international awards in recognition of the remarkable quality of work produced by the bright young minds of our students using technological tools. This article will chronicle two class projects and share the community involvement of

At MGIS students have a conducive environment for technology infused learning. Technology is a tool to further learning, not an end in itself.



students as ambassadors of the potential of using ICT within a project based, experiential pedagogical approach when used for a real life purpose in a real life context.

Project one is an interdisciplinary class project that covered Humanities, Technology, Art and Language curriculum requirements. The impact of this project was astronomical for students aged 13-14.

Education often ignores the bodies of the learners in the classroom. At MGIS we bring the students into the picture, put them in focus and give them a platform to be, to express and to learn with a medium of their choice. It is a win win situation for teachers and students at MGIS.

“We must equip the future citizens of the world with relevant information, 21st century skills and tools that empower them to become lifelong learners”

- DR. PASCAL CHAZOT

Their class output reached over 75 lakh adults across the state thanks to the Election Commission of Gujarat. The second project mentioned is a technologically driven project of communication that gave a voice to young adolescents using iPads and editing software Final Cut Pro. The school continually uses technology in the class room as a tool to further learning and hook 21st century learners with a medium that engages them, this article only has the space to underline two such projects.

MGIS students call for electoral participation and are heard by lakhs of voters

When Shri. Anita Karwal, the Chief Election Officer of Gujarat communicated the need for creating voter education in the state ahead of the legislative elections and invited MGIS to create content for promoting voter awareness in the state under the aegis of the Systematic Voters' Education and Electoral Participation (SVEEP) program, we saw it as a learning opportunity anchored in a real life context. MGIS was the first school to participate in the SVEEP Program with the Election Commission of Gujarat as a pilot project. Students of grade 11 enrolled in the Diploma Program and the first bastion of the vocational course in creative media production came together to create awareness videos using a simple word processor for script writing, video editing software Final Cut Pro and semi-professional shooting equipment, these were screened on local cable television and reshot for national television, Doordarshan. Thereafter, Grade 8 students were given the task of designing the Sankalp Patra to encourage electoral participation by the Election Commission of Gujarat as part of SVEEP. The process included slogan writing, authoring text in Gujarati, creating logos and design options for the *Sankalp Patra* in its second edition to promote voting and encourage a sense of civic responsibility. In other words, the curriculum in English and Gujarati, Humanities, Art and Technology was covered through this project in addition to life skills and study skills. Creating the *Sankalp Patras* on iPads and the simple word processing software Pages, two designs were finally approved by the authorities. The *Sankalp Patra* was distributed to over 75 lakh voters across Gujarat and was incorporated by Radio Mirchi to create voter awareness among traffic offenders.

By restructuring the curriculum, the students were able to learn the otherwise dry subject of civics through an inter-disciplinary project that delivered the technology, art and language mandated curriculum. The revised Bloom's taxonomy has placed 'creation' at the top of the learning process and this project is a testament to the incredible learning potential of creation made simple by using technology. Our students' class work contributed to voter awareness at the state level legislative elections in 2012, the national parliamentary elections in 2014 and the electoral roll revision. This engagement with the Election Office gave a purpose to the project and made it meaningful and relevant to the lives of the students. The student's work contributed to the community, their sense of identity as citizens got a serious kickstart and their voice was heard...it was a golden opportunity for future citizens of a democratic nation.

Publishing class work through their own online channel

Students wanted to create a world wide dissemination platform for their work. They launched their online newscast channel for the school community which they called MGIS TV Newscast and created content using appropriate authoring tools. They went through a rigorous learning cycle where they learnt important concepts in language, sciences, mathematics, technology and arts. Their work was put together with the editing software Final Cut Pro and iMovie on the iPad and Apple computers. After creating an identity for MGIS TV Newscast through a visual syntax of editing choices, posters, logos, font, colours and slogans, writing style, diction and shooting style, students were able to fructify their efforts by releasing three episodes of MGIS TV Newscasts. All three episodes were viewed and critiqued by MGIS management, media professionals and senior journalists from CNN IBN and was published by Pearson India on their official youtube channel (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7yqqatihxnU>). Their episode on Human Rights which chronicled what they learnt in class was viewed by the full school community and by people across the country. For the grade 8 first time filmmakers it was a litmus test from the real world. It put their class work on a platform where it continues to exist long after the culmination of the class, in a day and age when students work is relegated to cupboards and never looked at again. It gives meaning to their class work, gives a meaningful context to acquire specific subject specific content which otherwise feels disconnected to the life of the students and more importantly it gives students the space to speak and be heard. Using social media and the internet it is now possible for educators to give that opportunity our students using technology.



Giving students a powerful tool to create, edit, author, research, document, annotate, publish and more. Giving students the tools to feel empowered to synthesise their understanding and create outcomes that reflect it. Here you can see the class interviewing a news reporter for their next episode and recording it on the iPad. Still from they MGIS TV Newscast episode 3.

As educators we need to be careful about the reasons why we wish to bring technology in the class room. Technology in the hands of the adept teacher is a powerhouse of possibilities. It can enable students to create class outcomes that surpass our expectations from school going students and enable them become authors of their content and of their lives. We have seen a huge turn around in students where their energy was channelised through hands on creative projects, we have seen our students find their life purpose, open up doors to their careers, but more importantly it has given us educators at MGIS one more tool to help transform the learning experience for our learners.

About the Author:

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Lissa Chazot is an initiator at Mahatma Gandhi International School (Ahmedabad), a school that is heralding change in education. She is the Head for Communication & Multimedia Projects and the International Baccalaureate Community Service Coordinator. She has been recognised as an Apple Distinguished Educator and is a certified Apple Professional Development Consultant. Her work at MGIS has been conferred the Pearson Teaching Award, a national award for teaching excellence.