Ideas for Using a Wireless Keyboard and Mouse in the Classroom

1. **Create Powerpoints showing the agenda for the lesson.** You move around a lot in the classroom, and instead of having to return to our daybook to see the plan, it’s right there in front of everybody. It helps students to see where the lesson is going (… and helps us not to forget some important concepts.)

2. **You can use a projector to display a text for a shared reading.** If you have a photocopy budget, this can help cut down on the paper you use. You can also do a think-aloud demonstrating how you use your reading strategies to deconstruct a difficult text.

3. **You can use a projector for modeled or shared writing.** A lot of balanced literacy revolves around the idea of creating anchor charts and posting them around the room. (For example, brainstorming with your students a list of strategies to help them find good books.) You can use Microsoft Word or your word processing program to type the list of ideas displayed directly through the projector instead of writing it on flip-chart paper. (We then print the shared writing and post it in the classroom.) If you do your shared writing on the computer using the projector, you can also then post the file on your classroom blog or website so students can access the information from home.

4. **You can use a projector to teach critical media literacy skills.** The comprehension strategies that we use in reading (inferring, predicting, making connections, synthesis, evaluation, etc) are also used when we consume media texts. Commercials, music videos, and other online media can provide quick content for students to practice their comprehension strategies, which can then be transferred over to printed texts.

Benefits of using a Wireless Keyboard and Mouse

1. **You are not limited to teaching from behind your desk.** With some classroom setups, (or if you use a school data projector attached to a media cart that you roll into your classroom), your computer may not be in the most ideal location. A wireless keyboard and mouse allows you to move around and teach from anywhere… (That way, you can sit beside students who need help focusing on the lesson.)

2. **You can share the work.** You can pass the wireless keyboard and mouse to older students so they can type in the responses generated by the whole-class discussion. That frees you up to move around and engage the students. (It’s the digital equivalent of asking a student up to the board to record answers on the board or flipchart paper.) We’ve found that students enjoy the opportunity to type during the lesson. (We typically stress that when we generate ideas during a lesson, we’re in the prewriting or brainstorming stage of the writing process. Therefore, we are not focusing on correcting grammatical or spelling mistakes – that comes later in editing.)

3. **You can use the wireless mouse to move forward to the next slide from anywhere in your classroom.** If you are a dynamic speaker, you won’t be limited to the front of the classroom… you can change to the next slide in your Powerpoint presentation from anywhere.
More Ideas:

Ideas:

1. Show something small—Using your document camera to project small demonstrations so the class can see easier
2. Demonstrating a skill, teacher or students drive the computer—Provide some scaffolding to help demonstrate for the students, the correct way to perform a skill before they practice on their own
3. Play multi-media—May be DVD's, sound, Flash files, etc. to introduce lessons or units, motivate students, and promote inquiry questions
4. Display non-linguistic representations—Images, graphs, concept maps, are powerful ways to represent information and provoke discussion
5. Display virtual dissections or virtual human body “tours”—One resource is
6. Graphing class data from experiments—Combine all the results and display them
7. Slideshow of photos taken during class
8. Compare electronic, web, and print resources for currency, depth, and accuracy
9. Virtual field trip to a museum or art gallery
10. Listen to audio—May be sound files on how to pronounce words www.m-w.com streaming radio from another country or in a foreign language-- (just remember streaming media really slows down the Internet for all users at the school)
11. Look at the current headlines from a news source in a different place
12. Demonstrate the computer work a student will do at home or during class
13. Presentations with the teacher driving the computer—Direct instruction using PowerPoint or concept mapping