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Positive use of Chat

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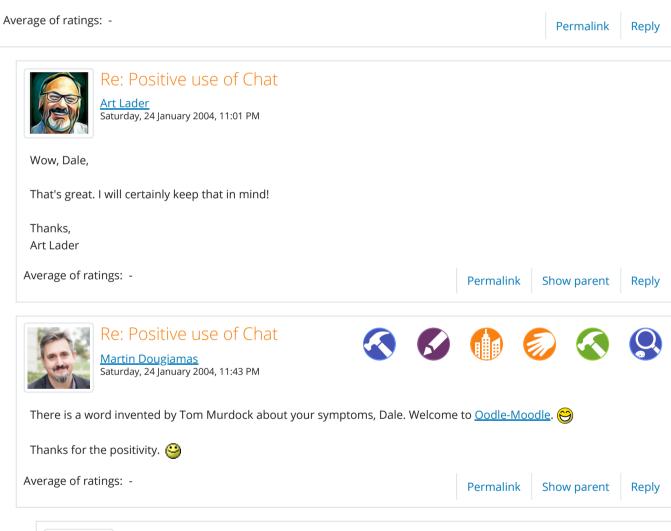This discussion has been locked so you can no longer reply to it.

Positive use of Chat

Dale Jones
Saturday, 24 January 2004, 9:14 PM

These forums give positive comments all too rarely. Am I looking in the wrong places? If that's the case then this posting is in the wrong place...but here goes.

I have two classes of 14 year-olds sitting UK GCSE qualifications in ICT. I deliver the course through Moodle with increasing success. Last week I had to take two afternoons off as part of my paternity leave - leaving these pupils with no ICT specialist help. Before I left I told them to open the course chat room, and when I got home I did the same and was able to give assistance as you would expect. The chat worked like a dream, apart from slight lag (I'll look at settings to fix that) and occasionally crashing (any ideas why this might be?). The students help each other too which is superb.

The upshot is that I was able to remotely support my students in real time. One of the implications of this is that I can support students in two classrooms - the class is too large for one room - supporting them via chat. It's brilliant.

FWIW, my wife was NOT impressed with my supporting students on my afternoon off! Oh well...

Average of ratings: -

Permalink   Reply

Re: Positive use of Chat

Art Lader
Saturday, 24 January 2004, 11:01 PM

Wow, Dale,

That's great. I will certainly keep that in mind!

Thanks,
Art Lader

Average of ratings: -

Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Positive use of Chat

Martin Dougiamas
Saturday, 24 January 2004, 11:43 PM

There is a word invented by Tom Murdock about your symptoms, Dale. Welcome to Oodle-Moodle. 😄

Thanks for the positivity. 🙂

Average of ratings: -

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Re: Positive use of Chat

Dale Jones
Saturday, 24 January 2004, 11:58 PM

Oh dear, I think you're right. 😵
My wife shows no pride in her becoming a specialist "moodle widow" rather than a "pc widow". There's no pleasing some people...

Average of ratings: -

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Re: Positive use of Chat

Dale Jones
Saturday, 31 January 2004, 7:19 PM

Thought you might like the continuing saga...
The class mentioned above broke yet more new ground this week. One of their number was absent (he'd been

in class.

This class now wholly accept the online environment in its entirety and they are beginning to use the many facets to their advantage. They are developing onto good independent learners, and the only complaint I have is that I don't have enough time to put sufficiently broad learning materials in the system for them to use - though this will improve as the years progress. Only Moodle has made this possible - we operate a DigitalBrain environment too, but I find their implementation cumbersome.

Is there an emoticon for glowing praise and gratitude? I need both...

Average of ratings: -   Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Positive use of Chat

Richard Treves
Thursday, 5 February 2004, 12:23 AM

Hi Dale,

Interesting to hear your experiences of chat. I have to say I have always been suspisious of it as a medium, it seems to slow everything down so much and needs so much work to put back the none verbal communication you lose.

However, I am also open to the thought that its just because I'm not used to it that I find it slow and if I put in some time I would get quicker naturally. Your report has encouraged me to try it again sometime in the future.

I am also jealous of your students, adult learners need a whole lot more support getting going in a new medium.

All the best

Richard

Average of ratings: -   Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Positive use of Chat

Tom Murdock
Thursday, 5 February 2004, 1:56 AM

In a slight modification of the prior testimonials: I had a teacher sick the other day and I couldn't find coverage for him. He didn't think he could get to the computer from home, either.

So I took the students into the computer lab, logged them into a Moodle chatroom and said, "Tonight your teacher will read over this chat log and find out who participated and what each person contributed. He might want to grade you on this discussion."

The kids were fantastic. I gave them three or four questions to consider and they worked on them for an hour without complaint. The log was a very clear document for the returning teacher. I would say that the Moodle chat was a far better substitute teacher than I might have found otherwise.

Average of ratings: Useful (1)   Permalink   Show parent   Reply

Re: Positive use of Chat

Dale Jones
Thursday, 5 February 2004, 8:52 AM

...and the downside of the chat module is ...

