

**Follow-up  
To  
Technology Assessment Programs  
(Discussed at the Tech Coordinators meeting/November 6, 2007)**

**K to the 8<sup>th</sup> Power ([www.kto8.com](http://www.kto8.com))**

In corresponding with the company, we have obtained the following pricing information.

Kto8 is an annual subscription.

Districts with **fewer than 500** students: \$5/student for the assessment OR \$9/student for the curriculum and assessment.

District with **more than 500** students: \$4/student for the assessment OR \$8/student for the curriculum and assessment

**There are 4 parts to the assessment.** Part 1 assesses the information and skills in NET\*S Standards 1 and 5. Part 2 assesses Standards 2 and 3. Part 3 assesses Standard 4. Part 4 assesses Standard 6. The company rep reported to us that the assessments & curriculum have been realigned to the revised ISTE standard.

**If your school district does not have a complete K-12 technology curriculum integrated into the academic curriculum and coursework,** your district can learn more about the curriculum published by K to the 8<sup>th</sup> Power. They can provide to us a 30 minute online web demonstration about the curriculum and the assessment.

Here is some **additional information** about what you can see/do at [www.kto8.com](http://www.kto8.com)

I was able to take a **practice test**. Select Technology Literacy Test within the choices on the left side of the homepage. The practice test consisted of 25 multiple-choice questions that the students read and answer online. I was able to **hear** the questions read aloud and **see** a picture for most of the answer choices (If Answer A was a printer, then I could select a button that said Choice A and see an actual picture of a printer.) The information noted that this test was one of 4 different technology assessments. The tests are grouped by 3 levels: Grades K-2, Grades 3-5, and Grades 6-8.

Within the actual curriculum, there is a printout or results-sheet showing which questions were answered correctly/incorrectly on the test. If the student(s) has not answered the test item correctly, the program also suggests what tutorials/instruction the student(s) need to take/retake to achieve tech literacy with that specific concept.

I **previewed lessons**, which are part of “over 600 interactive, self-paced online lessons integrating technology with academic content in Reading, Writing, and Math. Here’s the introductory info for a 4<sup>th</sup> grade math lesson:

Students use information from a Census Bureau Web site to solve addition and subtraction problems. Students will use online sources and Excel.

The Buzz is a large collection of extra resources contained within the sample lessons...access this by selecting the icon shown as part of each lesson. Allow pop-ups from [www.kto8.com](http://www.kto8.com) if the icon does not open.

Products from the non-profit organization **Generation Yes** (<http://www.genyes.com/programs/>) take their approach from a different angle than the standard survey or assessment tools. All three products available from **Generation Yes** are grounded in student leadership and mentorship in the use of instructional technology. These modules have been used, evaluated and revised over the past ten years, having been originally created by the Olympia, Washington school district, and have been tested and evaluated by the Northwest Regional Education Laboratories repeatedly throughout the past ten years.

The **GenYes** program pairs student mentors with a teacher partner to develop learning projects that effectively integrate and use instructional technology within the project. The students are the technology leaders/teachers, providing one on one staff development with their teacher/partners. The result is a classroom curriculum that makes seamless use of current technologies in content area classrooms. The second product,

**TechYes** is a self-guided program for students in grades 4 – 12. By completing four projects identified in the curricular program, students earn certification in their technology competencies that may be used to fulfill the NCLB required technology proficiency at eighth grade. The program should be integrated with content from the classrooms, providing for the connection from mere technology skills to the ability to evaluate and apply those skills in authentic performances and problem-solving settings.

**Generation Tech** is the third aspect of the series of programs that provides the organization and support for students as tech assistants, troubleshooters, and building and district experts responsible for maintaining technology use and access.

The organization emphasizes that it has no sample questions or examples of checklists, since it is their position that surveys and checklists are not authentic applications and evaluations. The costs of their programs (\$1200 for a starter with the **Gen Yes** professional development program; \$495 for a starter kit of 30 student modules/guides for the **Tech Yes** certification program; and pricing for the Generation Tech program is individualized per purchaser) need to be evaluated closely for the cost effectiveness: while other assessment programs are available at a rate of about \$5.00 per student, the modules of the Generation Yes programs provide for more than the assessment and

scoring tools. Additionally, there are a few free resources available at the website, that might be helpful in evaluating the products, or might even be mined, should a school choose to ultimately develop their own, home-grown tools.

Perhaps an even greater possible drawback to the *Generation Yes* programs goes beyond dollars and cents: since the modules are grounded in the student as the leader in learning to use the technology, there has to be serious commitment and understanding on the part of teachers. There is no question that most educators are able to admit that students know more and learn the use of the technology more quickly than faculty, and there are great opportunities for positive climate outcomes when teachers and students collaborate in learning. Nonetheless, it takes a strong, positive attitude on the part of educators to work in partnership with students who are in the role of teacher rather than that of pupil.

A final observation: there was an effort made to locate more “local” instructional technology assessments for students, such as those that were available on-line from independent schools, such as those in Bellingham, Washington, or Mankato, Minnesota. While these assessments were popular and abundant only a few years ago, they are fewer and farther between now when one initiates searches for them. There is instead, a very strong trend toward measuring student capabilities with the existing, abundant technologies through performance based and project based measures, which work to determine if students not only possess the skill to use the tools, but the evaluative analytical capabilities to determine when and how a variety of technologies may be used for real problem-solving and answer seeking.