

BEYOND THE CLASSROOM: CCHS STUDENTS TRAVEL TO MACHU PICCHU USING VR HEADSETS



Shortly after opening the new iLab, Mr. Panagiatacos, Director of Technology at CCHS, and his team approached Mr. Kilgore with the request to purchase 24 Virtual Reality headsets for student use. **“We wanted to purchase the headsets because the possibilities in VR are virtually endless and the way that your eyes and brain perceive what you are interacting with when using them is completely immersive,”** said Mr. Panagiatacos.

From practicing emergency medical procedures to visiting Spain, these headsets have already proven to be a valuable contribution to the learning environment here at CCHS. World Cultural Geography teacher, Mr. Riddell, recently took his students to Machu Picchu, virtually, of course. Geared with a VR headset, students traveled to Peru where they were able to see their learning come to life. **“It was such a fun and helpful experience being able to see Machu Picchu ‘in person.’ It helped me picture what it was like there and took my understanding of the content even deeper,”** said Amelie Buras (CCHS Sophomore).

“I wanted my students to compare and contrast the Incas and the Aztecs and their associated geographies,” said Mr. Riddell. “The VR headsets allow students to experience the material in a different way. They bring it to life.” For this activity, each student was paired with a tour guide through the National Geographic app where they had various tasks to complete during their visit. Accompanied by sound and with a 360 degree field of vision, students were able to immerse themselves in different regions of the world without having ever actually left school campus.

“It was so cool to be able to have an ‘in person’ view of Machu Picchu. The VR headset helped me to better understand the material because it really did ‘put me in the shoes’ of the Incas,” said Marin Lewis (CCHS Freshman).

Plans are in the works to implement more VR activities in our academic classes this school year and beyond. **“We want our students to excel in their future field of study to which God has called them to serve, and it is evident that technology will continue to play a prominent role in their day to day tasks,”** said CCHS’ Instructional Technology Coordinator, Tori Hale.