I was off sick the other day but still felt compelled to support learners in a lesson. Again, they were all really great at using chat (except for three girls who abused the bandwidth by the usual text messaging/chatrrom rubbish, namely "Hiya, how are ya, wot udoin, who u lovin" tripe. They were sitting next to each other at the time - I phoned the teacher in charge who gave them a piece of my mind!). I must admit I felt better after the session but it was lightspeed typing for an hour - they were quite demanding but that's all to the good - engaged and motivated learners are the best kind IMO and they don't deserve my absence.

My favourite solution to a problem was finding the paper for the printer ... the office were really puzzled when one of my students turned up and told them that "Mr Jones sent me for a ream of paper". You see, they knew I was ill! Such moments of glee are rare.

Of course, my long-suffering wife was yet more indignant than usual when she heard my keyboard rattling and sent me back to bed. Wait until I get that wireless LAN installed...
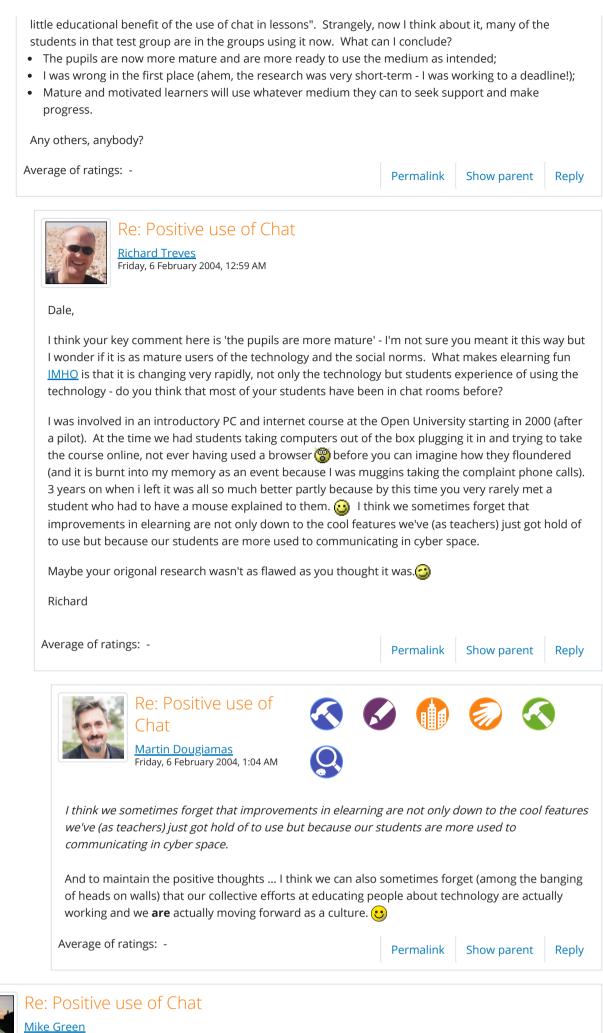
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Re: Positive use of Chat

Dale Jones
Thursday, 5 February 2004, 8:41 AM

little educational benefit of the use of chat in lessons". Strangely, now I think about it, many of the students in that test group are in the groups using it now. What can I conclude?

- The pupils are now more mature and are more ready to use the medium as intended;
- I was wrong in the first place (ahem, the research was very short-term - I was working to a deadline!);
- Mature and motivated learners will use whatever medium they can to seek support and make progress.

Any others, anybody?

Average of ratings: -

Re: Positive use of Chat

Richard Treves
Friday, 6 February 2004, 12:59 AM

Dale,

I think your key comment here is 'the pupils are more mature' - I'm not sure you meant it this way but I wonder if it is as mature users of the technology and the social norms. What makes elearning fun IMHO is that it is changing very rapidly, not only the technology but students experience of using the technology - do you think that most of your students have been in chat rooms before?

I was involved in an introductory PC and internet course at the Open University starting in 2000 (after a pilot). At the time we had students taking computers out of the box plugging it in and trying to take the course online, not ever having used a browser 😵 before you can imagine how they floundered (and it is burnt into my memory as an event because I was muggins taking the complaint phone calls). 3 years on when i left it was all so much better partly because by this time you very rarely met a student who had to have a mouse explained to them. 🙂 I think we sometimes forget that improvements in elearning are not only down to the cool features we've (as teachers) just got hold of to use but because our students are more used to communicating in cyber space.

Maybe your origonal research wasn't as flawed as you thought it was.😎

Richard

Average of ratings: -

Re: Positive use of Chat

Martin Dougiamas
Friday, 6 February 2004, 1:04 AM

I think we sometimes forget that improvements in elearning are not only down to the cool features we've (as teachers) just got hold of to use but because our students are more used to communicating in cyber space.

And to maintain the positive thoughts ... I think we can also sometimes forget (among the banging of heads on walls) that our collective efforts at educating people about technology are actually working and we **are** actually moving forward as a culture. 🙂

Average of ratings: -

Re: Positive use of Chat

Mike Green
Monday, 28 May 2007, 4:47 AM

I don't usually use Chat, but I advertised a one-hour last-minute advice/therapy session to my students on the evening before their exam. It worked really nicely, and I will do it again. Nice, I think, to give students a friendly and understanding point of contact at a time of potential stress. One student wasn't going to bother turning up for the exam as she didn't think it was worth it, and I was able to talk her into attending - so just on that result it was worth it!

Average of ratings: -

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