TEACHING TOLERANCE

A PROJECT OF THE SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER
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SMART TECH USE FOR EQUITY

Sample Templates

Note: These sample templates include fictional answers inspired by the work of teachers in the Smart Tech Use for Equity *project. Mica Pollock captures their work in the feature story "Smart Tech Use for Equity," written for* Teaching Tolerance *magazine (Issue 52).*

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 1

What's your equity vision for students in your classroom?
We want to support our English learners. Many are shy and have trouble communicating their scientific thinking in English, and the Next Generation Science Standards require them to talk about science.

What tech use did you experiment with to see if it could help achieve that vision?
We used the Explain Everything Interactive Whiteboard app to see if it might help students speak about their understanding of science before writing lab reports.

We used iMovie to help students verbalize their understanding before taking tests.

What did you do with your students to test that use of tech, and how did it go?
We invited students to talk through their understanding via a video voiceover (over images) in English and then transcribe their words into written English.

We had students explain their thinking—in English and Spanish—on video voiceover during test preparation.

We were blown away by how well students actually understood concepts they hadn't been able to describe in classroom dialogue or traditional lab notebooks.

What's your conclusion about how "smart" that tech use was for achieving your equity vision?
In both cases, this technology helped our students start to share their voices.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 2

What's your equity vision for students in your classroom?
I want the students in my middle school English class to have deeper dialogues about literature.

What tech use did you experiment with to see if it could help achieve that vision?
I tried two different tech tools: TodaysMeet and Padlet.

What did you do with your students to test that use of tech, and how did it go?
TodaysMeet let my students type their contributions into a small-group conversation about the novel instead of talking face-to-face, and Padlet let the whole class brainstorm simultaneously by typing responses that were projected on a screen (rather than raising hands). After our group brainstorming session, I had students engage in small-group conversations where they could see and reference the full session on individual iPads.

TodaysMeet didn't offer much to the dialogue, and I think it kind of got in the way. Students had better small-group conversations in person. But the Padlet allowed for a rapid online brainstorm where every voice in the class was heard, captured and left visible. This deepened the in-person follow-up dialogue where students could tap all of their peers' ideas at once.

What's your conclusion about how "smart" that tech use was for achieving your equity vision?
It's really important that there's equity of voice in my classroom for our face-to-face dialogue to become deeper. So I'll continue using the Padlet to

help all students feel equally prepared and ready to enter their voice into the dialogue. I'm rethinking my use of TodaysMeet because it seemed to have the opposite effect.

SAMPLE TEMPLATE 3

What's your equity vision for students in your classroom?
I want to support my third-graders in their ability to explain a math concept verbally or in writing—a key expectation of the Common Core State Standards.

What tech use did you experiment with to see if it could help achieve that vision?
The video feature on my iPad.

What did you do with your students to test that use of tech, and how did it go?
I videotaped students explaining math problems to each other using the basic video feature on my iPad and showed the videos to students to clarify the elements of a rigorous explanation of math. Students then taped themselves explaining math problems to each other.

I was thrilled to see all of my students, including students who had struggled to explain math previously, explaining fractions and proportions in detail and correctly.

What's your conclusion about how "smart" that tech use was for achieving your equity vision?
Using video engaged my students in a new way! They seemed more willing to try and take risks. Maybe it was because they got to see their peers do it, or maybe it was because they got a chance at "do-overs." We will definitely keep doing this!