

# The Digital Classroom



▲ An iPad helps Andrew Desiderio, 12, dissect a sheep's heart.

▼ Mineola fifth grader Cindy Zheng keeps up with the news on her iPad.



**THINK!**

What are some pros and cons of using technology in classrooms?

## Schools are trading textbooks for tablet computers. Do the devices help kids learn?

Take a look around the hallways at Mineola Middle School, in Mineola, New York. You won't see fifth graders carrying textbooks. You won't find notepads or pens or pencils. Here's what you will see: Apple iPads—everywhere.

The school handed out the devices to 200 fifth graders and some seventh graders in September. Students use their iPads for subjects ranging from language arts to math. They use them to write papers and to e-mail homework to teachers.

The world is becoming more tech-savvy, says Mineola assistant principal George Maurer. He hopes that introducing technology to students will help them in the future. "When every student can access learning anywhere and anytime, that's exciting," Maurer told TFK.

This fall, every Mineola sixth grader received a netbook computer. All classrooms are equipped with interactive whiteboards (see "Coming to Life"). "We embrace technology as teaching tools," says Mineola schools superintendent Michael Nagler. "If it's out there, we have it."

## A New Way to Learn

Apple says that more than a million iPads are being used in U.S. classrooms. The use of tablet computers is also growing overseas.

Why are so many schools buying tablets? One reason is that there are more than 20,000 educational apps available, tech expert Carl Howe explains. "Plus, tablets engage students in a way that traditional computers have not," he says.

Apple is taking it a step

further. On January 19, the company said it plans to offer e-textbooks for the iPad. The interactive books will feature videos, photos and other tools.

Still, critics say not enough is known about the educational benefits of tablet programs to justify the expense. Each iPad costs at least \$500. Many districts are on tight budgets.

But educators who use iPads and other digital tools say the results so far are positive. They say students are engaged and test scores have improved.

Students like the lighter load, too. "It makes things easier," says Mineola seventh grader Nora Ziegler. "We don't carry books. We don't use paper. Everything is in our iPad." —By Vickie An

## Power Words

**embrace:** to accept willingly

**tech-savvy:** highly knowledgeable about technology

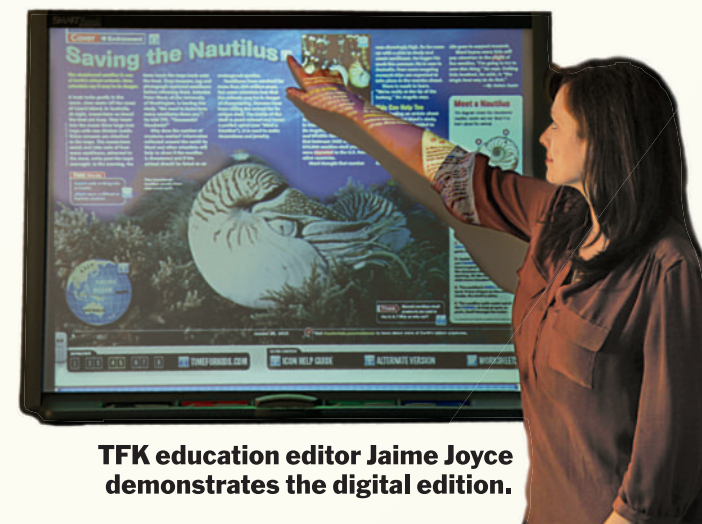


From left, Lauren Carlucci, Nuvaera Mumnoon and Viviana Ferreira work on a history lesson on their iPads.

## Coming to Life

TIME FOR KIDS is joining the tech revolution! This fall, TFK launched a digital edition for use on computers, whiteboards and projectors. Each digital magazine comes packed with interactive features, including audio read-alouds, videos, slide shows and more.

For this week's digital edition, we filmed our visit to Mineola Middle School. We spoke to students, teachers and officials about the school's iPad program. Go to [timeforkids.com/digital](http://timeforkids.com/digital) to learn how to access the digital edition.



TFK education editor Jaime Joyce demonstrates the digital edition.

