MON:Learning to thrive and survive in a digital environment (Pat Townshend)

☆ **Favourite**   **883 views**   **6 favourites**

Cloud created by:

Pat Townshend
7 January 2017

In this presentation a range of framework and survey tools will be explored. These will have been amended to be used with mature learners studying early years vocational childcare qualifications. The tools will be based on the JISC six-element `Building Digital Capabilities' framework, a short survey about the use of digital technology; and an amended pyramid model of digital literacy. Results and feedback from early use of these tools will be shared.

The presentation will include a report of feedback from course tutors on the JISC document "Developing Digital Capability - Understanding learners' needs". This will include their observations on learners as digital users in their personal lives and in their educational activities. It will consider their attitudes, skills, needs and preferences.

Research into the capabilities of mature students in comparison to younger students has proved controversial in the recent past. Prensky's 2001 metaphor of `digital natives' and `digital immigrants' has exited much academic discussion and lively debate. It also reached into the public sphere, as it seem to echo the idiom "you can't teach an old dog new tricks". Ten years later White and Le Cornu (2011) proposed new metaphor of a continuum between 'Visitors' and 'Residents' as a replacement: focusing on `place' and `tools'. This, it is argued, updates the metaphor for the post web2.0 environment. Which metaphor makes a better `fit' for individual students? Why? What are the most influential factors affecting individuals' relationship with digital technology? Is it overall educational confidence and competence, or the need to acquire the range of new skills, or having time spare to become skilled and confident, or is it a matter of affordability? Or any combination of these factors?

Attitudes to the use of digital technology in the care and education of young children appear divided in the sector. Some argue that technology is alien to the traditional play based, social and sensory curriculum. Others see a role for devices such as iPads in enriching teaching and learning and inspiring children's motivation and enthusiasm. The attitudes of parents has a vital role to play in this discussion. To what extent do they influence one side of the argument or the other? All the adults caring for children as carers, teachers or parents also have a duty to keep children safe. They also have to maintain balance, coping with their own concerns and the concerns of society about the ubiquity and the perceived dangers of using digital devices and the internet. Bronfenbrenner's (1979) ecological model of children's development includes the microsystem, mesosytem, exosystem and macrosystem levels. All have a role to play and influence.

Search

Log in ▾   **Sign up**

Username:

Password:

[Forgotten password](#)

Tags

adult learning   confidence
digital literacy   digital skills
early years   resident visitor

+ Add a tag

In Cloudscapes

☁ OU H818 'The Networked Practitioner' Online Conference 2017

Finally the presentation will report on the experience of networking with academics and with colleagues. Education is a social process. Digital communications could be the means to open up connections and learn in a wider social sphere than was previously possible.

Extra content

References

Flewitt, R., Messer, D., Kucirkova, N. (2014) `New directions for early literacy in a digital age: The iPad'. Journal of Early Childhood Literacy. SAGE Publications doi: 10.1177/1468798414533560. Available at http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/3365/1/Flewitt_Messer_Kucirkova_2014_new_directions_for_early_literacy_th (last accessed 30 Dec 2016)

Joint Information Systems Committee (2014) `Building digital capability: the six elements defined'. Available at http://repository.jisc.ac.uk/6239/1/Digital_capabilities_six_elements.pdf (last accessed 30 Dec 2016)

Joint Information Systems Committee (2014) `Developing Digital Capability Understanding Learners' Needs' Developing digital literacies Available at https://docs.google.com/document/d/1MziWRF4KBKjwjtbeN7kbpUrX5c30z6t81nss_JfTGlQ/edit (last accessed 30 Dec 2016)

Palaiologou, I. (2016) Teachers' dispositions towards the role of digital devices in play-based pedagogy in early childhood education. Early Years. Volume 36, 2016 - Issue 3. Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2016.1174816 (last accessed 30 Dec 2016)

White, D.S. Le Cornu, A. (2011) `Visitors and Residents: A new typology for online engagement.' First Monday.(2011) Available at: http://firstmonday.org/ojs/index.php/fm/article/view/3171/3049 (last accessed: 30 Dec 2016) doi:10.5210/fm.v16i9.3171.

