

77 Web Resources for Teachers to Explore This Summer

**[Free Technology for Teachers](#)
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Resources to Use Across the Curriculum



Blogs can serve many purposes for teachers. You can use a blog to communicate information to parents and students. You can use a blog to create a running journal of classroom activities and lessons throughout the year. Blogs can be used by students to record and reflect on their own learning. Make your students contributing authors on a class blog and have them write a weekly reflection on their own learning.

Three good platforms for classroom blogging are [Blogger](#), [Edublogs](#), and [Kid Blog](#). All three of those platforms are very easy to start as they don't require any technical knowledge on your part. All three of those platforms allow you to control your blog's visibility settings. Get directions for creating Blogger and Edublogs blogs [here](#). (*Disclosure: Edublogs is an advertiser on [Free Technology for Teachers](#).*)



Build a Wiki

Building pages on a wiki is a great way for students to record and share knowledge about topics they've researched. Last year one of my classes created a wiki

about 1920's culture in the United States. When everyone was done contributing one of my students made the observation that the wiki had more information than the textbook, he was right.

Teachers and students can also use wikis to create digital portfolios. Students can create and edit their own pages to show-off the work they're most proud of.

[Wikispaces](#), [PB Works](#), and [Wet Paint](#) provide free wiki hosting. I prefer Wikispaces because they provide free advertising-free wiki hosting to teachers. Learn how to use Wikispaces [here](#).



Build a Website

So a blog doesn't provide quite what you're looking for and a wiki doesn't either? Try building your own website. On your website you can include calendars of assignment due dates (try [Google Calendar](#)), post reference videos and documents for students and parents, and even collect

assignments.

Building a website used to be a difficult, technical process. That is not the case anymore. There are many free website creation and hosting services available on the web. [Google Sites](#) can be used to create a website containing blog and wiki elements. Learn how to use Google Sites in my publication [Google for Teachers II](#). Some other website creation and hosting services you might want to try are [Weebly](#), [Webs](#), and [Yola](#).

Create Videos Without Purchasing any Equipment



Video is a powerful form of communication. It wasn't that long ago that classroom video projects required possession of expensive editing software and other equipment. That is no longer the case. Today, anyone with access to the web can make a high-quality video production. Two of my favorite web-based video creation services are [Animoto](#) and [JayCut](#). Of the two [Animoto](#) is the easiest to use while [JayCut](#) offers the most editing options. Learn how to use [Animoto](#) and [JayCut](#) in my free publication [Making Videos on the Web](#).

Create Maps to Tell a Story



Maps are obviously useful for Social Studies teachers, but did you know that you can also use multimedia maps to tell a story? [Google Maps](#) and [Google Earth](#) can both be used to create a multimedia story. Try having your students write the biography of a famous person by plotting points on a map and adding text, images, and videos about that person to each placemark. Visit Jerome Burg's [Google Lit Trips](#) to learn more about using Google Earth in a literature course. Visit Tom Barrett's [Maths Maps](#) to get ideas for using maps in mathematics lessons. Need some general directions for using Google Maps or Google Earth please consult my free publications [Google for Teachers](#) and [Google Earth Across the Curriculum](#).

Try Backchannel Services



As staffing cuts create larger class sizes, it is becoming more difficult for some teachers to hear every student's question and or comment. Some students are reluctant to verbally share their thoughts in the classroom. And some students just have to blurt-out every thought or question they have as soon as they have it. Creating a backchannel for your students can address all three of those problems.

A backchannel is another name for a chat room in which your students type their questions and comments whenever they have them. You can then address those questions and comments immediately, have students reply to each other, or address the questions when time permits. Learn more about the uses of backchannels in [my presentation about using backchannels in the classroom](#).

Here are some school-friendly services that can be used to host backchannels: [Today's Meet](#), [Chatzy](#), [Edmodo](#), and [Present.ly](#).

Join a Social Network for Your Professional Development



Social networks can be used for much more than just sharing pictures of your kids with you old high school friends. [Twitter](#), [Classroom 2.0](#), and [The Educators PLN](#) are great places to connect with other teachers around the world. Use these connections to gather ideas for improving your lesson plans, share and find great web resources, and perhaps virtually connect your classroom to another classroom. Check out the [Flat Classroom Project](#) for ideas about connecting classrooms around the world. View my resources to [learn how to build your own personal learning network](#).

