

# Digital Technologies and Barbecue?

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I teach pre-service teacher education courses on digital technology, and many of my students believe that there is one “right” technology to use to teach something. Sure, there are some technologies that are designed to do specific things, but the majority of educational technologies can be purposed across disciplines. We spend a good amount of time talking about theories of technology use (e.g., TIA, SAMR, TPACK, 4C’s. etc.) but we also explore technology use from a philosophical perspective: What does my use of *Technology X* in this lesson say about my teaching approach? What kind of environment am I creating for my students if I use *Technology Y* in this way?



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I think one way to think about teaching with the “right” technology is like when you’re preparing to barbecue chicken. There are clearly some methods that will work better than others depending on the cut of meat. For example, “beer can chicken” can only be made by placing a whole chicken over the can on a stand. But most cuts—including a whole chicken—could simply be placed right on the grill. Similarly, when spicing the chicken, one could use a marinade, or a dry rub. Your dry rub could be herb-heavy, or paprika-based, or heavy on the cumin. These are all going to result in different flavoured barbecue chicken, but all have the potential to be equally delicious. Yet, you might have some diners (students) who don’t like the cut of chicken, or the marinade or rub you’ve used. Similar to how a barbecue host might ask if you like “white or dark meat?”, an educator using technology can ask students opinions’ and give choice to students on technology use.