

National Institute of Aerospace (NIA)/Nortel LearnIT Web Chat

**Authentic Learning/Authentic
Assessment, May 22, 2008**
www.nortellearnit.org



Bob Sprankle, educator, technology integrator (and innovator) and the 2006 Maine Technology Teacher of the Year, is May 22, 2008, 4:15 p.m., Nortel LearnIT/National Institute of Aerospace Web Chat special guest for the topic : Project-based Learning: Authentic Learning/Authentic Assessment. [View Web Chat details.](#)

In addition to his recent publications, "[Caught on Video](#)" in the April 2008 issue of Technology & Learning and "[4 Weeks to a Flatter You](#)" in PBS Media Infusion, Bob has his own [podcast and blog](#) ("Bit by Bit") on classroom technology integration.

Bob's web chat presentation will explore "Authentic Learning / Authentic Assessment" by sharing his adventures in the classroom and examining the need for "democratizing" learning environments to prepare our students for the shifting global landscape.

Learn more about:

- [the web chat topic](#)
- [Bob Sprankle](#)

Web Chat topics (May 22)

Using the book [Wikinomics](#) as a jumping-off point, Bob's going to focus on the monumental, global shift from people being "consumers" to becoming "prosumers." From what "wikinomics" means for businesses, as "smart companies" change to allow services' "democratization", he'll then connect with how we as teachers/schools need to do the same:

1. to engage our students by providing environments that match the rest of their reality: i.e., allowing them to be prosumers in school, just as they are becoming outside of school
2. to prepare our students for this transformed global landscape

He will share personal classroom implementation from "Web 1.0 Classroom web site" to Web 2.0 blogs and podcasts. He'll relate success using MIT's Scratch program in the computer lab to illustrate the benefits and successes of allowing students to create authentic products that have real purpose.

He'll cover how the new video technology advances not only support further engagement and partnership with students, but also are an excellent tool to capture their authentic learning experiences, i.e., to name just a few, students may be "caught on video"/ catch themselves on video to:

- Film students on the first day of school, asking them what their goals are for the school year.
- Ask a student to demonstrate how to solve a math problem and capture his exact process (rather than just the answer).
- Bring the outside world in: video your own experiences to share

Join the web chat and learn even more!

As a final wrap up, Bob will point to an article he wrote for PBS' Media Infusion last year called "[4 Weeks to a Flatter You](#)", a primer for teachers starting their Web 2.0 journey.

More about Bob Sprankle

Bob Sprankle has taught at Wells Elementary School in Wells, ME, for the past 12 years and recently became the Technology Integrator, serving students K-4. He was awarded Maine's Technology Teacher of the Year in 2006 from the Association of Computer Technology Educators of Maine (ACTEM).

From [Bob's welcome page](#) you can link also to his [school](#) and [classroom](#) web sites.

Watch for Bob's upcoming article in late June (where) focusing on the next steps: Democratization and "Crowdsourcing".

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techLEARNING

Caught on Video

By Bob Sprankle

April 22, 2008

URL: <http://www.techlearning.com/showArticle.php?articleID=196605169>

from Technology & Learning

When cheaper video cameras with built-in USB connectors were first introduced, I pined for one so I could introduce the technology into the classroom. I was positive that it would not only be a great tool for students to capture their own learning, but also make my job of collecting authentic assessment more streamlined and effective. Sure, I had access to a traditional video camera, but let's face it: it was way too complicated, bulky, and time-consuming. It was impossible to search through all that videotape to find 5 seconds of worth and even more of a challenge to catalog those snippets for a student database. I needed something digital, unobtrusive, and easy to manage.

I imagined myself being able to call up video clips of a student during Parent/Student/Teacher conferences. Rather than try and retell student achievements, I could simply show—"play by play"—what the student had done, allowing us to interpret and assess the student's performance. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then a video clip would be priceless. Our students have grown up in a video world. It is a medium they are naturally drawn to and comfortable with. In this Age of YouTube can we make learning more engaging and compelling by including video in our classrooms?