Use an Online Service to Save Your Bookmarks



Every spring just before school lets out for the summer and all of the school-issued computers are re-imaged, some of my colleagues come to me in a panic wondering how to save all of the websites they have bookmarked on their computers. This problem could be completely avoided if they would just try using an online social bookmarking service like [Diigo](#), [Delicious](#), or [Google Bookmarks](#).

Using an online bookmarking service allows you to access all of your favorite websites from any Internet-connected computer anywhere. All three of these services offer browser add-ons that allow to save bookmarks just as easily as you would with the bookmarking features in Firefox or Internet Explorer. These services also allow you to share your bookmarks with others (your students for example) and to add comments to your bookmarks so you remember why you saved each one. Learn more about online bookmarking services in [this video from Common Craft](#). Learn how to use Google Bookmarks in my free publication [Google for Teachers II](#).

Learn to Search Beyond Google.com

Give students a research assignment and the first place that most of them will go to is Google.com. There's nothing inherently wrong with that, but if that's all your students do they're not likely to find the best possible information. One of the ways you can do this is by introducing your students to Google Wonder Wheel and Google Timeline. Both of those refinement tools are built into Google Search. You should also show your students how to use Google's advanced search options. If your students are searching for information that contains numerical data such as distance and time, introduce them to [Wolfram Alpha](#). Learn more about Internet search strategies and tools in my free publication [Beyond Google](#). Learn how to build your own search engine in my free publication [Google for Teachers II](#).

Create Podcasts



Creating podcasts is a great way for students to preserve oral histories or to hear themselves practicing a foreign language. Open source program [Audacity](#) and Apple's Garage Band are excellent platforms for recording podcasts. You can also record podcasts without installing software by using [Aviary's Myna](#) service or [Google Voice](#). If you need a free place to host podcasts check out [PodBean](#) or [Blubrry](#).

Eliminate Inbox Overload



Start using [Google Docs](#) or [Zoho Writer](#). Get comfortable with it over the summer then in the fall start using it with students. Having students submit written work to you through Google Docs or Zoho Writer will eliminate the need for them to send you document attachments. Simply have them share their documents with you. You can edit their documents and grade their documents without having to open attachments. Using Google Docs or Zoho Writer will eliminate issues associated with students sending attachments that you cannot open. Getting your students to use either of these services will free up a lot of storage space in your email inbox.

Another option for eliminating inbox overload is to have students submit their work to you via an online dropbox. Create a DropBox.com account for saving files. Then create a [Drop It To Me](#) account to have students securely send files to your DropBox.com account without giving them access to the contents of your DropBox.com account.

Mathematics Resources



[Brain Nook](#) is a virtual world in which students can practice their mathematics and English skills. [Brain Nook](#) provides students with a series of scenarios that they have to resolve by answering mathematics and language arts questions. The first scenario presented to me when I tried out Brain Nook required me to earn

coins to buy materials for a vehicle that I would then use to explore one of the virtual worlds. I could earn coins by answering questions correctly. Brain Nook presents students with questions based on their skill levels which is determined by a quick pre-assessment and adjusted as they progress through Brain Nook's virtual worlds.

[Learn Your Tables](#) is a neat little site for students to use to learn and develop multiplication skills. The site offers two basic games on two different levels. The most basic game is a simple drag and drop activity in which students match equations to their correct answers. The more "advanced" game has students enter the correct answer to a multiplication question. The easier of the two levels only contains problems from one multiplication table while the more difficult level contains problems from multiple multiplication tables.



[Ten Marks](#), an online mathematics tutoring service, offers a [free program for teachers](#). [Ten Marks for educators](#) is designed to be a supplement to classroom instruction, not a replacement for it.

Ten Marks provides educators with an online forum in which they can assign mathematics practice problems to students and track their students' progress. If a student gets stuck on a problem he or she can open a tutorial to help him or her through the problem. Ten Marks provides teachers with the option to CC parents on the assignments sent to students. The online curriculum provided by Ten Marks can be aligned to the state standards a teacher chooses.



[Yummy Math](#) is a website designed for the purpose of sharing mathematics problems and scenarios based on things happening in the world today. For example, the activity for December 4th was based on LeBron James's return to Cleveland. [Yummy Math](#) lists activities chronologically as well as by mathematics subject area. Two mathematics teachers, Brian Marks and Leslie Lewis, developed [Yummy Math](#) and welcome [suggestions](#) from other mathematics teachers.



