Episode 19

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00:29 Speaker 1: Welcome to episode 19 of the PE Geek Podcast. And wherever you're tuning in from, whether you're driving to work, or you're on a run, or you're doing some exercise at the gym, or you're doing some chores, or the dishes, or you're just sitting on the couch and relaxing after a hard day's work, I really thank you for tuning in, because without the feedback that is in the form of downloads and plays of the episode, I really wouldn't be motivated to do this. And I know for a fact that now, because of people sending me e-mails, saying when the next episode is, suggesting ideas for episodes, that I'm absolutely motivated to do it.

01:11 S1: And I've just gone and scheduled the next six episodes, and it's not something I normally do. Normally, I'm thinking about one episode ahead, but I've gone and planned out the next six episodes, to bring us right up to episode 25, which is that quarter of a century. And we're gonna be covering all sorts of things, from dance. We've got a whole episode dedicated to using dance in your classroom, that's episode 20. Right up to how you can motivate running and exercise, and even doing an episode on mindfulness in PE, and things like yoga and those sorts of practices, which are really getting big headways in lots of different spaces.

01:52 S1: So, today's episode's going to be focusing on the role of assessment, and the different tools that you can use to help you become more efficient in this regard. And just a little bit of a round-up of some of the things that people are using and doing with Google in their classroom, to help with assessment and make it more efficient and effective, and I'm gonna be shouting out a few teachers that I think are doing some really good stuff in that regard.

02:18 S1: Now, before we dive into the content, I just wanted to point out an upcoming venture that I have. I shouldn't say venture. An upcoming website that I have that's gonna be launching in 2015, and the basic idea is that it is all about raising money for your PE programs. And if you've ever seen the website "Kickstarter" or "GoFundMe," basically you put up a campaign, and people from all around the world fund the campaign if they believe in it and if they like to support it. So I'm bringing that to the PE world, and that you will be able to go onto the site, and you'll be able to do it all for free. Post your campaign and I'm gonna pick a campaign a month to fund in it's entirety, and people from all over the world, and even in your community will have a platform to provide funds for that.

03:14 S1: Now it could be anything. The projects are designed to be small, in that you can raise $50 or you can raise up to $500. And you basically say what you're going to be using it for, people contribute, you share those links to your social networks and your community and so on, and at the end of... If you raise all your funds, or whether you raise half your funds, those funds are sent to you and you can go ahead and... You can make use of... You'll make good on your promise.

03:44 S1: And as I mentioned, I'm going to choose to fund a project on the site in its absolute entirety, once a month. And that's to encourage people to jump on, to get signed up and to contribute as much as they possibly can to growing and helping PE go into the masses. Now I should point out that I'm not gonna be raising my own funds on there, at all, and it's not designed for people to contribute funds to me, it's the absolute opposite. It's for people to raise funds for their own programs, and I'm just going to be sticking to my agreement of choosing one that I think resonates with me every single month, and funding it in its entirety. And I certainly hope that the community

gets behind it. Yeah, it's really exciting for me because I know that it's gonna be giving back to all the people that have made this possible for me. So let's dive into the content.

[pause]

04:42 S1: Sections in the PE Geek workshops is a whole afternoon focused around assessment, and varying tools that you can use to become more efficient and effective in that regard. And I wanted to share these with you, and talk about how they're used and what you can do with them. And, hopefully, you can find a place for these in your classroom if they fit your needs. Now, the very first tool, and probably really close to my heart is my app Easy Assessment.

05:14 S1: It is actually one of the first apps I ever built. Back in 2011 I think I released it in a very early stage and it slowly changed in that regard. But the basic focus of this app, and the reason I built it, was because of basically an angry parent. And that angry parent came into school one day, before the app was built, and demanded evidence of the student that I was teaching. They actually wanted to see skill progression and skill learning, and this was not something that I could show them very easily. I didn't have any tools at that stage that would enable me to capture some video and match it to a rubric.

05:59 S1: But it got me thinking that, "Wouldn't it be nice if there was an app or there was a tool that enabled you to record a student in whatever capacity it was, and match that up with some sort of rubric that you'd created? And you could become accountable with the evidence to support what the judgement was that you were making." So this was basically the premise for the creation of Easy Assessment.

06:24 S1: And it's gone on to be heavily downloaded. I mean, there are about 200,000 users across the planet right now who have downloaded Easy Assessment. Obviously, not all of those are using it, but I know for a fact that a strong contingent of the users are PE teachers. Because after all, I did build it for PE teachers in that regard. So Easy Assessment makes it possible for you to create custom numerical rubrics so you can design them to suit whatever you need, and the ranges can be from one all the way through to 100, on a scale. And you can have individual criteria. And basically you assess students, either on the fly then or there, which I know some teachers do, or you can just capture the footage there, and then basically watch it as many times as you need to complete an accurate assessment.

07:16 S1: Now, this isn't appropriate for all things that you would do in PE. I mean, I know there are teachers using it to capture swimming, and do a stroke assessment and so on as they're going past... Swimming past the pool. They're doing an assessment and capturing some video of it. I know for a fact that I personally designed it for a lot of the aesthetic type elements where there is a product that is very suited to being filmed and recorded and being watched over and over, so that you can conduct an accurate assessment, things like a gymnastics presentation or a jump rope presentation or any sort of those stylistic type elements, they certainly fit perfectly for this.

