

[Recording starts 0:00:00]

Vicki Davis:

Everything you do matters but everything you don't do matters just as much. Every little thing you do or don't do steers life onto a slightly different course. Teachers, you know I want you to be remarkable and I want to be remarkable too and I've been reading a book this weekend called *The Little Things* <http://amzn.to/2lzVwnB> by Andy Andrews. I'll tell you more about it at the end of the show, I'll be giving away copies of this book this week and I'll also tell you about a free curriculum that Andy Andrews is releasing for teachers and our students.

Suzy Lolley:

"I can collect those in a reasonable amount of time without having one child at my desk reading to me or demonstrating that task while I'm trying to keep the other 25 on task?"

Vicki Davis:

The Ten-minute Teacher podcast with Vicki Davis. Every week day you'll learn powerful practical ways to be a more remarkable teacher today.

VICKI: Happy Tech Tool Tuesday. Today we're talking to Suzy Lolley [@suzyloley](mailto:suzy@lolley.com) from Cherokee County here in Georgia where I'm located. Now, today we're going to talk about Seesaw and this is a really interesting tool because we know that we need to assess more than just tests. But a lot of people wonder, how can we do that? Well, one great way to do that is with student portfolios. So as we talk about Seesaw, this is really a tool that we can use with elementary kids. So, Suzy, tell us a little bit about Seesaw. Describe it for us.

SUZY: Well, I've been showing it a lot to teachers, I'm an instructional technologist specialist and so what I love is I get to go in and show different teachers. So the way I say it in a nutshell is it's a way to get what's on the iPad off. A lot of times, especially classrooms that are not one-to-one with iPads, maybe the media center has a cart and they would go in and check them out or do an activity and then it's like, "Okay, put the iPad down, time to go." And so Seesaw is a great way to get what's on the iPad off.

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And it's also a great digital refrigerator for parents and teachers and other students to be able to provide an authentic audience for student work. So that portfolio component you were talking about.

VICKI: Okay. Digital refrigerator. So what you're saying is the kids can post things in Seesaw and then the parents can look at it too?

SUZY: Yes. What's so cool about it is Seesaw is really big into privacy, so parents get a special QR code that when they download the free Seesaw app, and you can get that on multiple devices. It will have a QR code that just connects them to their one child. And so they see what their child turns in and they're able to give comments, likes and probably more stuff than they would ever see in a paper or folder that a teacher would send home.

VICKI: Now, I've heard that some people are even using these with IEP plans and to really connect all of the people helping a child. Have you seen that in practice?

SUZY: It's kind of a new initiative in our district, but I was showing it to a teacher who's in that situation, she's an EIP teacher in the elementary school and another teacher of autism and she said this would be a great way to provide, not only documentation she needs as a teacher with [ticks] and different evaluation plans but also so parents could see exactly what's going on in the classroom. So yes, it works with all different types of populations.

VICKI: Okay. So let's talk workflow here, you have a teacher who has, let's say 30 kids, and all 30 kids are checking out and using the iPads for one class period. What kind of assignment might they be doing and how would it get on to Seesaw?

SUZY: It's so easy, I love that. The first time students connect, when the teacher signs up she is immediately emailed, like a QR code class poster. She can also choose with older grades to have them sign in with a Gmail account.

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But the ones I've shared with, we've used the QR sign-in. And even if the kid can't hold the iPad straight, scans half that QR code it still somehow knows that they're in Ms. Davis' class. And so they're able to scan in, immediately they're joined to the class and on the very first dashboard page it gives them like six options. Like, what do you want to turn into your teacher? There's video, anything that's on your camera roll; a picture, a note, a link. So they click the button, it's very visual. You can tell it was developed by teachers, there's nothing complicated about it. And so the student choosing what they want to turn in, it immediately takes them to a page where they can either take that picture or make that video or pull from the camera roll whatever they chose. And then it's a series of green checkmarks where they walk through, they choose their little – it gives them an avatar that's an animal especially for the younger kids, that's wonderful.

Think about kindergarteners that don't necessarily know how to spell everything. They know, "Hey, I'm the penguin." And when they select the penguin, that's them, and then they check keep touching the green checkmark until their work is submitted. So everything is so easy for students. It's a very good workflow.

