

Findings Abstract

Students' Perceptions of the Ameritech Classroom

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Every student interviewed has preferred learning in the Ameritech Classroom to learning in his or her regular classroom. Primary students (N = 26) prefer learning in the Ameritech Classroom because a) they like to collaborate (9; 35%); b) they believe it's easier to learn (8; 31 %); c) they believe they learn more (6; 23%); d) it's more fun (5; 19%); and e) it's more interesting (2; 8%). Middle school students' (N = 61) preferences center on a) freedom, flexibility, and choice (35; 57%); b) more productive interactions with other students and teachers (20; 33%); c) learning more (17; 29%); d) having fun while learning (15; 25%); e) the "better atmosphere" (10; 16%); f) more responsibility (9; 15%)- g) ease of learning (7;11%); h) ability to work faster (5; 8%); i) hands-on learning (5; 8%); and sustained time to learn (4; 7%). (Totals exceed 100% because the question is open-ended. Students frequently mentioned more than one reason for preferring the Ameritech Classroom.) Conclusions: Students are excellent informants about their perceptions. Education in the Ameritech Classroom is engaging and motivating. Students believe they learn more and more easily in an atmosphere like the Ameritech Classroom. Middle school students, especially, appreciate the respect shown them as learners and the freedom and choices they had to pursue their studies.