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PARTNERSHIP WITH APPLE HELPS BUENA PARK MIDDLE SCHOOL KEEP PACE WITH TECHNOLOGY AND ENGAGE STUDENTS

Buena Park, CA — Ashley Song, known as “Apple Ashley,” gets her steps in at Buena Park Middle School every day. As an Apple Coach with the Apple Education division, she spends each day in and out of classrooms across the school teaching students and teachers alike to harness the power of iPad learning. Students never know where she may pop up on any given day – some days in math class, other days in science or history – but they do know that they’re sure to have a fun lesson and maybe learn a little something along the way. Today, the students in Ms. Ignacio’s sixth grade English/history block are creating a gif about Ancient Egypt. Through guided instruction, students personalize their backgrounds, animate an image of King Tut, and begin to add content.

While the students may think of her as a guest teacher, Apple Ashley’s role as a Professional Learning Specialist is more about teaching the teachers and less about her own direct instruction. Since August 2021, she has lead staff developments, helped teachers create their own subject-specific content, and co-taught lessons with them. Teachers can even book a time for her to come by to meet with them, but many just grab a moment with her on the fly.

On this particular day, Ms. Andros asks the office to send Apple Ashley to her classroom asap. Ms. Andros teaches the “Femineers” class, a hands-on engineering program designed to empower elementary students to engage with STEM, and she has a brand-new student who speaks only Spanish. She needs Ashley to help her set-up the “Translate” app that will allow for written and spoken translation in real-time. Ashley has already led a staff development about this resource, and she encouraged the staff to ask for one-on-one coaching as needed. I walk double-time to keep pace with Ashley as we head to the classroom. Ashley gives both Ms. Andros and the student a quick tutorial on how to use this app, and then she has them each try it out several times. Now, the student will be able to use the app to keep pace in all of her classes.

On our way back to the office, Ashley pauses to speak with the principal. She had been asked to implement a restorative, iPad-based practice that might supersede the age-old student lunch detention. With Ashley’s guidance, students now use a



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digital drawing app that allows them to create kindness postcards. The school prints the finished postcards, and the students distribute them to their peers, demonstrating the power of technology to support the whole child in addition to traditional, subject-based learning. The principal reports to Ashley that the students seem to be responding well to this new intervention (and the principal loves it!).

And what do the students in Ms. Ignacio's sixth grade English/history block say about it all? They have only five-star reviews for Apple Ashley and the use of technology to promote learning. "I like it because when we animate, we can be completely creative – totally free range," says Caleb. His friend Daniel agrees: "For math, we wrote multiplication facts and made a video lesson about them, with objects appearing or disappearing depending on which multiplication fact we're animating." He laughs and adds, "I do it on my free time too."

Evelyn talks about using Garage Band in her history class to make a rap about Ancient Egypt. "It really helped me learn and remember – kind of the way the 'ABC song' helped us learn the alphabet when we were little," she says. Daniel chimes in: "We made slides about the cities and how they voted, farmed, or about their gods, and then we put it together in a slideshow with a rap voice over!" He and Evelyn begin a self-conscious rendition of their Ancient Egypt rap for my benefit.

Like the Apple partnership itself, it was pretty impressive.

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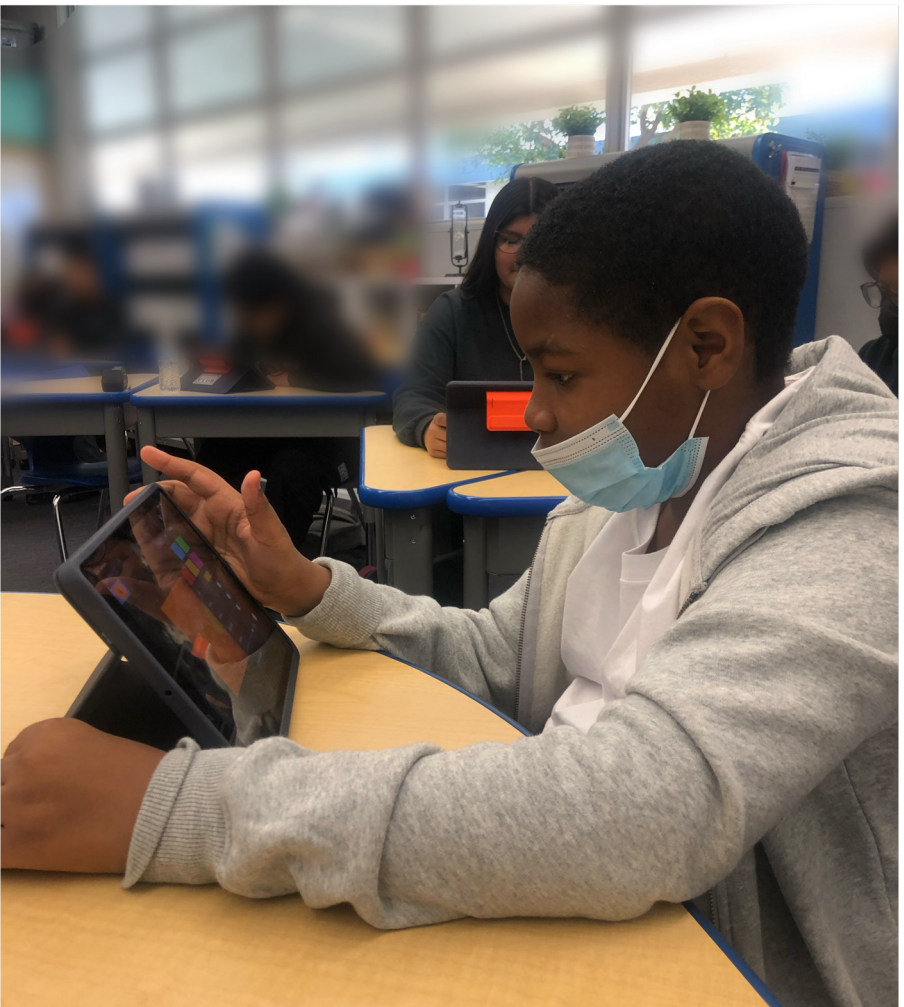
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Evelyn R. shows Adelmar G. how to animate King Tut.



Ke'Mond B. figures out how to personalize his background.