

21st Century Learning @ your library™



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The first draft of this column was composed on my laptop while on a plane flying from Toronto to Vancouver to attend the Canadian Library Association's annual conference. As far as technology goes, my experience wasn't particularly cutting edge, but for a relatively novice flyer like myself, doing anything on a plane other than staring in awe out of the window is progress.

The editorial board and I recently pushed our own technology comfort levels in the name of progress. Instead of co-ordinating the schedules of ten very busy people from across Ontario to arrange our usual face-to-face meeting, we chose to have an evening conference call using Skype. On a computer with a microphone, Skype software enables you to make free calls, including conference calls, anywhere in the world.

Our editorial board did experience a few glitches getting everyone connected – Rob was able to hear the conversation but unable to be heard – thankfully he and I were able to use Yahoo Instant Messenger so he could express his thoughts and I could read them to the group. Others had trouble signing on but eventually we were able to hold our conference with colleagues far and wide – all while I was dressed in my pajamas lounging in bed.

How does our editorial board's technological experience with Skype compare to the everyday technological experiences of the "digital natives" we teach? Two of my favourite presentations which give a feel for the fast-paced and quickly changing technological world educators and students now face can be found on YouTube at www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMcfrLYDm2U ("Shift Happens" / "Do You Know") and www.youtube.com/watch?v=dGCJ46vyR9o ("A Vision of Students Today").

Many educators are grappling with the challenge of how to best meet the needs of a technologically literate learning community whose expertise often surpasses its teachers. Educators will continue to provide students with tools, strategies, and critical literacy skills but changing technological requirements will push more and more of us out of our comfort zones so that we can meet our students' needs.

In this issue of *The Teaching Librarian*, you will read about the many ways in which librarians and their students are creating a technologically literate learning community and a very new kind of classroom experience. The future of learning is not just about technology, but about different teaching approaches. The future is now – embrace it! □



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The Editor's Notebook