

Yes, It Is Virtual!

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Meta Quest 2 VR headsets, or VR headsets, are all the “rage” lately. Even the *New York Times* has written about VR, and it is a safe bet that what the *Times* wrote made people at Facebook/Meta stomp their virtual feet.

Several years ago, *Distance Learning* journal published a column titled “A New Technology—Drones” that featured a story about a drone nicknamed Lightening. Lightening was a white, quad-propeller drone. Lightening is still flying, AND the question asked when Lighting was new is still being asked:

Is drone technology an education tool for the instructional designer and the distance educator?

The answer to this question is still unanswered, but one observation can be made. If drones are essential, then distance educators should be using them by now. However, when Lightening flies, people still stop and watch. Lighting, and drones, remain something of a novelty.

What about VR technology. VR—virtual reality—is an artificial environment that is experienced through the senses with help from a computing device, and where the users’ actions mostly determine what happens in the environment.

Virtual means “almost real.” Reality means something actual, or factual. The opposite of reality is fantasy. Often VR games are based on fantasies. Confused?

According to the *Times*, game playing is the most widely used application of VR. Gamers love VR and they are reported to love the Meta Quest 2 VR headsets.

Developers are reported to love VR headsets, too. There is even an ad on TV that shows a group of developers—identifiable because of the stereotypic way they are dressed—who are sitting around a conference room table. After a few seconds they all reach for and quickly put on their headsets and begin to virtually “move things around.”

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