

Using TinyTap to Innovate All Student Learning through Engagement
Greg Macer
Wilkes University

Abstract

In this paper we will look at the application TinyTap as it pertains to innovating the classroom learning experience with a focus on memory and cognition for those students who are struggling, as well as the benefit this tool can have for all students. We will discuss the ease of setup by teachers to build activities, lessons and assessments and the ease at which students of all levels can access and complete these assignments. Demonstrating how tinytap can make learning take place in new and innovative ways will be addressed.

Resource Review

There are many great applications on the market for memory and cognition, and all of them have their positives and negatives. Many content rich applications have a large cost associated to them making them unaffordable to use with all students, while others might be cheaper or even free, but lack in much of the content. Many only work with one type of device like an iOS enabled apple device or an Android operating system, but they don't integrate well together. It is with these factors in mind, the cost per student, the ability to access an abundance of content and the integration with many different systems including iOS, Android and internet browsers, that helped formulate the decision of choosing TinyTap as an application that can innovate areas of memory and cognition. That I would recommend TinyTap . This application offers all of these things while also accommodating students with disabilities, becoming in itself an assistive technology.

Description

TinyTap is an application used by students and teachers to create a variety of engaging and interactive assessments and lessons. Used by many teachers already, TinyTap allows them to create activities students can complete on their iPads, other mobile devices and through an internet browser on a computer (TinyTap, 2016). With a paid subscription to TinyTap Insight, access to many great data tools are available, such as a gradebook to track students progress and a parent communication tool where caregivers will be able to access their student's progress. TinyTap also allows teachers to build courses, which students can take at their own pace, and allows teachers to set a minimum grade requirement to move on to the next lesson (Teachezwell Blog, 2016).

One of the best aspects of this tool is the community of resources behind it. While a teacher has endless potential in what they can create themselves, reluctant teachers might want to access activities already created. This is where the library of teacher and student created resources can come in handy. TinyTap has a huge collection of activities already created, which can be used by anyone (TinyTap, 2016). If a teacher doesn't have the time to create their own lesson, or is hesitant to spend a lot of time creating something before they are accustomed to the program, they can easily access the activities already developed.

On top of that, students can also create projects. From interactive stories to students creating their own innovative games, students can create and share projects with other students and the teacher. This connectivity is a great way to have students involved in their own learning and help others in learning. TinyTap's creation features are also a wonderful way to have students with special needs share their learning. For example, having nonverbal students create sound boards so they can have a voice, or having students with difficulties writing make stories come alive through pictures and sound (Blessington, 2014).

Interpretation of Data

There are many concerns raised by teachers when researching what type of application we should use to aid in memory and cognition. Most of these concerns are based on ease of use for both students and teachers, and how well they will be supported in this implementation. Teachers want a tool that is easy to use and quick to pick up in order to implement those programs in their classrooms. They don't want something that has a steep learning curve and would require a lot of hands-on experience and professional development to get to a point where it is comfortable to use in their classrooms. They also desire a tool that has an "all-in-one" functionality and wouldn't require the use of too many outside resources in order to bring integration into the tools they already use. They want to have access to gradebooks, class lists to quickly assign work, and calendars so that they can see due dates and schedule assignments for future completion. Lastly, they justifiably want to know there will be support for this tool's initiative so they are not just thrown into a new tool and expected to become proficient in its use, and see students immediately benefiting from the tool's integration.

In terms of the technologies' capabilities to integrate into the school's network system the technology department wants to know that this application won't put an unburdened strain on the existing system, and more importantly, that it won't require updating the system already in place. This of course could raise the cost of running the program exponentially.

Recommendations

TinyTap is an application that is based around that issue of ease of use for students. They want students to be able to open up the app and go to a lesson quickly and easily, which once students are assigned to a teachers, they will be able to do through the student's dashboard. Teachers can easily assign these lessons for students and the students will just as easily be able to find that assignment once the app is launched. Because this app is based around teachers creating their own content, the ease at which students can complete the assignment can be based around how the teacher introduces the said task. With the ability to have text based instructions as well as audio instructions, this helps the students to in having multiple ways to gain the information they need (Andrews, 2013).

While teachers can make their own projects in the program, so can the students. Students can create projects that are based around the functionality of point and click. They would be able to make interactive stories, engaging games and innovative assessments. This creates new opportunities to have students showcase their own learning.

When students complete the assignment, the students' answers will be recorded in the teacher's gradebook. Teachers can gain a deep insight of their understanding by getting detailed reports about the student's progress, seeing not only what the students scored put a review of the answers they provided. Through the gradebook teachers will be able to evaluate and make informed decisions about what the students know and better understand what needs to be done to either intervene with the content that they don't understand or challenge them with content that reaches the next level (Burns, 2015).

TinyTap also provides online support for teachers that might need help with creating lessons, assigning activities, creating interactives that go beyond just assessments and all of the features that are found within the teacher's dashboard. The technology staff and I will certainly be available to ensure teachers feel comfortable with its use, and will continue to have professional developments past the initial one. These followups will be collaborative efforts,

with teachers that are using the app in creative ways sharing how they are doing so, and helping to mentor those that might be struggling to accept the app's potential for innovating lessons, assignments and homework. Success in a whole school adoption doesn't come from forcing those that are hesitant to try the new product, for they will have the negative attitude towards the benefits of the app and thus only see what doesn't work. Instead, form a steady buy-in of the product. Allow the hesitant few to see the success of those teachers that embraced the app and give them the opportunity to see the benefit for themselves (Roland, 2015). We would also like to give those teachers who are struggling to accept its use an opportunity to observe teachers in the classroom setting using the app in the classroom, as well as having my support and the technology coaches to go into their classrooms and aid them in designing a lesson and implementing that lesson with their students. Many times these teachers that abstain from its use are just leary about using new tools uncomfortable and foreign to them. Therefore, it is important they see there is support to help and guide them to successfully implement the tool.

The technology infrastructure to ensure this app is successful is already in place at the school. Knowing students already have devices, and these devices are already being used, we know the school's infrastructure is capable of supporting the magnitude of these devices operating at the same time. TinyTap is not a bandwidth heavy application and shouldn't put any additional strain on our system, which should make it even easier to use.

In conclusion, TinyTap has the potential to innovate student learning and create new ways we can use apps in adaptive learning for those students that have exceptionalities which need to be addressed. TinyTap will allow teachers to create new types of assignments that are both innovative, and continue to capture and use the teacher's voice. They don't necessarily need to use already created assignments and projects, but instead can create their own, and customize student's learning. Finally, TinyTap pushes students to create their own learning by allowing them the ability to create games, interactive stories and lessons through the designing aspect of the tool. In addition, they can share with other students and teachers these innovative projects they created.

TinyTap truly shows how we make large strides into innovation for their learning experience in our schools and will help to level the playing field for all students to learn.

Resources:

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