PUTTING THE "A" IN STEAM WITH CREATIVE APPS

As many teachers know, there are many different types of learners in a classroom. Some kids are auditory or visual learners while others learn best by reading and taking notes on paper. While many assignments could be done on paper worksheets or in Google Forms with fill in the blank or short response answers, many assignments could be completed in a more creative manner, which helps to develop valuable life skills that future employers are looking for. This is where the concept of "Putting the A in STEAM" comes into play.

So, what is STEAM?

STEAM is…

> **S**cience
> **T**echnology
> **E**ngineering
> **A**rt
> **M**athematics

The **A** stands for **Art**. Art is important for students to express themselves in the classroom and it surrounds us in daily life. The use of creative apps in classrooms allow for deeper expression of student understanding through projects, classwork, and responses with visual and audio implementations.

Creative App Suggestions

These creative apps help to increase skills such as problem solving, communication, team work, critical thinking, and creativity.

Google Draw: Users can collaborate in real time to create flowcharts, organizational charts, mind maps, concept maps, and other types of diagrams in addition to creating original drawings online. This can be used for creative charts, drawings to convey concepts/ideas, and can easily be integrated in Google Classroom.

Soundtrap: This app allows sound recording. Students can practice making podcasts or informative presentations. Mix different tracks and instrument sounds together for an original track. Great for music classes, creating original music for presentations/projects, and original podcasts.

WeVideo: Through this app students can easily create videos. These videos can be submitted through google classroom or other platforms. Teachers can use this to film their students playing an instrument or speaking a different language. Other ideas would be to make advertisements for clubs they are involved in or make videos pertaining to what they are learning in class.

Explain Everything: An interactive white board that allows students and teachers to work together. Teachers can also prepare whiteboards in advance for their lesson. This is great if you like to use the flipped classroom approach, students watch videos and learn outside of class for homework so they can participate and reaffirm information in class.

Buncee: A creative app that goes beyond the capabilities of apps in the Google Suite. Students can create PowerPoint-like presentations and add audio files that can be easily recorded and added in the presentation or document. Buncee also has animation features and thousands of visuals that students can add and create.

This app is great for responses that include drawings or visuals to aid text or audio answers, which allows teachers to understand how much a student understands on a certain assignment or topic. Great for vocabulary flashcards, creative paperless art projects, and large concepts.

In addition to these specific creative apps, there are many more Chrome Extensions on Chromebooks and other apps in the App Store that allow students a more creative way to express their knowledge and understanding of a topic.

Creative expression in the classroom may not be every student's style of learning. Using, or allowing the option to use them on certain assignments, creative apps such as these will allow more opportunities for growth and learning in the classroom.

Why Use Creative Apps

Flow charts, Venn diagrams, flashcards with visuals in addition to words, group presentations/projects, use audio explanations instead of writing out super long answers. They can also be used to assess speaking/pronunciation/ articulation skills, original drawings online to insert in presentations/documents, make a movie, make commercials, field trip video, music for music and art classes, writing out complicated visuals or problems in math/science classes

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