also see http://daveowhite.com/vandr/ and

https://youtu.be/sPOG3iThmRI

Pat Townshend
16:06 on 10 February 2017

+ Add extra content

Embedded Content

Pat Townshend poster

Pat Townshend poster
added by Pat Townshend

+ Add embedded content

Contribute

Dr Carol Waites
9:55pm 26 January 2017 Permalink

I teach mature adults at the United Nations in Geneva. I find they are not open to digital media. We use an e-learning platform and it takes quite an effort to make them comfortable using it. When I suggest Twitter or other social media as a way of increasing their English exposure and knowledge, they look shocked. However, others in the courses work with social media to promote their organizational goals. There is quite a divide even within the digital immigrant cohort.

My teenage children go to a school which uses iPads and Mac computers in all the classes and teaching. But the children often lack good research skills and are not really taught to harness the information. Some do it naturally, but others don't.

Does this fit with your research? PS Do you have a poster so I can get a clearer idea of your paper?

Jude Toasland
12:05pm 28 January 2017 Permalink

As Carol describes I have observed the resistance from some (although not all) older learners. It was really interesting to read the development of the `digital natives' /`digital immigrants' metaphor which I admit to finding very helpful in exploring with older learners why some of the newer forms of digital learning feel tougher to learn in comparison with younger students, many of whom integrate these technologies with minimal effort. You explore the issue of culture with regard to parents' attitudes and I have also found the attitudes of learners and the culture in which they operate to directly impact upon the style of learning with older learners frequently requiring more support and encouragement to use digital learning technologies.

Leanne Johnstone
8:35pm 28 January 2017 Permalink

Hi Pat,

Using technology with adult learners can be difficult. Based on my own experience teaching adult learners, I disagree with the idea that you "can't teach old dogs new tricks". Of course some learners find adapting to new technologies more difficult that others, but I have found with appropriate support (quite often from their peers) they get there. I am really interested to hear about what you found and whether my perspective is shared.

Best wishes,

Leanne

Dr Carol Waites
11:24am 29 January 2017 [Permalink](#)

Hi Leanne I agree with you that they can definitely succeed with proper support. The problem I seem to face is getting them to enrol in the first place! Those that do enrol can be helped.

Pat Townshend
11:39am 29 January 2017 [Permalink](#)

Hi Carol - I've added the poster. Thanks for the reminder!

Pat Townshend
11:53am 29 January 2017 [Permalink](#)

Hi Carol, Jude and Leanne

Its good to read that we're not alone! The introduction of using digital sevrices in our training prgramme has be a very challenging process over seven years. It's been very useful to discuss our current stage of development with staff and learners. I feel that I understand the situation much better, but that its is considerably more complex than it appeared to be at the start.

Yes - I don't accept the old dogs and new tricks arguments either. There's always someone around who knows computer litrate 80 year old! I do, however, think that having suffcient disposable income to own and use digital devices may be very significant. However this is not something I have been able to measure.

And yes - I agree: confidet tutors lead to confident learners, when it comes to digital skills capabilities.

Sarah Adrienne Hughes
11:58am 29 January 2017 (*Edited 11:59am 29 January 2017*) [Permalink](#)

Dear Pat,

I too have found a lot of challenges in supporting mixed background and aged cohorts of nursing students. With potential major changes to the way students will chose to train (Vocational, and apprenticeship routes are now being considered due to the removal of bursaries), now is a great time to consider different modes of learning.

I too have been considering the JISC Framework to underpin this, but wonder how we can inspire, motivate and promote confidence online. Did your questionaire ask about what

motivated students to engage with blended learning: for themselves and for childre/students?

