The benefits of using Edmodo in the school

Title: The benefits of using Edmodo in the school.

Abstract
The following article explains what Edmodo is, its different uses in the classroom and the benefits of using it with students. It is explained in a simple way so all those who do not know what it is about can get the main idea and feel motivated to use it in class. Its most remarkable characteristics are mentioned as well and also the competences that our students will develop thanks to the use of this educative platform.
Keywords: English, Edmodo, educative platform, 2.0 school

Título: Los beneficios de usar Edmodo en la escuela.

Resumen
El siguiente artículo explica que es la plataforma educativa Edmodo, sus distintos usos en el aula y los beneficios de utilizarla con alumnos. Esta explicado de una manera sencilla para que todos aquellos que no sepan lo que es entiendan de que trata y se animen a utilizarla en clase. Se mencionan las características más importantes que tiene y las competencias que desarrollaran nuestros alumnos gracias a la utilización de esta plataforma.
Palabras clave: Ingles, Edmodo, plataforma educativa, escuela 2.0.

There have been 2 years already that I started using this platform in the school and I would like to share my experience with all of you. In this article I explain briefly what Edmodo is and how it works, as well the benefits of using it in the class.

Some of you may know it and use it in your lessons, others have heard about it before and few ones do not have an idea of what Edmodo is about.

All right, for the ones that it sounds totally new, let´s say that Edmodo is like a Facebook created to be used with our students and even with their parents. At first, it might sound scary. However , it is a brilliant way to communicate with them and to make lessons and tasks more enjoyable and adapted to the technological era we live in.

If you are still interested in it you may ask yourself ¨What can I use it for with my students?¨   So, Edmodo is a network where the teacher creates different class groups. Each class group has a code and only the students from that area can join it. For instance, you can have 5th grade arts and crafts group or 6th grade science group. When you have all of your students in that group you can share digital resources , create polls for students to vote online, write short summaries of lessons for students who were absent from class, post homework information and create quizzes they have to answer to individually.

The use of this online platform in the school is recommended for 5th and 6th grade students.

To start with, it is important to make clear the characteristics of this online networking application for teachers and students.

It is remarkable to say that it is a free application so the only staff teachers and students need in order to to use it is a laptop or a tablet. In the 2.0 schools all the students have these devices as they are replacing the traditional books so it is not difficult to have the chance to download it.

This tool can also be downloaded in mobile phones so teachers have the opportunity to review their students´ tasks at any time.

Even though the app is to communicate with our students it also provides several ways for teachers to connect with other teachers from all over the world. This is excellent because you can exchange materials, opinions, ideas and other resources with them easily.

Security is a crucial aspect when talking about internet and kids. Nowadays, using online tools in the class can become a risky method as some student can use it in an inadequate way with the main goal of harming other class mates. Because of this reason, the use of Edmodo in the classes it is always a good choice. It is a safe place for our kids due to the fact that each class group is managed and controlled by the teacher, which is a relief.

In order to log in, students and teachers have their own password like in any other network and once inside the site, in order to join a class group students need a group code that teacher needs to provide them with, otherwise they cannot have access to that group´s information.

A very positive point is that the network does not allow students to send private messages so it avoids any problem among students such as bullying. Learners can only communicate with the teacher and the later can delete any post that does not consider it correct. Moreover, parents have the opportunity to have access to their son´s /daughter´s and teacher´s posts if wished.

The benefits of using this tool in our subjects are many, some of them mentioned below already. However, if you still have some doubts about using Edmodo in you lessons let´s mention some more.

Students do not only have the chance to use it in the school, they can also log in and use it at home. Thanks to it, they feel really motivated and keen on their tasks. They can do their homework at the same time they communicate with their teacher or ask questions to their peers.

The exchange of recourses is not only possible among teachers but among students too. Teachers can share a range of resources such as websites, files, blogs, presentations, documents and images or embedded YouTube clips with students. This fact is really motivating for the teachers and students.

We do not have to forget that one of the keys for the success when teaching is to maintain our students motivated and interested on what we are teaching them. For that, Edmodo is a great system because learners can participate in online discussions, they have a real audience for their work and can create connections with other students from different schools, states, or cultures. This last advantage is always exciting and a very good way to make our students practice their English if we are English teachers.

We also have to take advantage of the fact that kids love working with computers, so using them they can also learn in a funny way.

This network is very useful for our student to keep everything under control and organized because there is a calendar where they have their corresponding tasks for each day and they also have text alerts to remind them of big assignments. As you see there is no excuse not to do the tasks!

As I have mentioned at the beginning of this article, parents can feel involved in their son´s / daughter´s education as they have the opportunity to create their own account and read all the tasks their kids undertake. They can also communicate with the teacher and be updated with the latest news.

Many of you might think that this platform is very motivating and useful but you will wonder how we evaluate the tasks our students carry out. Here comes the answer, Edmodo corrects the quizzes immediately and gives an immediate feedback to students. They know their marks and any comment that the teacher writes. Moreover, Teachers can give students positive reinforcement privately.

All in all, I can say that Edmodo is a very good tool to be used in the school because it helps our students being competent. They develop their technological competence as they learn how to use not only the software but the net in a safe and respectful way. They develop their technological skills for their working future and get used to use the computers not only to play and have fun but to study too.

Using a 2.0 tool in class develops their learning to learn competence and builds independence in our kids as they are responsible for doing the work.

I strongly recommend you to try it in one of your lessons, bear ing mind that is the premier social media and learning platform for teachers and students alike and over 500,000 students are using it worldwide.

The site is available in different languages, not only in English but in Spanish.

Below you can see a screen shot of how is the main menu students see.

Image resource: edmodo

•