

What I am learning

It is a very unique thing that teaching, can be. You set out to teach others to bring their individual metacognitive levels and skills up and dang if you don't look around and you've increased your own personal knowledge and metacognitive level. I set out on this journey to help other senior citizens to increase their computer literacy so that they will not feel left out of this fast moving computer age. I did not want them to feel as I did when the new century flipped over; that I was I still stuck in the old. Thank goodness for my daughter. She insisted that I learn these skills and use them in my everyday life. So I came into the 21st century "kicking and screaming" that I was not ready and didn't want to be ready! But I am an educator and I had taken any number of computer technology and literacy classes for knowledge and proficiency but was still dragging my feet when it came to application of what I was forced and sometimes eager to learn. *Knowledge without practice is just a lead weight around your head.*

The only source of knowledge is experience. Albert Einstein

This session of class with the senior residents was so invigorating to me! Watching people learn and actually get what they are trying to learn is so exciting and energizing. I was smiling the whole night as we went through reviewing the previous lessons concepts. Just watching the students being able to really understand. The class instructor's favorite statement to them is "this is what's going to blow your grandkids mind about what you know how to do!" And they just laugh! They all want to be smarter than a 5th grader.

I read an Association of Literacy Education & Researchers (ALER) proposal were they were trying to help increase elementary student's literacy in computer usage. It dealt with a web-based print and media format to help children in 1st-5th grades with online reading. It's funny, I have the same problems with the senior adult class that I assist teaching at the evening computer literacy class. They show the same inabilities that was discussed in this proposal. They listed children as having the following difficulties: lack of knowledge of terminology, orientation of layout of a website, direction of print, website navigation, knowledge of online print and media, synthesis of information, evaluation of information and digital skills. According to Coiro & Dobler, 2007 understanding online text can be a complex process for learners.

These adults are not a part of the digital age and therefore lack basic literacy skills in this area. It just shows that age is not the determining factor, but cognitive knowledge to build metacognitive skills. They also have problems like the first graders with evaluating online information and how to conduct an internet search. Also, they have little knowledge of how to bookmark a website or how to share a website with others. Many of them have laptops that their families purchased and they have no idea why they can't get them to work. They have no virus definitions to protect their devices and a few can't remember the password, their family member put on them, in order to get into the device once they turned them on. This study showed that the 5th graders were more apt but still fell short on many skills needed to be considered computer literate.

I am so proud of these ladies because they are determined not to be left behind. They are vibrant and eager to learn how to add these skills to the cognitive knowledge bank. They are going to leave their grandchildren in the dust. They are learning not only how the computer works but why it works the way it does and how best to use it in their lives.

For our next session we are assisting them in getting a Pinterest account. Just showing them a little taste of the things they can see on the site made them excited for the next session. They are learning but they

have realized that it is work but fun work. They do all assigned homework that the instructor gives and always come to class with more questions and what if's. I believe we will all become smarter than a 5th grader.

References

ALER 2017 Conference. (2017). Concepts of Web-based Print and Media.

Coiro, J., & Dobler, E. (2007). Exploring the onling comprehension strategies used by sixth-grade skilled readers to search for and locate information on the Internet. *Reading Research Quarterly*, 214-257.

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