

Chapter 13

The iPad: A Mobile Learning Device and Innovative Note-Taking Tool

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ABSTRACT

Mobile learning is becoming more prominent in all levels of education. While educators strive to keep up with the learning needs of twenty-first century students, research on best practices for mobile devices in the classroom is limited. There is a great deal of research on traditional note-taking, but mobile devices have changed the way students take notes. While electronic note-taking began with simply typing notes on a laptop computer, it has quickly transformed into a multitude of options with various note-taking applications (apps). The purpose of this chapter is to provide a brief review of mobile devices and note-taking in K-12 classrooms. Additionally, it reviews and compares features of eight note-taking applications. These apps change how notes are taken, organized, stored, and accessed. This chapter provides an overview of each application with specific examples using Notability, as well as the advantages and disadvantages of taking notes on the iPad.

INTRODUCTION

Mobile learning, the concept of both teaching and learning using electronic mobile devices (Kaganer, Giordano, Biron, & Tortoriello, 2013), has grown into an accepted form of learning for twenty-first century students in both K-12 and higher education settings. Although the mobile learning phase began with laptops on carts and eventually expanded to cell phones and tablets, many school districts now implement bring your own device (BYOD) or bring your own technology (BYOT) policies (Grant, Tamim, Brown, Sweeney, Ferguson, & Jones, 2015; Hill, 2011) that allow students to use personal devices during instructional time. Additionally, school districts have purchased mobile devices such as Apple's

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The iPad

iPad and Google Chromebooks for students in one-to-one technology initiatives aimed at providing every student with a device.

Regardless of how students access technology, mobile device use has increased in the United States (Pearson Education, 2015). Each year, the Pearson Student Mobile Device Survey is administered to students in grades 4-12 across the United States. According to the most recent survey, students are currently using laptops, hybrid devices, a mixture of a laptop and handheld tablet, tablets, and cell phones in the classroom while 1 in 5 students attend a school that offers every student a mobile learning device (Pearson Education, 2015). These results suggest that mobile learning is nationally present and must be considered when designing and planning classroom instruction.

Note-taking, one of the most common classroom practices used to organize and learn content material, is now possible through multiple applications available on mobile devices. Recent research focuses on typing notes, often verbatim, and has found that comprehension and retention decreases as compared to traditional pencil and paper note-taking (Aguilar-Roca, Williams, & O'Dowd, 2012; Muller & Oppenheimer, 2014; Sana, Weston, & Cepeda, 2013). However, taking notes has transformed from just typing. It is now possible to draw, organize, search, record, import, and edit notes through multiple applications available on mobile devices. The current applications provide students with ubiquitous access to their course notes and provide users with multiple note-taking features.

The purpose of this chapter is to contribute to existing research on mobile device use in the classroom while providing a deeper look into how iPads can be used for note-taking purposes in a K-12 educational setting. Objectives of the chapter include:

1. **Mobile Devices in K-12 Education:** Providing a brief literature review about mobile device use in K-12 classrooms.
2. **Note-taking Using Mobile Devices:** Explaining the difference between traditional note-taking and note-taking using an electronic device.
3. **Note-taking Applications:** Providing descriptions of the following applications: Evernote, Microsoft OneNote, MyScript Memo, Notability, Penultimate, Simplenote, Notepad+, Metmoji NoteLite, with specific emphasis on explaining the Notability application using Apple's iOS.
4. **Note-taking Using the iPad:** Describing and providing student note-taking examples of taking notes using an iPad and the Notability application.
5. **Advantages and Disadvantages:** Explaining current advantages and disadvantages of taking notes using mobile devices, and providing practitioner suggestions to overcome technological barriers.

BACKGROUND: MOBILE DEVICES IN K-12 EDUCATION

Mobile learning and the number of mobile devices present in K-12 classrooms worldwide have continued to rise, and in the United States, the increase in device use has been consistent throughout the past few years. A 2010 survey found 71% of high school students believed that the number one way to make learning easier was to allow more access to digital content and resources (Hill, 2011). In just seven years, the number of schools that have lifted their cell phone ban has surpassed the number of schools that banned student cell phone use during the day. In 2009, a study conducted by Common Sense Media found 69% of schools banned cell phone use during the day (Hill, 2011). By 2016, more than 70% of schools had lifted their cell phone bans (Walker, 2016).

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