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| Clemson University |
| Prezi |
| Innovative Presentation Tool |
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Prezi: Innovative Presentation Tool

Benefits of Prezi

Prezi should be considered for use in education because it encourages active learning for all different learning styles, it shows the content in a relational format, and it is easy to use, free, and accessible from anywhere. The literature has shown that Prezi is a unique learning tool that can meet the needs of all learning styles and encourage active participation by incorporating audiovisual elements with an interactive interface. Audible learners can benefit from the embedded sound files within the Prezi as well as listening to the teacher’s lecture along with the prezi presentation. Visual learners and tactile learners will be stimulated by the concept mapping and the visual connection of the material through the “zooming interface” which allows them to manipulate the screen to access the information on-demand (Prezi, 2012). By incorporating technology into the classroom, educators can keep students engaged and promote connection to the material at hand (Manning, et al., 2011).

Moreover, Prezi helps students achieve optimal learning because they can build on their previous knowledge. Prezi is a “storytelling tool” which helps students to follow along easily and identify relationships and patterns in the material (Anonymous, n.d.). The Prezi software allows the educator to start with a blank canvas and then layer the information to create a story or concept map of the information. With this technique, educators are not bound to spatial limitations and can present the material outside of the classic linear format. This prevents the students from becoming overwhelmed as they can zoom in and learn at their leisure (Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2011).

Prezi is also a great tool for educators because it is free and accessible from anywhere. Because Prezi is web-based, all the presentations are stored online and can be retrieved, edited, or shared from any computer or tablet. A USB port is not required, and a presenter does not have to worry about emailing a file prior to the presentation (Barlow, 2011). Also, anyone can utilize this software for free but can get upgraded versions for a small fee. With the paid version, users can also edit the prezi offline then upload later. Prezi is easy to use and tutorials are available on Prezi’s website as well as on YouTube (Prezi, 2012).

Uses of Prezi

Prezi is useful in a variety of settings, including the education field. Prezis can be used in place of other presentation tools, such as PowerPoint. Educators can incorporate a prezi into their lectures to enhance learning and promote student engagement. Students can also utilize a prezi to present a project to classmates or to the educator. An article by Manning, et al. (2011) suggests replacing a traditional essay with a prezi presentation to assess learning. Students can include all the information needed to write an essay into a prezi and incorporate links to website or other AV sources to show resources used in their learning. Students can then post their prezis and other students can view and comment on their classmates’ work as well as learn from their work (Anonymous, n.d.).

Educational Value of Prezi

Prezi absolutely enhances the teaching-learning experience. Incorporating Prezi into the classroom pushes educators out of the monotony of the classic slide presentation and meets the needs of all different types of learners. Prezi engages the students in learning and allows the educator to present the information in story or concept mapping format which promotes connection of ideas and encourages students to build on previous knowledge. Students can get a snapshot of the big picture and then focus in on the details (Anonymous, n.d.; Manning, et al., 2011; Rockinson-Szapkiw, 2011). Prezi can also be utilized to assess student learning by “requiring students to effectively communicate the explicit connections between their research and their own ideas” (Manning, et al., 2011, p. 27). Prezi is a unique tool with many ways that it can be incorporated into the education world to augment the teaching-learning experience and help students connect with the material presented.

Effectiveness of Prezi

Prezi presents information on a canvas where content may be viewed from overall concept to details. It does this with movement by following a path that creates a “story”. While this at face value seems beneficial, educators must consider if Prezi is just the latest trend or is it an effective presentation tool. Caputi (2010) proposes that irrespective of the technology used if students show mastery of the material and learning objectives are met then it is effective (p. 552). Evaluation of Prezi must be multifaceted. Peer review, focus group, student satisfaction survey, and “formal testing of teaching strategies” are several pertinent methods (Billings & Halstead, 2009, p. 482). Another aspect to consider is the time economy for educators to create in proportion to increased student learning. Finally, educations need to evaluate the tool in relation to the Seven Principles for Good Practice, by Chickering and Gamson (1987), to determine if it merits use. We will now discuss Prezi in terms of applicable principles.

Encourages Active Learning: Prezi stimulates interactive exploration of topics through incorporate of multimedia—promoting active learning. Also, it engages student by creating movement along a learning pathway and with layering of information. Student understanding of information is enhanced by the canvas displaying the main concept with the ability to zoom in detailed content by layers.

Emphasizes Time on Task: Prezi can be explored at your own pace or auto played. For the auto play feature, educators can provide an estimated viewing time. This respects the student time.

Communicates High Expectations: Prezi set the tone for high expectations. It allows students to “deeply explore the relationships presented by visually seeing the connections as well as delving into the content presented in the links” to achieve learning objectives and develop critical thinking (Manning, Brooks, Crotteau, Diedrich, Moser, & Zwiefelhofer, 2011, p. 27). When students use Prezi to make presentations it shows “knowledge they have acquired through their inquiry process. The adaptability of inquiry and research necessary for constructing a Prezi calls for students to utilize and synthesize the vast amount of information available at their fingertips” (Manning et al, 2011, p. 27).

Respects Diverse Talents and Ways of Learning: Prezi appeals to different learning styles because it utilizes multimedia and “storytelling”. It differs from the linear approach of PowerPoint by providing a spatial connection of information. “Multimedia instruction can be more interactive in all learning domains. When multimedia is used to actively involve the learner, improved learning and retention occurs” (Caputi, 2010, p. 530). Prezi makes it easy for educators to incorporate learning activities to appeal to different learning styles.

Educators strive for student centered learning through development of a community of inquiry. Prezi as a presentation tool can help educators facilitate student learning through its “storytelling” pathways because it creates a format where “interaction and reflection are sustained; where ideas can be explored and critiqued; and where the process of critical inquiry can be scaffolded and modeled” (Garrison &Cleveland-Innes, 2005, p. 134). If viewed asynchronously it assists with building teacher presence because educators can still facilitate student learning by imbedding pertinent videos and providing a pathway to comprehend relationship of conceptual content.

Recommendation

Prezi is an alternative for PowerPoint. Educators may choose to create a traditional PowerPoint then upload to Prezi to transform into a dynamic presentation. While Prezi is fairly intuitive, it may require a little extra time for an instructor to develop their presentation. Because of this our team recommends that Prezi be used for complex course material. Since it allows for layering of information emphasizing main concepts then focuses on details in a spatial manner for deeper learning. Also, our team recommends that students use Prezi to demonstrate their synthesized knowledge gained through active learning.

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