Mobile devices turn our world into a learning place

Rose Luckin

Comment

Nesta's landmark Decoding Learning report concluded that there is enormous potential in digital education. It showed how different technologies can augment and connect the sorts of classroom (and non-classroom) learning activities known to be effective. Success will come from commercial developers, researchers, teachers and students working together to develop, test and spread innovation from the rich landscape of technology.

Mobile devices and tablet computing can turn our world into a learning place, while game-based learning and augmented reality allow us to explore new virtual worlds and to see our physical environment afresh. But it's the way that we use these technologies that will change the learning game, and schools can make all the difference. Teachers and students can decide for themselves how they want to make, mash (combine) and hack (build) the future of technology in schools.

Students can learn through making and sharing results with others. Robotic kits, authoring tools, and multimedia production tools are a few examples of the simple technologies commonly available.

Teachers can mash together activities that break free from institutional boundaries. Technology can link individual students or groups, it can help them learn from different locations at once and it can connect students and teachers to new places. Connecting to science laboratories, fieldwork sites, and even the local high street can provide experiences currently unavailable in most schools, as well as access to new communities of expertise.

Schools can build their own educational technology applications by focusing on the type of learning they want to support and mixing existing devices and software to meet their needs. A whiteboard can be transformed into an interactive desktop; a mobile phone can direct students and allow them to explore and capture data for a scientific experiment that they visualise using software and share through a large display screen or table.

Rosemary Luckin is professor of learner-centred design at the Knowledge Lab, Institute of Education, University of London

'The way we use technology will change the learning game and schools can make a difference'

Technology can help pupils and schools to create learning materials Dimitris Legakis