

2008 UF COE Writing Contest Entry

(This is one of 27 entries submitted in the College's recent writing contest on the topic of "What's Good in Education?". Visit the [writing contest home page](#) for links to other entries, including the winning one.)

WHAT'S GOOD IN EDUCATION?

Computers enhance teaching, learning

By Melissa Livingston

*Graduate student, UF Lastinger Center for Learning;
First grade teacher, Blanton Elementary, St. Petersburg*

Technology has become a huge advantage in the classroom. I have used technology in many different ways in my classroom. I am a first grade teacher in a high-poverty school. About half of my students have computers at home, and the other half don't even have access to a computer. Our students come to school knowing how to use the computer, but not necessarily the right way. If computers are used the right way, they can help a student become successful in the classroom.

My first grade students have learned how to use a variety of technology programs successfully this year. They have created graphic organizers to show their reading comprehension. They have also made Power Point presentations, and learned how to search a website to learn new information. We also have access to educational websites to enhance our math and reading programs. My students are accessing these programs on a daily basis.

I have also used technology as a way of communicating with my parents. On our class website I have included important information for parents to access. I have links to educational websites as well as school related sites. This year I have even used our website to show off students work. My parents love being able to see their child's work. As a safety factor I do not include my student's pictures or names. I think the use of a class website can enhance our student's education as well as our parent's education. I know my parents love being able to see their child's work published.

As a teacher I have taken classes to find effective ways to enhance my teaching with the use of technology. The classes show teachers how to include computers into everyday lessons. We have learned how to use a variety of programs that are available to anyone with a computer. I am now able to create movies in my class on a variety of

topics. Next year, I would like to create a movie with my class to show parents at open house.

As a teacher I have realized how important technology is to our student's future. In order for our students to become successful adults, we need to show them how to use technology as an educational tool, not as a form of entertainment. I think additional technology training should be offered to all educators.

* * *

[Back to Writing Contest home page](#)