



Using Podcasts as Learning Tools

5 Ways to Integrate the Technology into Classrooms

Kids everywhere in the United States use MP3 players. Some schools have called these music players distractions, while others have embraced them as possible learning tools that help increase competency at all grade levels and in all subject areas. Since the students are already using this technology, why not take advantage of the existing infrastructure and use it for learning? Here are five ways to integrate podcasts into any curriculum.

1. **Class lectures** – Teachers can record their own lectures and make them available to students as podcasts. Students can later use the podcast as a review tool by downloading it and either listening to it on their computers, or taking it on the go on their MP3 players.
2. **Additional notes** – Teachers can make available extra material for students to listen to in order to have additional information about a topic being discussed in class. This can be done by either creating a new podcast episode containing the extra material, or by linking to existing podcasts containing that material.
3. **Alternate perspectives** – In order to give students the opportunity to gain perspective on an topic, it's helpful to present alternate points of view. Teachers can link to podcasts that have differing perspectives than their own, and ask the students to analyze both perspectives and to decide which they believe agrees with their beliefs.
4. **Study guides** – Students can review the material being covered on a test by re-listening to previous class lectures. Teachers can also edit together a compilation of important notes as a new podcast episode for students to focus their studies. Students find themselves better prepared for tests as all they need to do is sit back and press play to review for the class.
5. **Helping to bridge the gap with disabled students** – Disabled students often feel disconnected from other students in their class. Particularly, students requiring a note taker can find it difficult to keep up with the material being covered. By making podcasts available to them, they can download them at home and review the exact material that other students have access to, eliminating the need for a note taker, and eliminating the stress and disconnection disabled students sometimes feel in class.