[Web2.0calc](#) is a free online scientific calculator. While it won't replace the TI-84 Plus, it can do what your average high school student needs it to do. The best part is, you don't have to use it on the [Web2.0calc](#) site because they offer [three widgets](#) that you can use to embed the calculator into your own blog or website.

[Math Open Reference](#) is a free online reference for geometry teachers and students. [Math Open Reference](#) features animated and interactive drawings to demonstrate geometry terms and concepts. The table of contents on [Math Open Reference](#) is divided into four basic categories; plane geometry, coordinate geometry, solid geometry, and function explorer tools. Click on any subject in the first three categories to find definitions, examples, and interactive drawings. In the function explorer category users can select linear functions, quadratic functions, or cubic functions to explore how changes in variables affect the graphed output.



When it comes to creative uses of Google tools, Tom Barrett is certainly a leader that we can all learn from. A great example of this can be found in Tom's [Math Maps](#). [Math Maps](#) are Google Maps on which Tom and others have created placemarks which when clicked reveal mathematics questions for students to answer based on the maps. There are questions available for every elementary school grade level. The placemarks are color-coded to indicate the level of the questions. Blue = Kindergarten, Red = 1st grade, Green = 2nd grade, Light Blue = 3rd grade, Yellow = 4th grade, Purple = 5th grade. Visit [Tom Barrett's Math Maps page](#) to view the existing Math Maps and read about how to contribute to the existing Math Maps.



[Real World Math](#) is a great resource for teachers who would like to explore uses of Google Earth in mathematics lessons. Real World Math, designed by Thomas Petra, uses [Google Earth](#) as the centerpiece of mathematics lessons. [Real World Math](#) has the lesson plans divided into five categories; project-based learning, concept lessons, measurement lessons, exploratory lessons, and space lessons. The space lessons take advantage of the Moon, Mars, and Sky views in Google Earth. If you've never used Google Earth, Real World has a large collection of [tutorial videos](#) that you can view on the website or inside of Google Earth.

[Math Live](#) is a neat mathematics website developed by [Learn Alberta](#). [Math Live](#) presents students with animated stories that teach mathematics lessons. In all there are twenty-three lessons for elementary school and middle school students. The lessons are divided into four categories; Number, Patterns and Relations, Shape and Space, Statistics and Probability. Each animated lesson is accompanied by a mathematics worksheet that students complete either while watching the lesson or after viewing the lesson. Each lesson is divided into sections and students can advance or rewind as needed.



[Conceptua Math](#) is a provider of interactive visual mathematics lessons. [Conceptua Math's](#) primary focus is on the development of tools to aid teachers in the instruction of lessons on fractions. [Conceptua Math's](#) offerings are a mix of free and premium (paid) tools. There are a total of fifteen free interactive tools for teachers and students. Each of the free tools has an introductory video and a sample lesson plan.

If you've seen [Dan Meyer's](#) TED Talk, [Math Class Needs a Makeover](#), you already know that he's an awesome educator. If you haven't seen his talk, go watch it now (http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_meyer_math_curriculum_makeover.html) then come back to this. Dan Meyer published his entire [38 week Algebra curriculum](#) complete with slides, handouts, and just about everything you need in order to deliver the lessons. You can [download each week individually](#) or [download the entire collection](#) as one file. Dan Meyer also has his entire [38 week Geometry curriculum](#) available for free. Again, you can download each week individually or download the entire collection as one file.



[Easel](#) is an educational iPad App that was recently recognized at [TechCrunch's Crunchies Awards](#). [Easel](#) provides a canvas for working on Algebra and SAT practice problems. Select a problem type from the menu and you're provided with a blank canvas to write and draw on in the same way that you would use scratch paper. If you get stuck, you can tap the "show me" button to get help. Easel has free and paid versions of an [app for SAT prep](#) and an [app for Algebra](#).

Science Resources



[Sumanas](#) is a provider of animations of science and statistics concepts. Their [public gallery of animations](#) is divided into ten categories dealing with various topics in biology, chemistry, Earth science, and statistics. Many of the animations are narrated, but even those that aren't are very clear none-the-less. The largest selections of animations are found in the biology categories.



[Celestia](#) is a free space exploration simulation program. Celestia is a free download that works on Mac, PC, and Linux systems. The advantage of [Celestia](#) over other satellite imagery programs is that in addition to seeing the Earth's surface, students can zoom in on moons, stars, and planets. The user controls what they see. Operating the program is easy enough to be used by students as young as six or seven. The user guides for [Celestia](#) are very thorough and available in four languages. There is a companion website to Celestia called the [Celestia Motherlode](#) that features add-ons to Celestia and educational activities that teachers can use in their classrooms.