VICKI: Okay. So are you telling me they don't have to read to be able to make this digital portfolio?

SUZY: Absolutely not. The teacher and even parents can give – you know, for example, I’m a teacher and I want them to learn this list of psych words in kindergarten. I’m picking kindergarten because if they can do it everybody can do it. So I’m the teacher and I say, here’s our list of psych words for the week. I as a teacher can distribute to everybody with one click, a video of me reading the psych words. And then what’s so cool is a student can push one button and as they’re learning to read they can read those back to me. So I’m collecting, maybe, the whole class’s work sample, or reading exercise, fluency test or whatever it is. I can collect those in a reasonable amount of time without having to have one child at my desk reading to me or demonstrating that task while I’m trying to keep the other 25 on task from killing each other.

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So it’s lovely that I’ve got such a great workflow.

VICKI: Okay. So it all gets turned in and the cart gets packed up and goes over to another class. You’re wanting to assess these kids, what does that look like?

SUZY: You can assess in multiple ways if you have your own iPhone, Android phone, it works on multiple phones. It also works on the computer; you go to seesaw.me and you will have access to quickly flip through, it gives you a number with some notifications. So for example, maybe it was a heavy Seesaw day, every kid turned in two things. Then I’ve, maybe, got 50 notifications I’ve got to go through. I have two methods I can do. I can quickly flip through them and then I can touch on button that says “approve all” or I can approve one by one. But it’s with a touch of a finger or a touch of a mouse and I can do that at the nail salon, I can do that in my classroom. It makes grading convenient when I’m ready to do it.

VICKI: Okay. But you’re not airing grades in Seesaw, are you giving any feedback?

SUZY: You can give feedback. Parents only see their one child, but students all see each other and it’s part of that digital citizenship, we want them to have that authentic audience. So I would not attach a grade in Seesaw otherwise everybody is going to see it, but I definitely can leave either voice or written comments for students.

VICKI: Okay. So students are seeing each other’s work, does that create problems or are they giving each other feedback or what?

SUZY: They are. And actually I was in elementary school today where I saw some really great feedback, you have an option as a teacher. You have this “manage classroom” button where you can setup whatever options you want including you can disable commenting by students or disable likes. What I like, though, and what I recommend to teachers is leave comments turned on but leave them moderated. So the student is not going to be able to write anything inappropriate that’s going to go to parents or go to other students and get them or you in trouble. You have the choice to moderate comments as they come in.

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And then students have the ability to have, again, authentic audience and be able to practice digital citizenship without you worrying that maybe something inappropriate would be on there. You would be able to take that appropriate action or discipline or whatever before the comment is released to a public audience.

VICKI: Okay. Suzy, so as we finish, what is Seesaw not suitable for or not good for?

SUZY: If you're in a district or a classroom that's not going to have access to iPads or to – you know, you can use it on the website but you would be better off using it on a device. So if you're a school that just does not have the shared device or one-to-one device capability it may not be for you. But I have seen it work well if you've at least got some devices. I had a teacher in one school who was able to just say, you know what? We're going to take a Seesaw day. Maybe I can't get them every week but when I get a chance to get them then we're going to kind of submit several items to our Seesaw journals, is what it's called, at the same time.

So it may not be good if you never can get devices because, I think, the picture-taking on a laptop would be a little more cumbersome. But if you can access them, at least, some of the time I think it would be a great tool.

VICKI: Okay. Remarkable teachers, here you have it. One of my favorite tools for student portfolios especially for very, very young students. Get out there and try Seesaw. Looking up Suzy Lolley online, she's given a fantastic overview. And Happy Tech Tool Tuesday.

So my book of the week this week is *The Little Things* by Andy Andrews. I'm giving away five copies of the book. Just head over to iTunes or Stitcher to be entered to win and leave a review along with your twitter or Instagram handle. Also, head over to his website at andyandrews.com/media-education to take a look at all the really cool free curriculum that he has there for you. Now, get out there and be remarkable.

Thank you for listening to the Ten-minute Teacher Podcast. You can download the show notes and see the archive at coolcatteacher.com/podcast. Never stop learning.

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