

Reflection

Recycling is a process that is important for children to understand because of the benefit it adds to everyone's lives. PBS Kids Zoom creates many different activities and programs that are geared toward children in ways that make it possible for them to comprehend new materials, and this video in particular explains recycling in such a way that helps students move from an abstract idea of recycling into a more concrete understanding of what can be recycled and what good comes from recycling. A teacher can tell students how to recycle, but that does not explain this process or make as strong of an impact about the benefits. Also, the video gives enough information to allow students to proceed into an inquiry based activity in which they act out what they have seen and then take their experience and try to figure out the possible value.

The pedagogical approach of this lesson is a combination of whole group and small group activities. The video itself is a teacher-centered technology because the teacher is in control of the viewing, but the video is engaging to students. Being a source on the Internet, this video can be viewed on a large screen through a digital projector which allows for students to have a better view of the resource than if they were trying to watch a video on the small classroom TV. The teacher can easily pause the video to allow for students to participate in small group work and then return to it for further learning later in the lesson. If the teacher feels it is worthwhile, she can replay any part of the digital video instantly.

Although this is not the most advanced technology which can be used in a lesson, this video has many relative advantages for student learning in this particular lesson. Students in kindergarten do not have especially long attention spans, so the short length of the video is rather ideal. It also features little sound effects, music, and bits of animation that make it more attractive to young children. Another benefit to using a resource from the Internet is that this is something many students can share with their parents at home. Perhaps their parents do not know as much about recycling as they think they do, and children can feel proud educating them. Also, being online, students who are absent can still have the opportunity to view the video and then gain practice using their new knowledge through actual recycling in the classroom. However, the greatest

advantage of them all is the fact that this video allows students to gain a more concrete understanding about something with which they cannot realistically have interaction. I have a hard time imagining any kindergarten teacher who would think a trip to a recycling plant is a safe one on which to bring 5 and 6-year-olds! But seeing this video gives the students the opportunity to experience what happens once they place that piece of scrap paper from their art project into the recycling bin!

It would be a shame for the technology not to work, but it happens all too often. (Especially if you do not want it to fail!) In that case, it is important to have a back-up plan. Since the entire lesson is not completely dependent on the video, the teacher can present the information from the video verbally to students while displaying prepared photographs to go along with the explanation. These photographs would include images of the gigantic piles of materials to be sorted in the recycling center, the conveyor belts on which the materials are moved, the enormous bales of recyclables, new materials made from the recycled materials, and trees in forests. Students can still sort in their group activities and experience the number 7,500 through a box of manipulatives. At a later point, it would probably be worthwhile to return to the video to let students see it and further solidify their understanding of recycling.