

This is a tough thought, how the technology I choose portrays me as a teacher?



Well, my favorite technology as an educator is actually the video camera, rather digital video camera. Some of the reasons for the digital video camera being my favorite technology teaching tool, especially [FLIP video cameras](#), are ease of use, reduction of ancillary components, high quality of video production, and simplicity of publishing as a web-video or just transferring the file from user to user.

My preference, however, is critical, in my mind, because students today live in a relatively voyeuristic society where they love to show and tell everyone (seemingly) what they are doing, where they are going, and how they are getting there. Taking this into the realm of education is a chore due in large part to security and privacy issues; however, it provides students with a way to be creative while displaying their knowledge of concepts, all while using technology that most use in their life outside of the classroom.

Over the past year, I have had students create videos demonstrating their knowledge of Newton's laws of motion. However, the assignments also required students to use their creative, plastic minds in producing these videos. Two examples of assignments given to students in my eighth grade Physical Science classes are:

1. Creating a video demonstrating Newton's second law while syncing the video to [Beethoven's 5th Symphony](#), and
2. Creating a dramatic comedy, a dramedy, having an underlying theme of [Newton's laws](#).

Additionally, FLIP video cameras have been integrated in my Astronomy curriculum. Each quarter, my high school Astronomy students are required to submit an Astronomy misconception, i.e. there is more than one star in our solar system. Next, they are required to submit a set of questions that they will use to educate the general-public through interviews conducted at our local observatory, [Griffith Park Observatory](#).

These projects have been an overwhelming success in my 8th grade classroom. Most students approach these assignments with vigor and a thirst to understand the concepts so they incorporate these ideas into their creative thoughts. It helps that many of my students are actors/actresses/musicians or come from families in the entertainment industry, so they are predisposed to enjoying assignments designed in this manner.



However, this susceptibility declines with my Astronomy class because they realize the assignment is not only an assignment requiring them to learn the concepts, but also understand the concept enough to express it confidently in the case their interviewees do not know the correct response to their questioning. That said, many of the students are hesitant at first, but end up realizing the assignment is to go hang out at a local landmark and learn on their own while interacting with a part of the public they have little contact with normally. Many students have said the experience was actually fun once they got into the assignment; however, the preparation was not as fun as the execution of the assignment.

Ultimately, these assignments have been a great addition to my teaching as well, because they provide me with insight as to how my students interact as well as how they perceive the concepts discussed in class. These revelations are great, now I can start manipulating the groups to get more classroom interaction as well as addressing misconceptions that may arise during the production process. Furthermore, it is a great way to get excitement into a course that most students do not initially enjoy. **Videos available upon request due to privacy concerns.**