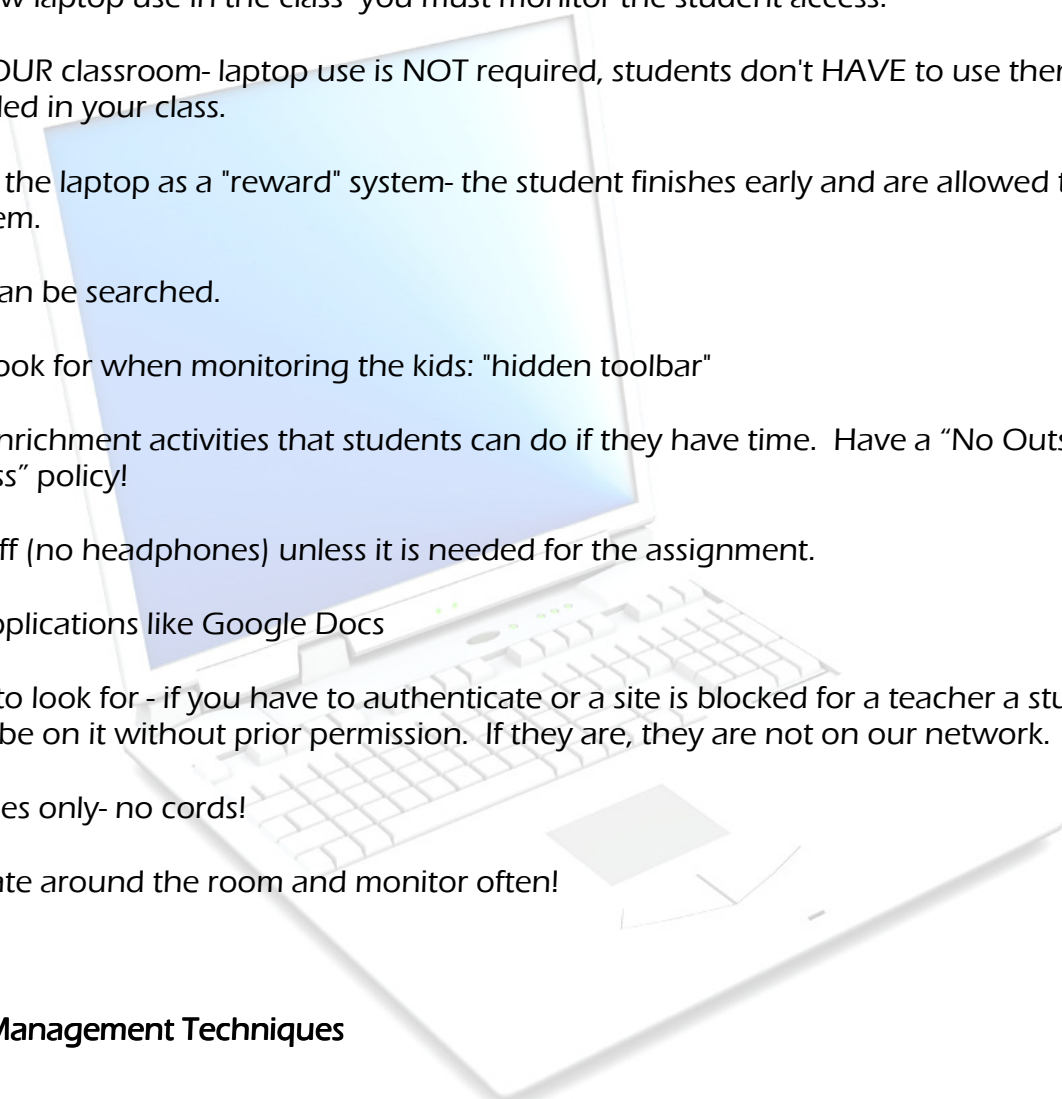


## Student Laptops Tips & Tricks:

1. Close the screen while the teacher is talking or 45 degrees. (Anytime as a teacher deems necessary.)
  2. Hands on the desk (keep them from texting in class).
  3. Be aware of recorders and webcams on computers.
  4. If you allow laptop use in the class- you must monitor the student access.
  5. It is still YOUR classroom- laptop use is NOT required, students don't HAVE to use them if it is NOT needed in your class.
  6. Don't use the laptop as a "reward" system- the student finishes early and are allowed to "play" on them.
  7. Laptops can be searched.
  8. What to look for when monitoring the kids: "hidden toolbar"
  9. Plan for enrichment activities that students can do if they have time. Have a "No Outside Work in Class" policy!
  10. Sound off (no headphones) unless it is needed for the assignment.
  11. Use applications like Google Docs
  12. What to look for - if you have to authenticate or a site is blocked for a teacher a student cannot be on it without prior permission. If they are, they are not on our network.
  13. Batteries only- no cords!
  14. Circulate around the room and monitor often!
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### Classroom Management Techniques

1. Editable, Electronic Syllabus. Providing an editable, electronic version of the class syllabus will allow students to do their before-class preparation and in-class note-taking as described above.
2. "Classroom Rules." We find that most students want to do the right thing most of the time. Publishing or otherwise providing a list of norms will ensure that your students know what is and what is not allowed in class.

## Dangers and Pitfalls

Students and instructors face sometimes unexpected hazards in using laptops in the classroom. A few of the more obvious ones follow.

1. **Surfing the Web.** Initially, students surfing the Web in class poses the biggest challenge to using laptops. Fortunately, Web surfing is easy to spot because students are decisively engaged with the computer, but not much keyboard activity is involved. Again, a direct but tactful request or walking around the classroom is generally all it takes to get students back on track.
2. **Instant Messaging.** Also a big challenge during the first couple of classes, instant messaging is more difficult to detect because it does resemble taking notes. By moving around the class and behind the students, you will keep most students on track. Another technique is to look at which programs or applications are active and which ones have been minimized. Again, a direct but tactful request is generally all it takes to refocus students on class goals.
3. **Legitimacy of Web Sites.** Using the Internet is one way to spark interest in your topic, but students must not leave class thinking that every Web site visited in class is "scholarly." For example, one Web site offers an applet to help students determine the "sex" of their brain. While useful for generating classroom discussion, that Web applet should not be confused for a scholarly resource. Other sites have similar credibility issues.
