

Interesting Free Resources for Teachers

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<http://www.dial2do.com> – Okay forget the classroom, this is just plain awesome, yes I said awesome! After creating a profile, you can load email addresses and cell phones #'s of your friends and contacts. Then wherever you may be simply dial the number, enter your pin and state whether you want to text or email, say who, and talk your message. It will then be automatically sent via text or email to your intended recipient.

Cool Educational Use: You can set up groups as well. Imagine sending out a text or email to your entire class or parents with ease. "Hey this is Mr. O, don't forget test tomorrow!" They live on their cell phones, we know that, why don't we use that?

<http://www.flickr.com> – Many of you may already have heard of this site. It is a site where you can load pictures easily for all to see or perhaps just those who you allow to see. Basically it is an online scrapbook.

Cool Educational Use: Think outside the box! Could you set up a flickr account for your classroom and allow students to upload pictures for a class photo journal, or word association photo project. You know your curriculum better than me, get creative. More importantly allow your students to be creative!

<http://www.polleverywhere.com> – Alright this one might be stretching the laws of Junior High's across the country, but let me be radical for a moment. This site allows you to set up a text poll online. What does that mean? You set up a question with simple answers, perhaps yes/no or A,B,C,D. Than those who want to answer can text to a certain number and it updates instantly!

Cool Educational Use: So what you say? You can basically set up a quick response system in your classroom. Imagine after reviewing a topic you have a quick pop quiz. "Okay students, text the correct answer". Instantly students see their results pop up on the screen. You then discuss the correct answer C as well as why 7 students answered A. Too radical, maybe, but a lot cheaper than response systems out there considering our students already posses the technology.

<http://www.gcast.com> – This is a site for those who want and easy introduction into creating podcasts. There are other sites like podomatic.com but this one makes it easy because you can create your podcast over the phone. This means no need for a computer microphone, you can just use the phone that each of us already have in our rooms. You could even call from home and create a podcast.

Cool Educational Use: Podcasts are short audios clips that provide news or information to the user (student). You could record an audio version of a study guide or read a textbook excerpt for your students to study from. They can then download it to their MP3 player and listen to it wherever they go. Don't think they will, try them! They would rather listen to their MP3 player than study a worksheet. This is a way you can connect to their culture.

<http://www.Ustream.com> – Instant video connection that allows you to stream live video online and chat live with other people or...classrooms.

Cool Educational Use: The cool possibility here is the option to possibly have discussion with other students and teachers in different states or different countries. Of course that would take some behind the scenes logistics to connect with other teachers who you could set that up with, but an interesting possibility. Imagine a Spanish class here chatting via streaming video with an English class in Spain. It's happening folks, why don't we join in!!!

<http://www.voicethread.com> – What is a voice thread anyway, hit this link and then click on the main link that asks that exact same question. This is simpler than Ustream because no camera is needed, and a great way to connect your students with others outside the classroom doors. Better yet as a k-12 educator it is free.

Cool Educational Use: Students can discuss a picture or document, even a mathematical problem or puzzle online and get feedback from others with different perspectives and backgrounds.

<http://delicious.com> – A social bookmarking site which you can bookmark to from anywhere, and allow others access to collaborate. It is a pain to bookmark to Internet Explorer...at home just to have to re-bookmark at school. Bookmark it to delicious and access it from anywhere and everywhere.

Cool Educational Use: So of course you can easily access sites from home or school, but once again if we want our students to be creative, we need to be as well. Set up an account for just your students to access and bookmark to for projects or for sharing. Perhaps each week they need to book mark a current event topic as an assignment or share great websites on the topic you are studying in class. Who knows your students may find websites that will help you teach the topic next year!

<http://www.eduscapes.com> – This is a site updated by two former educators who tour the country in an RV and find what they believe to be the best free resources for teachers. Exploring some of the links on this site is well worth the time.

Cool Educational Use: Make sure to check out the link 4 2 eXplore, from there click on your discipline and a ton of sites that relate to your subject area will be at your fingertips!

http://lima.osu.edu/academics/education/ed_surfinsout.html - Sue Beckner is a professor at The Ohio State University Lima Branch and has put together some great resources in her "Surfin's Out! Direct hits are in!" seminar. When you go to this site click first on the OSU – Interactive Web Resources link, and then take time to check out the other links as well. This is more time effective then searching Google. Let her do the hard work for you.

Cool Educational Use: The OSU Interactive Web Resources are directly aligned to Ohio's Academic Content Standards. You'll wonder why you ever wasted time googling.

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org> – Most of you know about rubistar by now, but I'll include it for those who do not because it is great. You do have to sign up, but it is free and you can create your own rubrics or modify existing ones.

<http://www.loc.gov> – The good news here is that the Library of Congress has billions of resources...the bad news is that the Library of Congress has billions of sources. So here is a hint, click on the teacher's link on the left and then look in the middle of the page at what is called "Spotlight on Teachers"! This will make your journey to the LOC much more successful.

<http://www.blogger.com> – This is an easy free way to create a blog for your students. I would advise to use the blogging and chat ability we have in moodle, but if moodle has seemed too complicated than this is an easy quick way to still connect to your students.

<http://www.k12onlineconference.org> – Do not have time (or in our case money) to attend Professional Development opportunities. Go to the k12 online conference anytime and either join in or just read and get ideas anytime, anyplace. Wesley Fryer is one of the main forces behind this and it is a conference you can attend in your pajamas if you would like, try that at our next in-service day.

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