

**Education Research
is Powerful –
Be Careful How You Use It**

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Some question the real-world
relevance of education research.

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Last April, a preliminary study funded by the U.S. Department of Education might have put that question to rest.

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Publicity about this study collided with the strong predilection of general news media to view the glass as half empty.

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Here's a sampling of the headlines readers and viewers around the world got after ED released its study:

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CNN: *Study: No benefit going high-tech for math and reading*

China Post (Taiwan): *Software has no major impact on student performance: study*

Fox News: *Study: Computers in Classrooms Don't Make Kids Smarter*

The Age (Australia): *No benefit to adding math and science software products to classrooms, study says*

USA Today: *Software doesn't help hard numbers of math, science scores*

Gulf News (United Arab Emirates): *No benefit by adding math software to classrooms*

Boston Globe, Business Week, Forbes: *Study: Test scores unmoved by technology*

WIFR-TV (Freeport--Rockford, Ill.): *Education Technology Isn't Helping*

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In other words, skepticism in the general press was as rare as socks on a chicken.

- The news media at large were gullible, incurious, and downright lazy.
- They took PR punch lines that defy common sense and mindlessly repeated them.

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Here's what would be a better headline for that ED study:

Education technology doesn't work
... UNLESS YOU USE IT!

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The fallout has been filtering
down on us ever since,
much as I feared at the time.

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“The ill effects of [reporters’] sloth likely will undermine education efforts for years to come--as latter-day Luddites, imbeciles, yahoos, and cheapskates wave accounts of this so-called 'research' whenever legislative sessions and school board meetings convene to consider technology expenditures.”

– eSchool News Editorial, May 2007

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