4. **A Computer Exercise for Everything.** The laptop is a tool the instructor can use to facilitate learning, but it should never become the focus of the class. Some topics are better covered in small-group discussions, while others are better brought to life with role-playing techniques such as skits. Sometimes the laptop is not the best teaching and learning tool. The key is to use the most appropriate medium for the material to be covered. The CEO Forum on Education and Technology put it nicely when they concluded from a review of studies that "technology can have the greatest impact when integrated into the curriculum to achieve clear, measurable educational objectives."<sup>8</sup>
5. **Instructor Preparation.** Integrating wireless laptop technology requires instructors to learn a new set of skills to be effective. As mentioned earlier, first and foremost,

instructors must have a laptop if they are expected to integrate it into classroom practices. Additionally, instructors who see and experience the effective strategies and techniques for integrating laptops into classroom practices will be much more confident and likely to integrate laptops into their classrooms.

*A laptop classroom requires quite a repertoire of moves, strategies, tactics and procedures to make sure learning occurs.*

Example 1: An effective teacher will instruct students to move the furniture around as mentioned earlier to match the landscape to the activity.

Example 2: An effective teacher will move about the room when students are working on laptop challenges, checking, monitoring, assisting and intervening or supporting as necessary.

Example 3: An effective teacher will scan the room with frequency to figure out where to move next but will also use eyeballing and eye contact to make some of those movements less necessary as many students respond well to such gestures.

Example 4: An effective teacher will announce a coming shift of activity with enough time so that students can wrap up what they are doing. "In two minutes I will be asking you to turn around and join me for the next activity."

Example 5: An effective teacher will ask students to "shut laptop lids" when laptops would not prove useful. Sometimes a single laptop shared by a pair or trio works better than one-on-one. Sometimes a group discussion is best served by cooling laptops.

Example 6: An effective teacher will call for complete attention prior to demonstrating a series of instructions. "I need 100 per cent eye contact now."

Example 7: An effective teacher will hold many conferences with individual students and teams, guiding, suggesting, encouraging and supporting their work in various ways.

Example 8: An effective teacher will devote lots of energy to assessment, most of it informal, asking how things are going and what needs to be adjusted.