



Apple Distinguished Educator Makes Three Key Education Trend Predictions, Fully Supported by the Labdisc



Andrew Rhodes, originally a science teacher from London, is one of a select few Apple Distinguished Educators who show teachers and administrators around the world how Apple technologies can support learning. Andrew currently works as the Director of Technology for the international school of Stavanger in Norway, where he's always on the lookout for exciting new education technologies that have the potential to change learning outcomes for the better.

GlobiLab for iPad first impressions:

"I found GlobiLab for iPad very intuitive. It has a lot more functionality than other similar solutions with limited analysis features. Most teachers want to use the iPad for data logging because it's a more practical tool, but then find they have to export the data to the computer in order to analyze it. With Globisens this isn't the case. They didn't just create software for the iPad as a companion to the PC version. The GlobiLab is a complete stand-alone solution, plus there's extra interest with features like Google maps integration.

Andrew predicts three key educational trends that the Labdisc fully supports:

- Multi-disciplinary activities – easy & early
- The role of teacher as "facilitator"
- Technology purchases that can demonstrate measurable value

1st Trend: Multi-disciplinary activities – easy & early:

Schools are looking for tools to aid challenge-based learning for multi-disciplinary projects that bring science closer to real life. Students are supposed to be using data loggers from the top end of primary school, right the way through secondary school - for GCSE and A Level. The reality is most schools ignore data logging because equipment is too tricky. At best they may use a digital thermometer and manually plot the data on a graph because it's too complicated to get a data logger out.

The Labdisc is easy to use, even for getting primary school students interested in science, environmental science and geography activities. I've used many sensors from competitor brands in my Apple workshops and there is just too much to plug in, students lose the peripherals or items get dumped in a cupboard. With the Labdisc everything is built in, you don't even need a cable for the computer, making for really easy storage and application.

2nd Trend: The new role of teacher as “facilitator”

As technology increasingly enters schools, many educators are struggling with the changing role of the teacher. No longer a font of all knowledge, standing front of class trying to fill students’ heads with as much content as possible; teachers now function instead as facilitators. Today’s students have more access to information in their pocket than any teacher could ever teach. Adapting to this new role is a state of mind, being open to tools like the Labdisc that allow a more creative approach and engage their students. Practically it’s about teaching students how to research and perform activities independently, then put data into a format that’s useful and interesting for other people. Teachers who’ve achieve this have found their professional lives a lot more interesting.

3rd Trend: Demonstrating measurable value

Over the last two decades schools have spent a lot of money of technology, whether interactive boards or data logging tools, they are now being expected to show the educational benefits. When I was a teacher we had drawers full of equipment because we’d had the budget. But they weren’t easy to use, we didn’t get enough training, or whiteboards were just used as expensive projectors. Essentially all the expensive technology had virtually no impact on teaching and learning. Teachers will now have to make purchases that they know can measurably change learning outcomes. I think the learning opportunities offered by the Labdisc are very promising and would expect this tool to be regularly used.

