

The following extract is taken from articles written by students from a number of schools taking part in student led research projects, in response to a SSAT and NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts) initiative. Students were invited to raise their own questions to explore, in addressing the challenges facing C21st education and a global economy. We invite you to read about their projects and explore and respond to the issues and questions they raise.

The extract is taken from a publication that will be launched on Tuesday 23 March 2010 called, *Meeting the challenge of C21st education and a global economy: Student research teams present their initial findings*

To find out more go to:

<https://www.ssatrust.org.uk/innovation/studentvoicenetworks/Pages/home.aspx>

## **Technology on trial: a student research project @ Ringwood School**

Abigail Grace, with support from: George Whittingham, Evie Davies, Max Beresford, Alexandra Cheater, Gareth Cork, James Carr, Laura Dickson, Lewis Broadway, Liam Aldridge, Sam Poulter and Stavanna Read, at Ringwood School, England.

Last Spring a group of students at Ringwood School made a successful bid to investigate which technologies are necessary to meeting the challenges of learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The students volunteered or were asked to join the group because of their interest in technology or development of future learning styles. We wanted to explore questions such as:

- Which skills do students perceive as being essential to successful learning for a globalised economy?
- Do students feel they have to “power down” when they enter a classroom?
- How can we use technology to enhance learning whilst avoiding “technology for technology’s sake”?

The group trialled different technologies and discussed which we thought could be appropriate to different areas of the curriculum...By making video proformas for each device ,we were able to evaluate how useful they would be to learning in an medium more exciting than a simple word document . The technologies ranged from voice recognition software to digital pens. We found that not every item was advantageous to every student. To avoid “using technology for the sake of technology” it was important to for us to acknowledge that each student learns in a different way before we could hope to accommodate them. Whilst specialised technologies can be of use

to some students, as a group we decided to focus on the handheld technologies that many students are already using...

Students arranged a visit to Wildern School in Southampton where the students were more than happy to answer our questions on their use of TV, Twitter, iPods and the Nintendo DS. Similarly they were interested in our ideas about using mobile phones; our school mobile phone policy was student driven, agreed by governors and has proved very successful ....

In order to begin harnessing the use of new technologies we worked with an enthusiastic French teacher, to co-construct effective learning strategies. It was important to us that we met often in order to maintain momentum; we had lunchtime or tutor time meetings most weeks and used our school e-mail as a useful communication and delegating tool. A survey of his French class showed that all of the students had a mobile phone with over 95% of them having Bluetooth and camera accessories. The use of mobiles in a language lesson can vary from creating sound files, videos and using Bluetooth to do peer assessment. ..

We feel our project has enabled us to explore the range of products available to enhance learning.

If you wish to see our film or one which inspired us please view them at:

'Manifesto for Change' <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XWSk-8jcmM>

'Digital Natives' <http://education.ning.com/video/1027485:Video:25574>

### **Questions for you ...**

- How do you think handheld technologies might be used to improve learning?
- Should students be allowed to keep their mobile phones switched on and ready to use for learning?
- What are the views of students and teachers in your school?