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Strategies to (fully) engage learners with technologies

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These eight proposals to (fully) engage learners with technologies —and together we could draw up a longer list—aim to support teachers and educators in the battle against what we call “digital passivity in education”. What does digital passivity in education mean? It is something that my team and I have observed during studies conducted in countless classrooms across North America, Europe, Asia, and Africa. First, digital passivity in education occurs when learners are equipped with all kinds of technology devices (laptops, tablets, smart phones, and so on) but make little educational use of them in class. Second, it also occurs when learners use their devices in class, but in a way that actually hinders their learning. For example, they use them not to learn, but instead to distract themselves, socialize, and play games. At a time when digital literacy should be maximized and leveraged so that all learners might achieve academic success, it is vital to prioritize the fight against this new blight on education. Even interactive education experts must guard against delusion. It’s a mistake to believe that all learners will naturally be keen on active participation in their learning when using technologies. The illustration is the work of @didac2b. Special thanks to @MarieGauthie for her precious ideas.

1. Assign students meaningful tasks that are either related to the subject being taught or to their curriculum.
2. Give students problems and challenges that are suitable for their abilities and skills.
3. Sometimes learning should be fun, especially when motivation is a major issue with learners. Therefore, game-based learning should also be emphasized.
4. Encourage creativity, innovation and individual initiatives as this will (fully) engage students when they use technologies.



Provide quick and constructive feedback to all students.

Have students work collaboratively as collaboration is an important 21st century skill.

Demonstrate your trust and respect for all students.

Keep records of the learning processes and achievements of all students.