The [Chemical Education Digital Library](#) is a large collection of resources for teaching and learning chemistry. The [ChemEd DL](#) contains tutorials for students, 3D models, lesson plans, and more. The [tutorials](#) include [3D chemical models](#) and explanations of what each part of the models does and how those parts work together. In the [lesson plans section](#) you will find downloadable lesson plans organized by subject. [ChemEd DL](#) also features a periodic table that links each element to data and explanations about that element.



[Hey LHS Kids](#) is a science activities website for kids developed by the [Lawrence Hall of Science at UC Berkeley](#). Hey LHS Kids features some good activities for elementary school students. One of the activities on the site that I think would be fun for elementary use is [Measure Yourself](#). [Measure Yourself](#) asks students to measure the size of their ears, feet, and overall height in centimeters. Students then plug those numbers into [Measure Yourself](#) and are shown a list of animals that have similar dimensions. I tried it and learned that my ears are almost as big as an armadillo's ears, my feet are longer than a bear's, and I'm taller than a grizzly bear walking on all four feet.

[The Periodic Table of Comic Books](#) is a project of the chemistry department at the [University of Kentucky](#). The idea is that for every element in the Periodic Table of Elements there is a comic book reference. Clicking on an element in the periodic table displayed on the homepage will take visitors to a list and images of comic book references to that particular element. After looking at the comic book reference if visitors want more information about a particular element they can find it by using the provided link to [Web Elements](#).



The University of Pennsylvania Health System provides [nearly 200 video animations](#) and explanations of injuries, diseases, and body systems. The animations, like this one of a [balloon angioplasty](#), are concise which makes them good for general reference purposes.



[Body Browser](#) gives you a 360 degree view of the human body. You can turn on layers to see bones, muscles, organs, and the nervous system. You can turn on all the layers at the same time and alter the transparency of each layer. Turn on labels to have labels appear each time you click on a part of the body. For example, if I have the bones layer turned on along with the labels, when I click on a bone a label will appear. Watch [this video](#) to see the [Google Body Browser](#) in use.



[Healthline Body Maps](#) provides interactive three dimensional models for learning about human anatomy. Body Maps has male and female models. The models have eight layer views, from skin to skeletal, that you can select. You can hold your mouse pointer over any part of the model to view a body part's name and then zoom to more detailed information. For example, if I place my mouse on the stomach I can then click through for a more detailed view and to see how the stomach is connected to other body parts. To rotate the model just click and drag the model to the left or right.



[Knotebooks](#) is a neat service that allows users to create, customize, and share lessons composed of videos, images, and texts from all over the Internet. [Knotebooks](#) uses the term "lesson" to describe what users build, but I think a more appropriate description is "multimedia reference article." Using [Knotebooks](#) you can organize information to create a reference article for yourself or to share with others. You can also browse the articles published by others, add them to your account for later reference, and or alter the articles that others have written to suit your needs. For example if I find an article in [Knotebooks](#) about Newton's Laws but some parts of the article are too difficult for me to comprehend, I can click the option for "easier content" and Knotebooks will change

the article to meet my needs. [Knotebooks](#) is a great concept, learn more about it and see it in action in [this video](#).

[The WorldWide Telescope](#) makes very detailed, high resolution images (scientific quality) from space available to anyone with access to a computer and an internet connection. The goal of the [WorldWide Telescope](#) is to enable users to use their computers as virtual telescopes. The WorldWide Telescope can be downloaded and run on Windows-based computers. Mac users will have to use the web client to access the WorldWide Telescope. The [educators page on the WorldWide Telescope site](#) has lesson resources and ideas for middle school and high school use.



[Shape It Up](#) is one of many good educational games and activities on [Kinetic City](#). [Shape It Up](#) is an activity that would be good for use in an elementary school Earth Science lesson. The activity presents students with "before" and "after" images of a piece of Earth. Students then have to select the force nature and the span of time it took to create the "after" picture. If students choose incorrectly, [Shape It Up](#) will tell the student and they can choose again.



The Molecular & Cell Biology department at [North Dakota State University](#) hosts a nice [collection of virtual cell animations](#). The collection of virtual cell animations introduces students to seventeen molecular and cellular processes. For each process there is a series of annotated images, a text explanation, and a video explaining the process.

