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Effective Use of Modern and Personal Media in the Classroom

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Effective Use of Modern and Personal Media in the Classroom

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Guiding Question
What are effective ways in which teachers can implement modern technologies, including social media and other forms of electronic communication as a way to engage students in meaningful classroom learning? And how can teachers avoid the limitations of those very same mediums?

Why it Works
Social media in the classroom:
- Facilitates Communication
- Students have ease of access to relevant material
- Promotes collaboration among students
- Active style learning
- Learning is enjoyable

- Twitter and other modern media related learning activities have “Pushed students to display a deeper understanding of the content being addressed than might have been the case if students had simply read a textbook section or listened to a lecture of such historical figures.” - Daniel Krutka

Conclusion (And avoiding the limitations)
Utilizing modern technology is a great way to increase student engagement. By pairing learning targets with technologies that students enjoy using, teachers can redefine the limits of using personal communication media as a learning tool.

However, limitations may include the inability to handle spontaneous communication, a lack of pre-learning with particular mediums, and the inaccessibility to a set of classroom computers. This unit relies upon access to computer devices, and continued development of skills which allow students to utilize the media effectively. Without at least some time dedicated to learning the media as an academic tool, limitation possibilities increase.

Moreover, embedding state standards within a collaborative, technology driven learning environment gives the students many chances to learn and display content knowledge. With an effective plan, modern and personal media can serve as an effective vehicle to meet learning targets and promote student engagement.

Unit Overview & Standards Addressed
In this unit, students will evaluate historical sources from a United States history context and use that research information to engage in informed and respectful debate with classmates. Students will choose two historical figures of focus from the U.S. History unit timeline.

Using twitter as a modern media vehicle, students will create profiles for their historical figures to engage in conversation; including: drawing historically relevant conclusions, projecting thoughtful viewpoints and deliberating respectfully.

Standards are derived from the Oregon State Board of Education High School Social Sciences Standards. The unit will cover: HS.10, HS.11, HS.13, HS.57, HS.58, HS.63.

Those standards range from evaluating historical sources and points of view, to defining and researching events and their significance to society. As well as engaging in civil and respectful debate of topics.

References