

Tips and Tricks for Effective Computer Technology Projects

- Conduct demonstrations in your classroom during the days leading up to your time in the lab. Doing this allows students to use most of their lab time for work (eg-give demonstrations of procedures and activities in SketchPad prior to coming into the lab...when students arrive in the lab they are ready to work).
- Use a rubric to evaluate for content, layout/design/ bibliography, storyboarding/preliminary work, etc.
- Have students plan out their project on a story board prior to beginning on a computer-evaluate their storyboard as part of the rubric.
- Consider a collaborative project when possible-cuts down on the total number of projects/presentations and has positive benefits for the students as well.
- Meet with Matt if you need any help planning/implementing your idea.
- Use templates as an option for students who may need help getting started. Or, use templates when working with a piece of software that is unfamiliar to the students...helps get them moving in the right direction (for example-Laura Smyzcek's flower sale project).
- Have students develop content first. After the content is completed, then they can add the bells, whistles and other special effects
- Encourage students to use special effects that compliment the theme of the project
- Layout/design tips-No more than two fonts throughout the project...use colors and backgrounds that compliment each other. Use 2-3 complimentary colors and no more...Encourage consistency in background, layout, fonts, etc from page to page...use the analogy to a book (wouldn't it be confusing to read a book and every other page had a different font, size of text, color of text, background color, etc-kids relate to this pretty well)
- Try it first!!! eg-if doing a brochure, set one up and familiarize yourself with how it will print out. See Matt if you need help with this. Or, if you are going to have students printing their web pages or power points, print it out yourself first to see how it looks.
- Consider flexible scheduling of your lab time so the students turn in their work while in the lab. For example, if you are going to do a 3 day project in the lab, go to lab on Monday and Tuesday. Give the students two days to work on their own and meet with them in the lab once again on Friday.