Engaging and Empowering a Changing Learner: Meaningful Work in the 21st Century

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Photo Story
Who Am I?

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Operator of Teacher Totter (blog and YouTube)

Hiker, Runner, Musician, Reader
Objectives

1. Reflect on our own biases around technology
2. Identify motivating factors for digital natives
3. Collaboratively build a publication to share out meaningful learning experiences for our students
Meaningful Work: Project Creation

In this form, submit your ideas (the sky's the limit) for how to create meaningful projects to harness the intrinsic motivation of our learners.

Project Title

Short answer text
AutoCrat

Existing Jobs

Meaningful Work Publication

AKA REAL MAGIC
Meaningful Work
Harnessing the Intrinsic Motivation of Digital Natives

Projects that Matter
Part I: Current Reality
Venting Time
In Your Mind:

- Fetch my emails!
- Navigate to John’s house.
- Show me the news!
- Send this photo to Lynn!

Y-Y-Yes Master.

In Reality:

- Charge me!
- Gimme some WiFi! Now!
- New email! Read!
- Answer this call!
- A restaurant! Check in!

Y-Y-Yes Master.
Digital Native vs. Digital Immigrant
Important Note

Digital natives know how to use technology fluently, but they don’t necessarily know how to use it powerfully.
Think-pair-share: How has technology changed your life?
Share:
How has technology changed your life?
It’s not bad; it’s different.
Cursive
Barrier vs. Opportunity
It’s not bad; it’s different.
Why a Shift in Mindset Matters
Part II: Major Shifts
Shift #1

More so now than ever, the motivation to do a task is dependent on the number of people it will impact.
Which would you rather do?

Take 5 minutes to do something that 500 people will see.

Take 60 minutes to do something that one person will see.
The Drive for Likes

The drive for likes is simply a misguided application of our need to impact others.
Students want to impact others, but they need training and experience in how to make that meaningful.
Shift #2

The value of information is based on the immediacy of its need.
Share Out:
What’s the last thing you taught yourself to do?
Just In Case vs. Just In Time
Until there is an immediate reason for learning, the information is irrelevant.
Cognitive Offloading
When we create an immediate and meaningful need, information matters.
Shift #3

The value placed on a task is connected to the amount of control (autonomy/choice) we have over it.
Watching TV Shows
Workplace Reality

The days of “show up, follow along, get paid” are rapidly going away.
If we aren’t offering our students choices, we aren’t preparing them for life.
Choice and autonomy = empowerment and preparedness for life.
Engagement is about getting students excited for what we want them to do.

Empowerment is about helping students be excited about what they want to do.
Part III: Classroom Application
Element 1: Audience

Who will their work impact? Who else does their investment of time matter to?
Element 2: Purpose

How are they building something that matters outside the classroom? What challenge are they trying to address?
Element 3: Autonomy

What control will students have over their learning/product?
Connect Your Thinking
Our Product

gg.gg/meaningfulwork
Thank You!

Let’s stay connected - @Mr_Rablin on Twitter.

Email me with anything you want or need: tylerrablin@gmail.com

To dig deeper into some of these topics, check out my blog: Teacher Totter

If you want tutorials on some of the tools I mentioned or used, check out my YouTube channel: Teacher Totter