07:53 S1: Now, Easy Assessment, I know for a fact, is being used in subjects broader than PE, when it comes to things like oral presentations. People recording the actual video of the oral presentation and then being able to watch it over and over and conduct the assessment. I mean, this is... This is why it's being so widely received is that the video is the supportive evidence that you can use to make an accurate judgement of the assessment.

08:21 S1: The other really positive feature about it is, it is quite easy to use and teachers are handing them over to students to create their own rubrics. And then, they're actually assessing each other with those rubrics, and it sort of makes this really impressive option in your class for peer assessment in a meaningful way. So, that's Easy Assessment. It's available for iPhone and also iPad and Android devices and it's certainly something that I know a lot of teachers are using to help with their assessment in a PE context.

08:59 S1: Now, the other app that I am a massive fan of and I blogged about it recently, and if you visit thepegeek.com/36, you'll see a blog post about it where I've actually got a video tutorial showcasing how exactly the app works. But the app I'm talking about is Assessmate. And Assessmate is quite amazing really because it's similar in that it's a rubrics-style app to Easy Assessment, but it does have some differences that I'm certain that you'll find useful.

09:37 S1: With Assessmate, the difference is that it doesn't necessarily allow you to create just numerical-style rubrics like my Easy Assessment app does. The difference is this is all criterion-based. So for example, you can create a rubric really easily in the app that basically indicates the actual identifiable factor that you're going to assess them on.

10:05 S1: So let's say, for example, the badminton serve was something that you were looking to assess students on. In Assessmate, it would basically have varying levels of achievement that they could achieve the badminton serve at. So for example, the first one might be "cannot serve over the net." The next one could be "can serve over the net but is inaccurate." The next one along could be "can serve over the net and reach their opponent" and et cetera and et cetera.

10:37 S1: And what that basically lets them do is tap on the actual criteria that that particular assessment would be at. Instead of in Easy Assessment where the criteria would be "serve" and then it would just be a number range. So two different ways to actually complete assessment. So I really like the way that Assessmate handles the ability to create rubrics. It's really seamless. It's really powerful. And at the end, it does give you an overall score for each student that you can then use to send out as part of a report card or send out as some other sort of information.

11:25 S1: Now, one of the features of Assessmate which makes it differ to Easy Assessment is that it actually doesn't let you take any sort of photographic or video evidence to support the judgement that you're making. So depending on what your objective was, if you're trying to support it with videos, then you're not gonna be able use Assessmate on its own for just that purpose. However, you can certainly use Easy Assessment. So I am finding that regardless of the tools and their different features, people choose to use the one that best fits their needs or maybe they have activities that support one app over another.

12:06 S1: However, one great thing to consider is, if your objective is to capture evidence and be able to present that to parents, or be able to showcase and use it for writing your own reports, then maybe, you need to use a completely different app altogether. And one that makes it really possible to create a portfolio of skills, of achievement, of learning in a really easy-to-navigate way. And if that sounds like something you're interested in, then I certainly recommend checking out the app, Three Ring. And Three Ring is an app that basically enables you to add your class list to the app. And from there, you can simply attach any sort of photo, video, audio, notational observations that you make.

12:52 S1: The basic premise is that you click on a student's name or multiple students. You then tap the type of media or content that you wanna attach to that portfolio. And then, you record it. So if it was a video, you would select all the students. You then, start to record the students doing what ever it is that you wish to log to their portfolio. And then, the second that you hit the stop recording, it's now saved into their permanent records, so that it can be reviewed later on. If you are only recording one student, then you only tap that student's name and that goes to just their portfolio.

13:27 S1: Now, inside the Three Ring app, you can then filter the records for each student. So you click on their name, and it brings up everything they've ever been involved in, that they were tagged in. And they can be photos, they can be videos, they could be an audio recording, all sorts of different things. And over time, you build up this incredible library of student achievement, which you can use to assess them on in other ways. You could have an assessment rubric out and be watching it, or you can just use it for discussions at Parent-Teacher night, or to reflect on things that you've done in class, really easy way to build up a bank of resources.

14:07 S1: Now, I should point out that Three Ring is entirely free, and you access the content via your Three Ring Account, which means that the videos and photos and so on, are stored in the Three Ring Service, completely for free. That doesn't suit everyone. Some schools have limitations on being able to store student information in certain cloud-based networks. And they might find that that's not something that the school supports. If that's the case, then you wanna probably consider using an app called, Easy Portfolio, which is mine. It's available on iPhone and Android. And it's my most downloaded and most successful app I've ever released, with half a million downloads across the... In all of the app stores.

14:51 S1: And what it lets you do is exactly like Three Ring. Add all your students, but then start to capture information and achievements of those students. The difference is that, that is stored on your device. It's not communicated to a server. It's just basically stored on your device for you to review. It means you can do it all off-line, which is I guess, a positive, whereas Three Ring, you need an internet connection. And the net result is that you have everything on the device, you can review it, you can send it to someone via email or via Dropbox Google drive if you choose. However, you don't need to do those things to be able to collate this information.