Social Studies Resources



[TimeRime](#) allows users to create timelines that include text, images, audio, and video. One of the better features of [TimeRime](#) is that you can have more than one type of media for each event on your timeline. [TimeRime](#) users can also select which media type they want as the feature piece of each event. As we've come to expect with any web 2.0 tool of this type, you can embed the timeline in a blog or share it via email. [TimeRime](#) can be used in English or Spanish.



[Historypin](#) is a service developed by [We Are What We Do](#) in partnership with Google. [Historypin](#) allows anyone with a Google account to place images within the setting of current Google Maps Streetview imagery. If you don't have images to add, you can simply explore the imagery added by others. To explore the imagery on [Historypin](#), zoom in on a location then select a range of dates on the [Historypin](#) timeline. Learn more about [Historypin](#) in [this video](#).



If economics, particularly personal finance, is a part of your curriculum then you should check out some of Common Craft's work. [Common Craft](#) has three videos that could be used in a business class, economics class, or in any setting that requires students to have an understanding of banking practices. Here are direct links to each of the three videos: [Investing in Plain English](#), [Borrowing in Plain English](#), [Saving in Plain English](#).

The [European Virtual Museum](#) is the product of collaboration between twenty-seven European museums. The [European Virtual Museum](#) makes artifacts of European history available in interactive 3D form. Through the use of QuickTime technology the artifacts in the [European Virtual Museum](#) can be rotated for optimum viewing. Visitors to the [European Virtual Museum](#) can browse through the collections by chronology, geographic area, object type, contributing museum, routes, and tour itineraries.

[Scribble Maps](#) is a fun and useful application for drawing and typing on Google Maps. Using [Scribble Maps](#) anyone can draw and type on a map. All of the zoom options and most of the search options available on Google Maps are available when using [Scribble Maps](#). You can zoom in on an area and then type text, draw a circle or a box around an area, you can even doodle stick figures or whatever you like on your map. [Scribble Maps Pro](#) allows you to import [KML files](#), import spreadsheets, and import [SHP files](#). Importing KML files allows you to add free hand drawing on top of files that you may have already created for Google Maps or Google Earth. Importing spreadsheets makes it easy to quickly add placemarks to a large number of places. SHP file importation allows you to add custom shapes to your maps. Watch this [video](#) to see these options in action.



[Google Earth](#). The possibilities for using Google Earth in a social studies classroom are almost limitless. In Google Earth students can [tour ancient Rome](#), explore [WWI and WWII battle sites](#), [learn about contemporary news stories such as events in Afghanistan](#), or [use Google Earth as an almanac of facts](#). Students, of course, can use Google Earth to create digital stories. Students can create tours of military campaigns, trace the lives of famous people, or map the expansions and contractions of political borders. If you're looking for some directions to get started with Google Earth, please see [Google Earth Across the Curriculum](#) and or the official [Google Earth help pages](#).



[The Center on Congress at Indiana University](#) has a good collection of interactive, role-playing activities for learning about how the United States' government functions. Each activity allows students to experience the roles and functions of different members of Congress. One of the activities that my Civics students have really enjoyed in the past is the ["How a Member Decides to Vote"](#) activity. In "How a Member Decides to Vote" students take on the role of a Congressman or Congresswoman for a week. During the simulated week, students receive phone calls from constituents, read newspaper headlines, meet with constituents, meet with lobbyists, and attend meetings with other Congressmen and Congresswomen. The "How a Member Decides to Vote" activity makes students account for their personal feelings as well as the influence of constituents and lobbyists.



[Snag Learning](#) offers free access to high quality documentary films from notable producers like National Geographic and NOVA. Snag Learning categorizes documentaries by grade level and content area. Additionally, Snag Learning offers a series of guiding questions for each film. You can embed previews of each video into your blog, but you have to watch the full-length versions on [Snag Learning](#).

[Ten by Ten](#) is a unique program that links images with news stories. Every hour the top 100 news stories from around the world are linked to images on a [ten by ten](#) grid. The stories are ranked according to current popularity and importance. Clicking on an image in the grid will provide you with more information including links to more articles about the story. (You must allow pop-ups for the article links to work).



[60 Second Civics](#) is a daily podcast produced by the [Center for Civic Education](#). Each [60 Second Civics](#) episode offers a short lesson about US Civics. Along with each episode is a one question quiz about that day's episode. Playing [60 Second Civics](#) could be a good "starter activity" at the beginning of a US History or Civics class. You might consider combining and or alternating the use of 60 Second Civics with a resource like [CNN Student News](#) or [The Week in Rap](#).