Regards,

Sarah

Pat Townshend
12:11pm 29 January 2017 Permalink

Hi Sarah

I didn't ask questions about motivation on the survey, but have followed up with one-to-one interviews with some of them. Their main motvation is to achieve the qualification, in ways that fit into their already busy lives (work, family, personal). They prefer the blended approach because they are intesnely social learners who can manage the digital skills demands to a greater or lesser extent. The skills range is very broad amongst the nine of them. One of the big successes with this group has been their formation of a WhatsApp group. I think this is active 24/7 between weekly sessions. There is considerable peer-support being offered and shared by more digitally experienced learners. They chose the app and this has made a big difference. Their tutor joins in and her inputs are greatly valued.

Mary Howell
2:15pm 29 January 2017 Permalink

Hi Pat I enjoyed reading your abstract - it is thought provoking and wide ranging in the issues it discusses. I also think that the old dogs thing is inaccurate. I agree with the point you make about a divide in terms of acccess to up to the minute equipment as well.

When I have worked with secondary school studnets they have often been at a loss to do with the technology and have made quite limited use of it until given a project that extended their understanding of its capabilities.

Alison Brereton
7:14am 31 January 2017 Permalink

Hi Pat, I'm looking forward to this presentation, as you've suggested there should be interesting comparisons between your project and mine. Will your project examine how the learners use, or will potentially use, digital technologies in their work in early learning settings?

Pat Townshend
9:27am 31 January 2017 Permalink

Hi Alison

My focus is more on early years workers as students, and the `spiky profile' of their digital capab ilities. Alongside this is the continuing debate about how appropriate, or otherwise. it is for young chidlren to have access to digital devices. There are pedagogical arguments for and against of course, but I sometimes think these are affected by adults often conflicted and conflicting views about the digital environment and their ability/confidence in using it themselves. This is yet a further `layer' on top of what is already a vast educational/psychological area, so I will only be able to touch on this in the 10 minutes. I will upload two EY research papers that take opposing views that you will find interesting.

Flewitt, R., Messer, D., Kucirkova, N. (2014) `New directions for early literacy in a digital age: The iPad'. *Journal of Early Childhood Literacy*. SAGE Publications doi: 10.1177/1468798414533560. Available at
http://eprints.ncrm.ac.uk/3365/1/Flewitt_Messer_Kucirkova_2014_new_directions_for_early_literacy_the_iPad.pdf
(last accessed 30 Dec 2016)

Palaiologou, I. (2016) Teachers' dispositions towards the role of digital devices in play-based pedagogy in early childhood education. *Early Years*. Volume 36, 2016 - Issue 3. Available at http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/09575146.2016.1174816 (last accessed 30 Dec 2016)

I've had some contact with the lead researcher on the first paper above. She tells me that of the three settings studied the school based ones have managed to continue their i-pad activity, but the private pre-school has not for financial reasons, and because staff have changed. This chimes with an emerging finding in my student research, i.e. some are unable to take advantage of digital affordances because they can't afford to buy and run the devices needed.

Alison Brereton
6:54am 1 February 2017 Permalink

It's a fascinating area that I've touched on with previous modules, within my own experience it's amazing the differences between how different practitioners and different parents view the role of digital technologies.

Pat Townshend
12:14pm 2 February 2017 Permalink

Hi Alison

This is a youtube recording of a webinar given by my colleagues Michael and Mel last year. They're covering many aspects of tech and young chiildren. Its interetsing to see what they cover.

We provided this webinar following many requests from members. There are references to the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) which is the Early Years curriculum in England.

https://youtu.be/Jpk11NKPbro?list=PL-ErGYJogHAQgdoe59j_R-Ep32F5LXJRX

This is one of our monthly webinars which can be accessed through our corporate website www.pre-school.org.uk

Dr Susan Morris
12:20pm 2 February 2017 (*Edited 12:20pm 2 February 2017*) Permalink

Pat,

You may find Helen Bentham's Keynote Presentation: From digital capability to digital wellbeing: thriving in the network. http://cloudworks.ac.uk/cloud/view/9681 useful as a resource to her published works. Helen was keynote at 2016 H818 Conference.

