TechQuest Project
By Chris Norred

Project Description

Getting students to be more interactive in the classroom is a growing concern. The educational need for this project will address the need to integrate technology into the classroom. They will be able to use their SMART Boards (a very big Cranbrook thing) interactively with the students. Teachers will be able to use PowerPoint for more than just presentations. This will help teachers reach out to those who learn in a hands on way more than just lecturing.

This project also brings out the importance of teachers continuing to learn and learn from their fellow teachers. It addresses the issue of teachers teaching teachers and the call for constant growth of knowledge. I believe this will also address the opportunity for professional development and appropriate use of faculty meetings.

Technology is the basis of this whole project and it will be used to introduce it. I will give examples of StAIRs including my own and a Jeopardy version. The computer lab will give the teachers a chance to learn for themselves how to create their own. Allowing the teachers to use my example will give them a great idea of what the students will be going through. Teachers will be able to learn from each other without having to pay for a workshop or hire an outside source to teach instructors.

The use of technology is also shown in the classroom when the teachers use it with the students. This technology allows students to become more active in the classroom, with learning at their own pace as well as instant feedback. Students need to become active in the class and StAIRs will allow them to use technology, have instant access to online material(via links) as well as being able to use the class SMART Board.
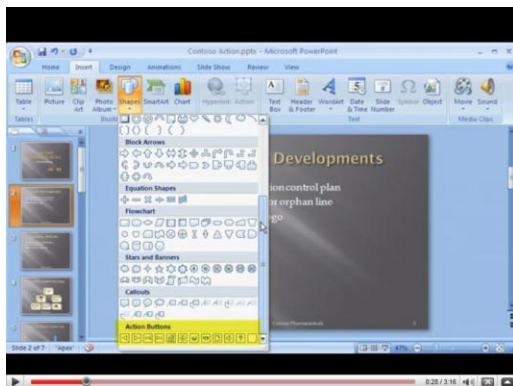
Research/Resources

The most research that I found for professional development was found at [Teachers Teaching Teachers](). This site talks about how important and successful professional development is when teachers teach teachers. When fellow teachers teach each other about new techniques it addresses your buildings direct needs because it's your staff that has brought the topic up. Teachers tend to be more interested in a topic when they know that it has already worked or sparked interest in a fellow teacher. Many teachers do not get interested when they know it is a workshop or meeting that the district or principal has forced them to attend. Many of the other sources all express the importance of teachers helping each other. The National Staff Development Council([NSDC]()) is a very good source of how to run professional development, but you must join to get the full article.

My Plan

During the course of this class I plan on developing a couple examples of StAIRs, a survey of interested people in developing StAIRs and any questions they may have. I have collected some sites that show how to teach PowerPoint with using action buttons.

After the class, I plan on bringing this idea to the head of my school. I am going to ask him to allow me to have some time during our beginning of the year faculty meetings. I will make a presentation to my fellow teachers about what a StAIR is and how it is used in the classroom. This will take place in a classroom so I may use a SMART Board for the demonstration. This meeting I will be allowed to have 15-20 minutes. My first question will be how many teachers have used the Jeopardy template in their class. This question will give a chance to explain how that version is a StAIR and why it is useful. I will email any interested teachers an example of a Jeopardy StAIR that they can play around with. The second part of the first meeting I will talk about how else, besides Jeopardy, this can be used in the classroom. At this time I will show them my StAIR on the Transcontinental Railroad, this should give them an idea of how the students can move at their own pace and the idea of immediate feedback. To finish up the first meeting I will hand out a survey to see how many if any teachers are interested in a 2nd session that will be more hands on, one on one time with me.

The 2nd session will consist of the YouTube video of how to create action buttons that they may watch on their laptops. The rest of the time will be devoted to answering any questions they may have and free time to work on their StAIR in which I will be available to work with them one on one.

Four Common Places

Teacher: This project will be a teacher teaching fellow teachers how to use StAIRs in the classroom. It will give a teacher a chance to help other teachers implementing technology in the classroom as well as getting the students involved interactively.

Learner: This project will have fellow teachers in the learner role. They will be able to learn how to get the students more interactive in their classroom by creating a StAIR project. Learning from a fellow teacher is a great way for teachers to have professional development as well as learning from their co-workers. The main goal will be for teachers to improve their use of technology in the classroom and getting student interaction.

Subject Matter: There is no specific subject matter for this project except the use of PowerPoint. Teachers will be expected to implement it into their own specific area.

Setting: The setting for this project will be at a morning faculty meeting with an introduction to what a StAIR is and how to use it. Interested teachers will have a second session in the computer lab or classroom with a SMART Board.

Appropriate for audience

The students of today are very well versed in the field of technology and need to be active in today's classroom. Teachers need to be able to get the students active in their classroom in order for them to learn. The StAIR project is a great way for students to get involved in the class. Teachers will be able to have a more interactive classroom instead of the traditional lecture and listen class. I have heard many complaints from teachers at my school that our faculty meetings are not very productive and are more about what is coming up on the calendar and not useful time to learn what others are doing. This faculty meeting will allow time for teachers to learn from each other and find out what others are doing in the classroom. The best faculty meetings at our building are the ones that have time set aside for us teachers to get together and share what is working and not working in our classes. Some teachers will like this project and some will not but it at least gives them a chance to see other possibilities to try in their classes. The thing about teachers is that they do not want to be force fed anything. You must as an instructor explain that making a StAIR is time consuming and students may finish it in a short period of time and it should be used as they feel fit. They may use it as a small review or intro to a unit or as a lesson itself, it should be up the teacher how it should be used.

Implementation

Jeopardy example: **http://www.msu.edu/~norredch/Progressive%20Era%20Jeopardy.ppt**

Railroad StAIR: http://www.msu.edu/~norredch/StAIR Project Development.pps

StAIR follow up workshop sign-up sheet: http://msu.edu/~norredch/StAIR follow up workshop signup sheet.doc

YouTube demo of how to create action buttons: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b9JH30zt_CA

Some of the surprises I ran into where that I could not find much when I searched for "StAIR", I had to look up "PowerPoint action button" to find any demos. I would revise my information by being more specific, especially more detail into what each of my meetings would consist of and how much time is devoted to what. I did find plenty of demos on YouTube or other sites that should step for step how to create a PowerPoint in kiosk mode with action buttons. I was also delighted with the positive articles about the benefits of teachers teaching teachers. This made me think that this project is definitely worth trying this coming school year.

Evaluation

I believe that there a few ways of evaluating this project. The first is the basic question how many people created their own StAIR? Did the teachers tweak the Jeopardy version for their own use or did they blow off my whole presentation? I will also look at how many people were interested in the 2nd workshop to learn more about StAIRs or help them develop their own.

I also believe there is a 2nd part that can be evaluated and that is are there more teachers asking for time during meetings to share what they use in the "teachers teaching teachers" method. If more and more teachers are spending time teaching each other more about what works for them than I believe my project was a success. This project was more than just using PowerPoint, even though the question of how to integrate technology in the classroom with student interaction is very important. The project was also about professional development how teachers can help each other out.