

## **“Imbedded animations of physical phenomenon and the ‘gee whiz’ factor . . .”**

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I incorporated computer-based instruction methods several years ago when the necessary technology resources became available at my institution. In these past years I have witnessed the greatest impact in two main areas:

First, is the process of delivering basic instruction. I now present all classroom lectures in a multimedia format where the subject material is presented in a more organized and entertaining manner. This has been the most significant improvement, in my opinion, on teaching and learning in my area of physical science. I believe that this has greatly enhanced my student’s understanding and achievement. I’m not talking about slide after slide of the same material that the student can get from the textbook. I make use of personal digital photographs, computer-generated graphs, scanned topographic maps, as well as imbedded animations of physical phenomenon. In the past, all these items existed as separate formats with the student experiencing gaps and pauses in the lecture in order to present them. Now, all this disparate material is seamlessly integrated into one complete package. This has had a great impact not only on the students, but on my enjoyment in the classroom as well.

Secondly, my students simply like it better. A technology-infused class somehow excites students and motivates them more effectively. I have had several comments directly from students on how much they like the presentations, the online supplemental material, the computer animations, etc. There is a kind of “gee whiz” factor at play here. Students just become more captivated by the material when digital technology is incorporated. Furthermore, when they complete an individual computer-based assignment it seems as though they take more responsibility for their own learning.

If you are a preservice teacher who has been reluctant to consider computers in the classroom, multimedia presentations are an excellent (and rather simple) way to get started on the road to technological literacy. I am more captivated by the new technology, and it makes my teaching much more enjoyable and exciting. What else could possibly have a greater impact on student learning?