Hope this helps, Susan

Sarah Adrienne Hughes
6:34pm 2 February 2017 Permalink

Thank you, Susan,

I too will have a look at Helen's work. I like the idea of 'Digital Wellbeing' and think I will include that in my curriculum for second year student nurses considering motivation and confidence with Digital literacy and Nursing Informatics.

I sometimes feel that I am only just 'surviving' online, Pat!

Regards,

Sarah

Heather Bloodworth
3:11pm 5 February 2017 Permalink

Hi Pat, the healthcare professionals that I teach at postgraduate level do worry and struggle with technology. On their induction day we usually ask the students to write down on a post it note what their aspirations are for the course and what their worried about, all of them usually mention that their worried about engaging and using the e-learning technology! We now include an induction morning related to the various technologies to try to allay fears and anxieties.

angela bonehill
6:15pm 5 February 2017 Permalink

Hi Pat,

I have been working with students who are first year undergraduates, I'm a digital immigrant and I have been teaching them how to do screen prints, how to search for a word in a PDF document or put a sentence into the web to get the appropriate paper they

need, however they are able to tell me anything I need to do on my phone. I have seen babies trying to 'swipe' a childrens' book, but my granddaughter who is 8 years old, can change things on my tablet, still does not know how to open a word document and save it. So from my experience it depends on what they have access too. However, I have realised that if I do not use a particular tool regularly I forget how to use it.

Julie Skeats
8:09pm 6 February 2017 Permalink

Hi Pat You topic is really interesting to me as I teach ICT which has now changed to Computer Science. I have found that over the years that the government and many people in general think that students growing up in the digital age are able to use technology, when this job st isn't true. There are many students who just aren't interested in using technology, or their only interested in playing games, which doesn't give them the digital skills they need in today's world. Many parents I talk to think their child much be a complete genius on the computer as they spend hours on the computer. Just because they can play computer games doesn't make them a user of technology. The change in the curriculum means that instead of teaching them how to use the computer, we are now teaching them to be creators of technology as we are now teaching them programming and how th technology works. My worry is that we will have a skills shortage as students won't be fully taught how to use office anymore in some schools.

Dr Simon Ball
10:55am 14 February 2017 Permalink

Hi Pat

Please find below the main questions and comments from your live presentation. It's up to you how to answer them, whether you wish to group them, or whether you wish to point to an answer already given above, for example.
Best wishes
Simon

- I have certainly had a similar experience with nursing tutors!
- An academic at my Uni also swears by WhatsApp
- whatsapp is my favourite app for group set up
- Would be interesting to carry out network and sentinent analysis on those chats in WhatsApp
- Students love WhatsApp!
- yes im part of a number of student groups in whatsapp
- When using WhatsApp with students, do you have to give them your mobile number or can this be used through a web browser instead?
- The relevance of IT in the workspace - def a factor in healthcare and eHealth!
- I can see a lot of benefits of using WhatsApp for students on placement etc, but many staff would be wary about giving out mobile phone numbers, unless this was a work provided mobile
- v interesting use of JISC framework of digital skills
- This is a really useful model - thanks for introducing me to it Pat
- What were the key points that enabled your colleagues to thrive? Were they

visitors or residents?

- V&R is a great exercise - have used it a lot to help people recognise their own role in the types of technologies they use, and sometimes to help improve their confidence
- Did your students digital confidence increase? Are the skills they developed transferable do you think?
- Thanks Pat. Do you have any tips on getting students to realise the relevance of digital tools?
- If you would like to not use whatsapp, Telegram doesn't require a phone number
- Do they find it easier to accept supprort from one another than from you Pat?

[Pat Townshend](#)
6:07pm 15 February 2017 [Permalink](#)

Staff resistance to using new software - Its comforting to know that we're not alone in this experience!