[CNN Student News](#) is a daily web show highlighting a handful of stories. The stories covered by [CNN Student News](#) range from traditional serious news topics to how-to stories appealing mostly to students to light and fun stories. As a social studies teacher every week I find at least a couple of stories from CNN Student

News that I can work into my curriculum. [CNN Student News](#) provides printable maps and a daily news quiz to go along with each episode.



[The Week in Rap](#) produced by Flocabulary is a free weekly rap video recapping the week's biggest news stories. The videos are generally less than three minutes in length. The videos can be found on Vimeo as well at theweekinrap.com.

Language Arts Resources



[Wordia](#) is a free visual, video dictionary. [Wordia](#) features a selection of user-submitted and professionally created videos explaining the meaning of a word. The videos focus on the everyday use of words while the text accompanying each video provides the dictionary definition of the word.



[Visuwords](#) uses a web design to show users the definitions of words and the connections between words. To use [Visuwords](#) just type a word into the search box and [Visuwords](#) will generate a web of related words. Place your cursor over any of the words and the definition appears. Use the color-coded key to understand the connections between the words in any web.



For someone learning the English language, particularly the American version of English, idioms can be difficult to understand. The [Idiom Dictionary](#) was created to help people understand the meanings of more than five thousand English idioms. To use the [Idiom Dictionary](#) just enter a phrase or part of a phrase into the search box and the [Idiom Dictionary](#) will offer an explanation of that idiom.



The [Canadian Adaptations of Shakespeare Project](#) has an outstanding interactive resource that everyone who teaches lessons on [Romeo and Juliet](#) should bookmark. [Interactive Folio: Romeo and Juliet](#) is an interactive display of the text of Romeo and Juliet. As students read the document they can click on any link in the text to view definitions, images, audio recordings, and videos related to the content they're reading.



[60 Second Recap](#) provides book summaries in sixty second video segments. There is a sixty second summary of each chapter of each book. Along with the chapter summaries there is a general overview of each book. [60 Second Recap](#) offers registered users the option to record a video response to each video summary. If you don't have access to a web cam, you can record a simple text response.



[22 Frames](#) is a service that provides a central location for locating captioned videos for learning English and for Internet users who have hearing impairments. [22 Frames](#) provides more than just captioned videos. For each video [22 Frames](#) provides a list of idioms, slang words, and commonly mispronounced words in each video. [22 Frames](#) tells viewers where each use of idioms, slang, and commonly mispronounced words appears in each video. Viewers can click on any of the words in the lists provided by [22 Frames](#) to find a definition for each word and to find pronunciation tips.



Mind mapping or creating webs can help students develop a story outline. There are many good mind mapping tools online (see nine [here](#)), one that I really like is Bubbl.us.

[Bubbl.us](#) is a free mind mapping/ graphic organization tool that allows users to collaboratively create and edit mind maps. [Bubbl.us](#) takes just seconds to figure out and you can try it before registering for an account. With [Bubbl.us](#) users can use their keyboard or use the drag and drop interface to arrange elements in their mind maps. Publishing work created with Bubbl.us can be done by exporting the file to a JPEG, PNG, or as an XML or HTML file. Any mind map created using Bubbl.us can be embedded into a blog or website.

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Commons works. All of the audio books can be downloaded directly from [Books Should Be Free](#) and or iTunes. One of the aspects of [Books Should Be Free](#) that I think some students will really appreciate is the large display of book covers that they'll see when browsing by genre. It's true that we should teach students not to judge a book by its cover, yet at the same time a good cover might get students interested in books they would otherwise ignore. If you have a student in need of an audio book to support their reading, [Books Should Be Free](#) could be a good place to start your search.

WordSteps

[WordSteps](#) is a resource for learning the vocabulary of your choice of nine languages. To start learning vocabulary with [WordSteps](#) select the language you are trying to learn then choose a set of vocabulary words in that language. [WordSteps](#)

provides six types of practice activities for each set of vocabulary words. The sets of vocabulary words are called dictionaries by [WordSteps](#). You can use the dictionaries made by other [WordSteps](#) users or create your own dictionary. [WordSteps](#) can be used without creating an account, but in order to create your own dictionary you must create an account. The languages supported by [WordSteps](#) are English, French, Russian, Spanish, Chinese, German, Japanese, Italian, and Portuguese. The vocabulary practice activities are Flash Cards, Translation

Variations, Words Variants, Alphabet Soup, Write Translation by Word, and Write Word by Translation.

