

DreamIT Part III

The DreamIT project is well underway in Room 108. Students are taking hold of technology like never before. They are becoming more familiar with navigating iPads and video cameras and are even playing around with features that have not yet been modeled. I am very impressed with the responsibility my little seven year olds have shown when taking care of the devices. They are very careful with handling them, they monitor and communicate battery life, and they know routine and procedures of using them.

One project that students were engaged in while using the iPads and digital cameras was in our weather unit. Students created digital weather maps on the iPads. They then created meteorologist reports that included vocabulary and content learned within the unit. Students then presented their project in a newscast format where their maps were projected like a green screen as they gave their weather reports. During the presentations, students videotaped their peers' reports and we collectively created a meteorology newscast.

Another project with genuine technology integration was during our solar system unit. Students used the iPads and digital cameras to interview students within our school about what they knew about particular topics within the solar system. For example, students investigated what kids in our school knew about why the moon changes shape. My students went around and video-interviewed their peers to collect data around their study question. Students then used this

information to complete a project around informing students through a creative brochure.

Looking ahead, there are numerous units where authentic learning will occur around technology. Daily, students are interacting with these devices to help support their learning goals in math and reading. They have been incorporated in our literacy and math centers. Students even suggest uses during lessons and request future projects.

Another great element to my DreamIT project has been the hype that has been created throughout my school. My colleagues are genuinely interested in what I am learning through the STEM program, and frequent conversations and collaborative planning time have taken place. I see other teachers in the building trying new technologies and incorporating more digital curriculum into their classroom. Last month, I received a technology grant that allowed us to purchase digital curriculum for all students in our school. We researched, demoed, and purchased the programs of Aha Science!, Science4us, and Raz-Kids to help supplement our existing instruction. The implementation of these programs are in the works, but from the early stages, I can already tell that this is going to be a game-changer for some of my students. They are highly engaged and very curious to learning more through the interactive models. I look forward to seeing how this DreamIT project will continue to transform.