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Are Teaching Gadgets Obsolete in Times of Computer Animations? Peter Müller, MIT Dept. of Chemistry, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, 2-325, Cambridge, MA 02139, pmueller@mit.edu

The author of this presentation has used several teaching gadgets during a graduate level class on crystallography, taught once a year within the curriculum of the MIT Department of Chemistry. Some of these gadgets are re-dedicated dog toys from Trader Joe's, some were self-made by Wally Cordes, the Godfather of crystallographic teaching gadgets, and some were manufactured for the purpose of teaching and are commercially available (namely the diffraction grids sold by the Institute for Chemical Education at the UW-Madison). At the end of the term the students were asked their opinions about the usefulness of the teaching gadgets used in class. Their responses are going to be presented alongside the actual gadgets themselves (as far as they can be brought to Salt Lake City) and a comparison will be drawn between teaching the same class with and without the help of these tools.