[Forvo](#) can best be described as an audio wiki for word pronunciations. One of the problems with learning to speak a language that is not phonetic is trying to figure out how to pronounce the words. [Forvo](#) hosts hundreds of recordings of word pronunciations by native speakers. Along with word pronunciations, Forvo provides some basic demographic information about each language. [Forvo's](#) content is user-supported and user-generated. New pronunciations are added on a regular basis.



[Voxy](#) is an interesting approach to helping ESL students learn English. [Voxy](#) uses current articles from world news, pop culture, and sports to help students acquire language. As students read an article they can click on highlighted words and hear them pronounced. Highlighted words when clicked reveal the Spanish translation. Clicking on highlighted words also adds them to a study list. The study lists can be used for quizzes and games. Voxy is available in English and Spanish.



[Repeat After Us](#) is an online library of copyright-free English texts and audio recordings. The purpose of [Repeat After Us](#) is to provide ESL students with a place to read and hear proper pronunciations of English words. The texts on [Repeat After Us](#) are arranged into eight genre categories including children's stories, prose fiction, and prose non-fiction. Recordings can be listened to online and or downloaded from [Repeat After Us](#). All of the recordings match the texts. Texts range in length from one paragraph to multiple pages.

Health and Physical Education

Sugar Stacks

[Sugar Stacks](#) is a good website for understanding how much sugar is in the food and beverages that we consume. [Sugar Stacks](#) lists popular food and beverage items in ten categories. Every item is pictured with a stack of sugar cubes. Each sugar cube represents four grams of sugar. This is a great way to see just how much sugar you really consume in your favorite snack or beverage.



[Get the Glass](#) is a game produced by the California Milk Processor Board. Obviously, the game is designed to promote milk consumption. The game takes students on a journey with the milk-deprived Adachi family as they try to break into "Fort Fridge" where they will find an unlimited supply of milk. Throughout the game students will learn about the benefits of drinking milk and making healthy beverage choices.



[Nourish Interactive](#) is a great resource for elementary school health and nutrition teachers. [Nourish Interactive](#) offers [lesson plans](#), printable [guides and forms](#), [resources for parents](#), and [games for students](#). In the [printables section](#) teachers will find things like fun coloring pages as well as educational pages like "*name the food group*" and "*exercise tracking sheets*."

The [parents' section](#) of [Nourish Interactive](#) offers parents tips on teaching healthy eating habits at home. The [parents' section](#) also offers tips and recipes for cooking healthy food with kids. The [games section](#) of [Nourish Interactive](#) contains ten online games for elementary school students. The games are designed to reinforce the lessons learned from parents and teachers using the teaching resources on [Nourish Interactive](#).



[Fat World](#) is an educational video game funded in part by the [Corporation for Public Broadcasting](#). The game isn't designed to tell students what they should or shouldn't eat rather it is designed to get students thinking about the results of food choices. In the game students explore the socioeconomic, geographic, and cultural factors that influence the nutrition choices people make. Students will also explore the roles of the government and interest groups in the marketing of foods. [Fat World](#) is available as a free download for Windows and Mac users.



[Scrub Club](#) is a website designed to teach students why they need to wash their hands. The [Scrub Club](#) offers videos, comics, and games designed to promote healthy hygiene habits to prevent the spread of diseases like the flu. For teachers, Scrub Club offers [free downloads](#) of posters, cartoon books, and lesson plans to promote hand washing. The downloads are available in English, Spanish, and French.

The [Ad Decoder](#) is produced by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The game appears on the [B.A.M.](#) (body and mind) section of their website. BAM is full of great resources for health and physical education teachers. The [Ad Decoder](#) provides students with two virtual magazines which they flip through to see examples and explanations of advertising tactics used to grab the attention of tweens and teens. After flipping through the magazines students can test their new knowledge.

Art & Music



The [Museum of Modern Art](#) offers a sizable [collection of online resources for teaching art lessons](#). Part of that collection is a series of lesson plans, but there are also collections of art for students, an art game for young (5-8 years old) students, interactive activities for older students, and podcasts about art and artists. The [MOMA lesson plans collection](#) can be searched by theme, artist, medium, or subject. If the lesson plans in the collection don't offer quite what you're looking for,

MOMA has free resources you can use in developing your own plans. MOMA offers many images and PDFs that you can use in developing own lessons and or slideshows.