Over the years, I've come up with many scenarios where using video would be a beneficial tool in the classroom.

Film students on the first day of school, asking them what their goals are for the school year.

This is a piece of footage that will be treasured years later, but also can be pulled out throughout the year so the students can self-assess—both struggles and successes.

Film the progression of fluency on a weekly and monthly basis.

Several successful ways to assess a student's fluency is to conduct a running record or a developmental reading assessment using video. These assessments, recorded on video, are an effective permanent record of student growth.

Ask a student to demonstrate how to solve a math problem and capture his exact process (rather than just the answer).

The student's thought process is as important (if not more important) as supplying a correct answer is. Not only does capturing the explanation solidify the evidence for understanding, but the skill is also reinforced as the student "teaches" his process to others.

Film a completed product from a student before it is sent home.

Now we can have our cake and eat it, too! A student gets to take her work home and share it with family, but the teacher also keeps a copy of the product so it can be reexamined at a later date.

Film questions from the class at the beginning of a unit, then film them answering the same questions at the end of the unit.

Students will be more interested in watching themselves on video than they would be in revisiting the traditional KWL chart at the end of the unit.

Have students film what they've done that day and e-mail it to parents.

Now that video is quick and easy, why not take advantage of its small file size and have students bridge the gap between home and school by sending moments of their day? We take video while traveling, why not do the same when taking "journeys in learning"?

Film your own reflections on what happened during the day and e-mail it to parents.

You can now give up your weekly newsletter (which you were never really sure anyone was reading, anyway). Include students in your reflections and you'll guarantee that parents will watch it.

Constantly capture the excitement of learning from each student.

If this footage is hard to come by, it tells us something about the curriculum, doesn't it?

Film all teacher/student-writing conferences.

Forget giving the student a pile of sticky notes to work on. Instead, the student can review the actual conversation anytime she wants to (on the classroom computer).

Have students watch their homework.

Post on the Web short video summaries of key lessons and have students watch them for homework. Better yet, have the students create their own.

Capture all that great hands-on, experiential learning that can never be captured by a traditional assessment.

Finally!

Never write another long note for a substitute teacher.

Simply leave them a "video explanation" of all you would like accomplished during your absence. You can even ask them to review a lesson previously recorded so they can see how today's lesson fits into the bigger picture.

Bring the outside world in.

Carry your compact video recorder everywhere you go and film real-world connections to be used as "hooks" to capture students' attention during your lessons.

Allow students to create a greatest-hits collection of their year for individual digital portfolios.

Burn these to DVDs at the end of the year to be shared with next year's teachers.

Film all presenters and special guests (who allow it).

Get your money's worth by being able to re-watch presentations.

Film important lesson highlights so absent students can review what they missed.

If possible, send the files home (especially for students who are long-term absentees). Students will never miss anything anymore.

Have students create tutorials for next year's class.

This will especially save a lot of time at the beginning of the year as students need to learn the routines and the rules of the classroom. Hearing what helped make the previous year's students successful from the actual students themselves (rather than from the teacher) will have a more convincing impact.

Create video time capsules.

Imagine if the entire school did this throughout the years and the culminating project was shared at graduation?

Capture the memories.

During the school year, your students spend more time in school than at home. Don't we owe it to them to help capture the memories? Forget yearbooks. Give DVDs at the end of the year.

Make it count.

Constantly using video (a medium that allows for self-viewing and self-reflection) in the classroom will have a consistent, underlying message: Learning is important enough to be captured, shared, and archived. Video begs for reviewing and rewinding much more than a letter grade could ever hope for. Learning captured by video suggests a continuum in which a letter grade suggests completion. Video can help show that a larger "story" is taking place than just what is reflected by a letter grade and that learning is made up of many events where success and struggle are part of the journey.

Bob Sprankle is a technology integrator from Wells Elementary in Wells, Maine.