WhatsApp comments - This caused quite a flurry, with personal and professional expeirence noted. All of my students use this on their phones, but I think it can be used with an email address. The students said that they found the interface paticulary easy to use, and that it wasn't overly intrusive in daily life. They felt that they could choose to answer or not. It's also cheap to use on wifi, and doesn't sap text allowances, so they feel they can chat freely. Last October one of my colleagues said that she'd heard a rumour that there had been a negative comment about students' use of WhatsApp from an Ofsted inspector. We couldn't find out the reason. We know that there had been some question about encryption, possibly in relation to the Prevent Agenda in colleges and secondary schools. There seemed to be the suggestion that staff should be monitoring student interactions and that the encryption stopped this. I put out a query on a discussion forum to see if anyone else had picked this up, but there were no positive replies. I also searched recent inspection reports on some likely keywords on http://www.watchsted.com/ and nothing came up. It's interesting to consider how monitoring of interactions might affect how students behave. To hark back, for those of you who watched it, think about season one of the Wire, where the protagonists stopeed using public phones and started using mobile simacres which they threw away rather than get traced.

IT in the workspace - the English Early Years Foundation stage is clear on staff use of personal mobiles in the setting. Not permitted. Mobile phones have featured in criminal abusive behaviour and been mentioend in serious case reviews. The only digital devices in settings will be owned by the setting. personal ones must be locked away.

Jisc framework use , visitor/resident - its certainly comprehensive, and provides a structure for reflection. For my students they used few of the skills, but this also helepd me to reflect on their `visitor' mode of working. They use the `tools in the toolshed' that they need i.e. the ones that help them to complete the qualification. They're busy people.

I'm discussing using V&R with colleagues soon. It certainly aids reflection and crosses the personal professional.

Digital skills are growing, but only within the confines of the applications they use/need. This course has a confident tutor. With her help and support of experienced peers they

seem to be able to function effectively using the e-portfolio around the third week of study. Only a few have skills sufficietly establshed / confident to be transferable,

Realising the relevance of digital tools - experience of success works very well. The tutor needs to support until this is achieved.

Telegram - will look into that. That could be a good option for future groups.

Source of support - I think they find it easy to receive from either tutor or peer. The tutor is a person very similar to them (age, gender, work experience background) . It migth be an issue if not.

Thanks for your comments. They certainly gave me lots more to think about!

[Pat Townshend](#)
8:35am 19 February 2017 [Permalink](#)

The visitor and resident metaphor/comparison can be taken a little further regarding their support needs. Visitors will need maps, guidebooks, youtube introductory videos in order to be able to use the `tools from the tool shed'. Those who are more affluent may have personal tourguides and chaffeurs. Residents know how to navigate public transport and where to find the best food in the local independent shops and restaurants. For my students the ones that had used the eportfolio software before were residential with that and became volunteer tour guides. And they felt empowered and positve about that. Think of the 2012 London Olympics volunteers, and you'll see the connnection.

[Dr Simon Ball](#)
6:10pm 20 February 2017 [Permalink](#)

Many Congratulations Pat! Your presentation has been voted by delegates to be one of the most effective of the H818 Online Conference 2017 and you are officially one of our H818 Presentation Star Open Badge Winners! Please see how to Apply for your Badge here: http://cloudworks.ac.uk/badge/view/33

Well done!

Simon

H818 Conference Organiser

[Jude Toasland](#)
9:38am 21 February 2017 [Permalink](#)

That's a fantastic analogy Pat. The visitors/ residents model has given me a lot to work on in my own project and I may integrate that with the development of digital skills to upskill my own audience. Interesting to hear that support was equally received from tutor and peer as I'm finding a variation of response with occasional resistence to support from the "tutor" role so am building in peer support.

Danny Ball
11:41am 21 February 2017 [Permalink](#)

Congratulations Pat!

Leanne Johnstone
12:29pm 21 February 2017 [Permalink](#)

Well done Pat :-)

Sarah Adrienne Hughes
9:44am 22 February 2017 [Permalink](#)

Brilliant, well done, Pat!

Some great ideas that I can consider in my own work, thank you!

Sarah

Contribute to the discussion

Please [log in](#) to post a comment. [Register here](#) if you haven't signed up yet.