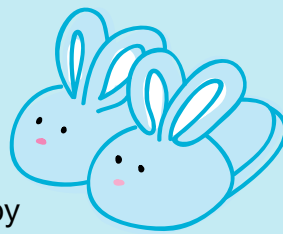


**32  
TIPS**

# FOR THE TECHPHOBIC TEACHER



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## Are you “Techphobic”?

Are you a bit “Techphobic” when it comes to using today’s latest technologies to enhance your classroom instruction? If yes...don’t worry! You’re not alone. Thousands of teachers, just like you, struggle with using technology as an integral part of their classroom lesson plans and activities.

Here at SimpleK12 we work with all types of teachers – from Techphobic Tracy to EdTech Eddie. We help hundreds of thousands of teachers from around the world learn and use technology – so we’ve seen it all. We’ve also seen how the power of technology can transform classrooms and change students’ lives.

If you’re a bit techphobic, or know someone who is, this is a must-read. These are real tips from real teachers from around the world that have practical advice to share. These are teachers that have “been there and done that” and know what fears and frustrations you can face using technology in the classroom.

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### Take the time to play

- 1 Take time out of your busy schedule (while watching tv is my best time) and play with the different tools that you want to be using. - Flexie
- 2 What you discover during "couch time" can really give you a feeling of confidence and ownership, which helps you build your skills. - Clint H.
- 3 Don't wait until you think you "know enough" until you jump in and try using technology. No one ever knows enough and by the time you think you might, things have changed. Professional development should be hands-on with time to play. Students learn by playing and testing things out and so do we. - Cathy
- 4 If possible bring it home. There are just not enough hours in the school day to do all the playing/experimenting it takes to become proficient. Experience being inept at it in a secure setting so you can feel more confident at it in class. - Anthony F
- 5 Try something. Anything. Scout out a colleague who has used a tech tool successfully in his/her class/lesson and try it. The tool may not fit your needs, but you are not in a position to determine that until you try a variety of tools. As you get better and more comfortable with technology use in general, you will be in a better position to figure out which tools are appropriate for your classes and lessons. - Brian

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### Don't be afraid

- 6 Despite what you may think.....you can't break the computer (unless you spill the glass of wine you are drinking over the keyboard) - Flexie
- 7 Chances are you won't break it. And if you do, well then you're no worse off than if you didn't use it! - Chris C.
- 8 The hardware and software should be sophisticated enough to withstand anything you do while you are learning. Take time to just work with the technology – try out all the menus, buttons, etc., to see how it works. - Judy C.
- 9 Teachers need to play with an experiment. Do a little hands on discovery. - Chris N.
- 10 It will take you making the commitment to experiment that will make your fears go away and your excitement to use and integrate come alive! - Nancy J.
- 11 Allow for 'oops' moments to occur and glitches to arise during class time. Sometimes finding the solutions can become part of the learning experience. - Daniel
- 12 Be prepared to be uncomfortable. For teachers who are confident and competent in the classroom it is difficult when tech use isn't second nature. There will be a dip in confidence but by using it everyday and asking for help, things will improve. - Cathy
- 13 Always have a Plan B, always. A tech savvy educator always has a Plan B for those moments inevitably when things go wrong: it happens to the best of us. -David C.
- 14 ... as long as you don't click on 'delete' you won't hurt anything, so explore! - Mary

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## Follow your own instruction

- 15** Education is the name of the game in a classroom and it's okay if the teacher is learning right along with the students. We ask students to step outside their comfort zones daily as they learn new things. It sets a good example for students when we model the same for them. Be honest and tell them you're learning it right along with them. They are very supportive and catch on much quicker than most adults. They help each other and can help the teacher as well. - Kylie D.
- 16** If there is something you really want to be able to do, read up on it and do what you would advise a student to do. - Chris N.
- 17** We ask our students to become life long learners and continually learn, and we as teachers should model what we speak. My motto is jump in with both feet- I won't let my teachers drown. - Susan
- 18** Let yourself be a kid again. Explore. Question. Play. Break it. Fix it. If you don't know something – ask the kids – they will be happy to show you how its done. - Tim Y.
- 19** You are in charge... stop when you want to and play like the kids do. That is how they learn and it is how you will learn also. - Vicki N.
- 20** You have to try in order to be successful. And, you have to learn from your mistakes. After all, isn't that what we teach the kids? - Brian

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### Keep it simple

- 21** Don't try to do everything. Just take one little step at a time and collaborate with other teachers. There is so much going on with technology integration ideas—with much added each day. Choose one thing you are interested in, learn it, and share your passion for it with your students. - Jaime S.
- 22** To keep it simple, take what you're already doing — say, teaching vocab — and use technology to enhance it — say, have your students create online flashcards they can study on their phone. - Matt M.
- 23** Start with something small and perhaps easier to use for less experienced teachers – just using one tool might give some confidence, something like Wallwisher or Storybird for example. - Colleen Y.
- 24** You can't and don't have to do it all at once. Baby steps help you focus on accomplishing something quickly and then move on to the next, instead of doing many steps simultaneously and not finishing any of them. - TJ W.

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### Ask for help

- 25** Put aside time to let your students teach you things that they know, they will love knowing that they know more than you and are teaching you. - Flexie
- 26** Swallow your pride and let your students lead the way. You'll love the journey. - David B.
- 27** Don't be afraid to ask questions. We always tell our students that, but it's true! Don't bog yourself down with asking every little thing, but if you're really stumped, go talk to a colleague or post questions to your PLN. - Clint H.
- 28** Connect with other educators who you can learn from. Twitter is a great place to start! - Ben G.
- 29** Ask the students for feedback, I guarantee that they will appreciate the effort. Plus, you're probably the only teacher of theirs that is prepared to try new things. They learn + you learn. It's a win-win. - Milneshine
- 30** Find a colleague who is using a piece of technology that interests you and ask for help. Sit in on their class during your planning time. What teacher doesn't share with colleagues? - Chris P
- 31** If you're fear is holding you back, find a mentor. It does not have to be another teacher; anyone who uses technology effectively in their personal and business lives and can help you find and master the tools you need. - Amy
- 32** If the technology doesn't work don't assume that it is because you don't know what you are doing. Quite often beginner tech users jump to the conclusion that they 'just don't get it' and that is why things aren't working. Ask for help because quite often it is the hardware or software that's the problem. - Cathy

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