15:34 S1: Now, I have built Easy Portfolio for myself. Again, I wanted to get a document and curate information that was meaningful and would help me write my reports, and Easy Portfolio was certainly that. So at the end of a semester, people can click on a student's name, they can see all the videos, the photos, the audio that they have been involved in. And they can very easily make observations about that.

15:59 S1: Now, I am really proud of this app, because it is an award-winning app. It has won a couple of awards globally, in the United States and here in Australia. And it's also... It also is something that I donated to the One Laptop per Child program, and it's installed on the tablets that have gone out to third world countries all around the planet. And it basically means that, those people and those students can really document their learning.

16:26 S1: I basically think of Easy Portfolio as like the fridge, when you have your fridge and you put up student work and so on, on display? Well, Easy Portfolio is like the digital version of the fridge. You can document the learning taking place for every student. And then, you open up their

portfolio, and then you can see everything they have done. But this is not just physical things that you can document. It's video, and sounds, and observations, and all sorts of stuff in really meaningful way. So two choices, Three Ring or Easy Portfolio for that sort of ongoing style assessment that you can find really powerful.

17:13 S1: Now, last but not the least, I wanted to mention How powerful Google Apps is in the classroom. Now, Google Apps if you're unfamiliar, is a suite of tools released by Google that are sort of steered towards the education landscape. And it includes things like Google Drive, which lets you create documents, and spreadsheets, and presentations, all of it from within your browser. If you're familiar with Microsoft Office, think about that. But make it available inside of a web browser, and you've basically got Google Apps at its most basic foundation.

17:50 S1: Now, one of the things that you can create in Google Apps is a Google Form. Now, a Google Form basically lets you create something that can be filled in by other people. And you can create surveys, you can create questionnaires, you can create tests, you can create all sorts of forms that people can fill in and get information on. And you can get really advanced with this, I mean you can create sort of logic flows that if they fill in and respond in this way, then it takes them down a different path. That's something that you can do. But at its most basic, it gives you the ability to create multiple choice surveys, sliding boxes, short text, long text responses and so on.

18:36 S1: So what a lot of teachers are doing is that they're actually investigating how Google Forms could be used in their classroom. And this means that they can basically create a form that is filled out by students at the end of a class or during a class, and that becomes part of the assessment cycle. Another thing they could consider doing is creating a form that they use to conduct assessments, in much of the same way that we've spoken about Assessmate and so on, you can use Google Forms for that.

19:07 S1: Good thing is, Google forms aren't just tied to the iPhone or an iPad, they're accessible via any device that has an internet connection. So you can create a form, let's say, for heart rate response. And as students basically check their heart rate and they can record it in a Google form, and that can be saved into the spreadsheets that the forms connect with.

19:34 S1: Now, if all this sounds like something that you have no knowledge about whatsoever, then head over to thepegeek.com/google. And it's going to redirect you to a few resources that are really well constructed in terms of setting up, creating a form, how you then get that out to people so that they can fill it in and what you can do with it to take it to that next level.

19:59 S1: So really big advocate for Google Forms and Google Apps on a massive scale, and that's because I am a Google-certified teacher, and I certainly hope that you can see how beneficial this will be. There's a growing presence of physical educators around the planet and educators in general that are moving to the Google platform, because of the fact that they are device agnostic, it works on any platform, and there are really strong links to how you can use it for assessment.

20:28 S1: Okay, that basically brings us to the end of today's episode. As I mentioned, we wanted to focus on tools that you can use to be more efficient and effective related to assessment that help you use technology more effectively. Now, if you have any questions at all, you know that you can send them to me in the form of a voice mail at thepegeek.com/voicemail, and leave anything and I'll be more than happy to respond it... Respond to it I should say, and perhaps we will make it into a

podcast on its own.

21:02 S1: I should also point out that it is now possible to book me for a 15-minute free consultation. And I've just gone through and posted this recently, and we've had over 60 people take up that opportunity. You can do that by going to thepegeek.com/15min, 15-M-I-N. It'll give you a booking form where you can see when I'm available, book your spot, it'll match it to your time zone, and then we get on a call and discuss all the things that you have regarding PE and technology.

21:36 S1: And I've actually really enjoyed doing those, because not only am I helping people with the things and the problems that they're facing, but I'm actually finding that people are giving me ideas for new blog posts and new products and new things that I know I can build to make their life easier. And that's what it's all about, it's about sharing as much as possible and finding out the issues that people are facing with moving technology forward in a program.

22:05 S1: Remember that at the start of the episode, I mentioned that I am releasing the website that is all about crowd funding your needs in a PE program. And if you wanted to go and get on the early notification list for that, then the web URL is fundmype.com. And if you head to that site, enter your email in and we'll keep you in the loop of when we launch, and you'll be among the first people who can post up your campaigns and attract funding. And you may even be that first month fund completed by myself, which I'm intending to do for the duration of the site.

22:48 S1: Alright, thanks guys for tuning in, and I look forward to seeing you for All About Dance in episode 20.

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