[The Getty Museum](#) offers a great way to view art with augmented reality. As employed by [The Getty](#), augmented reality creates 3D displays of art from printed PDF codes displayed in front of a webcam. The example that The Getty provides in [this video](#) is a 3D display of one of the

[cabinets of curiosities](#) created by Albert Janszoon Vinckenbrinck. If you want to try it for yourself after watching the video, the [directions are available here](#).



[Smarthistory](#) is a free online alternative to expensive art history textbooks. [Smarthistory](#) was developed by art history professors Dr. Beth Harris and Dr. Steven Zucker. [Smarthistory](#) features more than just images of notable works of art. Videos lessons, VoiceThread lessons, and audio lessons about eras and themes in art history are what make [Smarthistory](#) a valuable resource. Students can browse all of the resources of [Smarthistory](#) by artist name, style of work, theme, or time period.



[MOOM](#), the Museum of Online Museums, is a list of museums that offer online exhibitions. In some cases the museums include virtual tours and in other cases the museums online exhibits are simple photo galleries. Some of the notable museums featured in the [Museum of Online Museums](#) include the Smithsonian, the Art Institute of Chicago, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art.



The San Francisco Symphony's website [Keeping Score](#) is a comprehensive website full of educational materials about composers, scores, musical techniques, and symphonies. There are two elements of [Keeping Score](#) that should be of particular interest to educators. The most immediately accessible section of Keeping Score is the [interactive education elements](#) that contain videos, images, and texts that tell the stories of composers. The interactive section also features explanations of musical techniques, the history of notable events and themes in the symphonic world, and analysis of various scores.



[Classics for Kids](#), produced by Cincinnati Public Radio, offers lesson plans, podcasts, and games for teaching kids about classical music. The lesson plans are designed for use in K-5 settings. All of the lesson plans are available as PDFs. Activity sheets are also available as accompaniments to recordings of classical composers. In the games section of [Classics for Kids](#) students can develop their own compositions or practice identifying music and composers. As a reference for students, [Classics for Kids](#) offers a dictionary of music terms.

Teaching Online Safety



[Welcome to the Web](#) is a series of lessons for teaching young students how to navigate the Internet. There are seven lessons in the series although the first lesson is really just an introduction to the site. The other lessons in the series teach kids the basic vocabulary of the web, online safety, and search

techniques. The series concludes with a challenge exercise in which students test their new knowledge and skills. Every lesson in the series comes with an optional worksheet in PDF form.



[Own Your Space](#) is a free, sixteen chapter ebook designed to educate tweens and teens about protecting themselves and their stuff online. This ebook isn't a fluffy, general overview book. Each chapter goes into great detail explaining the technical threats that students' computers face online as well as the personal threats to data that students can face online. For example, in the first chapter students learn about different types of malware and the importance of installing security patches to prevent malware infections. The fourteenth chapter explains the differences between secured and unsecured wireless networks, the potential dangers of an unsecured network, and how to lock-down a network. Download the whole book or individual chapters [here](#).



PBS Kids offers the [Webonauts Academy](#) in which elementary school students can learn about safe online behaviors. When students have completed all of the Webonauts missions they will graduate from the Webonauts Academy. The educators tips page offers some practical suggestions for using Webonauts in the classroom or in a school library.



[LMK Life Online](#) is a website created for the purpose of educating girls about online safety. [LMK Life Online](#) is sponsored by the Girl Scouts and Microsoft. On the site girls can learn through articles and videos about protecting themselves from online predators. Girls will also find

lessons about cyberbullying and online privacy. After reading the articles and watching the videos, girls can test their knowledge through interactive quizzes.



The [Google Family Safety Center](#) introduces parents to and shows them how to use Google's safety tools including safe search, safe search lock, and YouTube's safety mode. Google has partnered with a number of child safety organizations to develop educational materials for dealing with topics like cyberbullying, strangers online, protecting personal information, and avoiding malware online. Finally, Google's Family Safety Center contains a collection of videos featuring Google employees sharing the strategies they use with their own kids for teaching online behavior and keeping their kids safe online.



The Virginia Department of Education has produced an engaging and useful site for teaching students web safety lessons. [Internet Safety With Professor Garfield](#) currently offers an animated lesson on cyberbullying and an animated lesson about online safety. As you might guess from the site's title, the lessons feature Garfield. Both lessons use the same model in which students watch a cartoon, take an informal quiz, then try to apply their new knowledge to a few different scenarios.