

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGIES IN DISTANT LEARNING

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Education must always correspond to the requirements of the time and society. Today's urgent need is a new learning environment connected with both innovative learning technologies and innovative technical means. Distance learning can be defined as a result of rapid contemporary changes in education; it is learning via computer network. It was designed for those ones who, due to various reasons, such as lack of time, financial difficulties etc., do not have an opportunity to learn directly at a university under the supervision of a tutor, but seek to study independently. Psychologists are sure that only independent work with textbooks, manuals, reference books results in knowledge. Distance education develops skills of independent thinking, teaches to work systematically, to assess a learning situation, draw conclusions, and forecast. It allows you to read the latest information and makes it easy to navigate through the subject.

The technology of distant study is an interactive educational technology: an instructor and a student are only involved. The instructor takes into account the individual abilities and skills of the student. It affects the quality of education.

The instructor is a tutor who represents learning courses. The teacher should take into account the individual characteristics of both the student and his / her sphere of activity, practical knowledge. The instructor of a course prepares learning material, answers letters and questions if any, provides advice, answers, controls assessment, if necessary, provides additional materials for the development of specific skills. On the whole, the teacher creates an active learning environment. This environment requires continuous improvement of knowledge and skills.

Student is a person who is aware of his / her needs due to interactivity and personality of studies. Distance learning makes the process of acquiring knowledge more accessible and convenient. Students work independently with the learning material, complete assignments; consult with both the teacher and students to participate in an e-forum or a chat. Training materials as usual involve course books, electronic libraries, and variety of on-line resources. Forms of communication involved are lectures, tutorials, electronic forums, videoconferences.

The training process is carried out on the basis of distance learning technologies; it includes both classroom training and self-study activity. Participation of teachers in educational process is determined by need to implement constant support of educational and cognitive activity of students through the organization of current control of network sessions and consultations.

Informational technologies applied in distance learning can be divided into three groups:

- 1) presentation of educational information;
- 2) transmission of educational information;
- 3) storage technology and processing educational information.

The basis of learning process is the transmission of information from a teacher to a student. It means that any technology used in education can be called *information*. On the other hand, the term "information technology" is often applied to all technologies based on computer usage technology and telecommunications. To avoid misinterpretation, three concepts should be pointed out:

- 1) educational information;
- 2) educational technology;
- 3) information technology.

Educational information encompasses knowledge that is to be transferred to the student in order that he / she could competently comprehend and perform any learning activity.

In case of distance learning the student himself interprets knowledge and, therefore, the quality of educational information and methods of its presentation must meet increased demands. It refers to newly created electronic books, as well as to databases and knowledge banks, reference and expert systems used for educational purposes. Represented in electronic means they, unlike the printing ones, should have completely different organization and structure. It is caused by peculiarities of

psychophysiological perception of information on a computer screen, and by online access to information.

Educational information should not be accumulated in one or a few means. Its variety should be taken into account, in order to ensure the most possible access to it by any student notwithstanding location, amount of telecommunication channels etc. Such areas of information can be located in large libraries, scientific and educational centers, created on the basis of leading universities.

Educational technology presupposes a set of teaching methods and techniques used for the transmission of educational information from a source to the recipient, and it depends on the form of presentation.

The main point in educational technology is to represent ideas by means of visualization. The most adapted forms in distance learning include:

- video lectures;
- multimedia lectures and laboratory courses;
- multimedia electronic textbooks;
- computer training and testing system;
- simulation models and computer simulators;
- online tests;
- video conference.

“Extra curriculum Activities for Students to Improve English Skills”

Svitlana Korneliuk, teacher of English

Okhtyrka gymnasium

Face to Faith is the Tony Blair Faith Foundation’s Global Schools programme, active in a wide range of schools in countries across the world.

Face to Faith:

– gives students the opportunity to **interact directly** with their peers from around the world to dialogue about the range of faiths and beliefs, values and attitudes that they hold. This occurs safely through **facilitated** videoconferences and a **moderated** online community.

– **supports teachers** by providing a rich range of high quality, engaging and appropriate materials to help them prepare their students for dialogue.

– talks about culture and identity, but always emphasises **Faith** and **Belief**, because those two things can play a very positive role in our world, yet are almost always referred to in a negative way.

– emphasises **Similarity** and **Difference** – finding the ways in which we are similar to other people is often easy, but discovering the ways in which we are different gives us much more opportunity to learn.

– supports the development of **key skills** for global citizenship, including respectful dialogue, information technology, cooperation, conflict mediation, reflection, global awareness and faith literacy.

– is a set of **flexible materials**; designed to fit alongside, and enhance existing curriculum requirements.

Face to Faith works across the world delivering a pioneering education programme to help prevent religious conflict and extremism. It helps students

embrace an open-minded approach to others, to diversity and to difference that can lead to tolerant stable societies.

The Essentials of Dialogue is an indispensable part of Face to Faith, which is why it is the only compulsory module. Students take part in lessons that explore topics on vital issues such as: understanding the faiths and beliefs of others, the facts of identity, respectful dialogue and its role in peacebuilding, power and influence and the requirements of global citizenship.

The lessons also use activities to introduce students to the core concept of respectful dialogue. They do this by identifying and building a number of key skills required to prepare students for meaningful and respectful dialogue on faith and beliefs.

Our experience has been that many articulate students are well equipped to take part in discussion and debate, but that building mutually respectful and meaningful dialogue, even amongst those same students, requires careful focus. This is why the Essentials of Dialogue focuses almost entirely on these skills.

Once students are properly prepared, the module introduces students to their first videoconference with another school that is part of the global network. The videoconference in the Essentials of Dialogue allows the students the opportunity to explore and articulate their own values, as well as encounter and consider those of others.

Face to Faith uses technology to give students ages 12-17 from throughout the world meaningful opportunities to express their beliefs and values and to learn about the beliefs and values of others.

More than 800 schools in 19 countries use Face to Faith: Australia, Canada, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Lebanon, Mexico, Pakistan, Palestine, Philippines, Singapore, UAE, UK, Kosovo, Ukraine, and USA. This includes almost 200 public and private schools in the United States. The program is most often integrated into the social studies curriculum, but it is also used in other courses or as a school club.

Students involved in Face to Faith develop skills in respectful dialogue, active listening, and conflict management. They have opportunities to build relationships and exchange ideas with their peers around the world through facilitated videoconferences and a secure online community.

In addition to encouraging student voice and civil dialogue, Face to Faith enables students to learn about religions and cultures. Teachers are given a menu of teaching modules on global issues such as wealth, poverty, and charity; the environment; and the art of expression. Each lesson exposes students to the ways in which the major religious traditions of the world approach global concerns. All of the modules use state-of-the-art cooperative learning strategies and provide civic engagement opportunities tied to questions of social justice.

Face to Faith is not just another education program — nor is it an “add-on” to what overworked teachers must already do. Rather, Face to Faith teaches core civic skills necessary for negotiating religious and cultural differences in a diverse society and world.