

Seven strategies for digitech

By Sandy Phillips

Snapshot

Sandy Phillips explores the concept of Digital Technologies and offers seven strategies, and related resources, to enrich our understanding of this area and support us in leading the change in our schools around Digital Technologies curriculum.

With only eleven years until 2030 let's consider the **17 sustainable development goals** (SDGs) to transform our world adopted by the UN General Assembly and think about our students. What is going to prepare them for their future lives and happiness? What are students doing? What is important for them to learn? What impact can they have towards building a better future for us all?

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There have been many new initiatives in education since I first started teaching. Some have been amazing for teachers and students, others not so much. It's obvious that one of the big game changers in what and how we teach has been influenced by the technology we all live and interact with 24/7.

To paraphrase Heidi-Hayes Jacobs – It's not 1984 anymore - even though at times we wish it were. (Young people add 20 years to that statement) The change has been rapid. I will suggest we haven't always kept up, but it's obvious that one of the big game changers in what and how we teach has been the presence of technology in our lives and increasingly in our schools.

Information Communication Technology (ICT) itself has had many changes, moving from more or less one-way communication to web 2.0 allowing our students to be creators on the web using social media and web-based tools such as Google Apps for Education and Microsoft Teams. New skills such as film making, eSafety and writing for the web have been eagerly adopted by schools in response to that change.

But as teacher-librarians you will know there is a new curriculum in town – Digital Technologies (DT) or Digi Tech. Whilst it seems familiar, once unpacked it really has a language and mind of its own. In fact, it has some new, and at times, challenging learning for us all. The idea of coding

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is making teachers nervous and as teacher-librarians across the country are leading the way with Maker Spaces, and robotics, you will know that coding is only one part of the curriculum. It's about thinking with Computational, Design and Systems thinking at its core.

Leading the change in your school is important and this article is all about strategies to support you in that process. I have listed seven strategies for you to consider with some key resources to support you.

Strategy 1

Why change?

It is essential to get your teachers to understand the reasons for the introduction of the DT Curriculum. If they don't believe in it, they won't make it a priority. Have a look at the UN goals I presented above. They are the challenges for the world and technology is going to be part of building solutions. Your students can be empowered to be part of that but they need the knowledge and skills for that future and their future.

Reading: [The new work order - Foundation for Young Australians](#)

Strategy 2

Leadership

To lead you must have followers. If you are doing all the work and delivery with the DT curriculum it's time to look at bringing people with you. Looking at this fabulous fun video the challenge here is to 'Find your first follower'. Work with a team to present at a staff meeting. Supporting teachers with their resourcing, planning and access is where you are invaluable.

Viewing: [Derek Sivers: How to start a movement | TED Talk - TED.com](#)

Strategy 3

Build your knowledge

Get your head around Digi Tech Curriculum language and concepts. What do you know? What do you need to know? The Victorian curriculum is very closely aligned to the Australian curriculum. Resources from: The Digital Technologies Hub are a really good place to start.

Viewing and Reading: [Victorian Digital Technologies Scope and Sequence](#) (including the Glossary)

Strategy 4

Clear the confusion

Get the word out -Digital Tech is not a rename of ICT. It might have some overlap, but it is different. Get your staff to play a game to explore where each concept and learning sits within the curriculum.

Reading and Playing: [What's the difference between ICT and Digital Technologies?](#)

Strategy 5

Planning checklist

Whilst this document is planning 1- to- 1 the steps could be useful for your school to resource and prepare for the DT Curriculum implementation – Please don't just go out and buy 'gear'.

Reading and Viewing: [Planning 1-to-1](#)

Strategy 6

Network and seek new knowledge

Use SLAV, Twitter and other online communities to help you build your capacity. Teachers and teacher-librarians are amazing at sharing knowledge. There is rarely no support online.

Watch: [STEMShare Community YouTube Channel maintained by the NSW DET team](#)

Strategy 7

See it in action

Visit a school who has it underway, ask them what worked and what didn't.

Watch: [Point Cook P-9 - Creating tomorrow today](#)

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