

Engaging Students with Free, Internet-Enabled Technologies

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Part One: Engagement within a framework of taxonomies, folksonomies, and college prep

ACRL Information Literacy

<http://tinyurl.com/3bp2l3>

Successful students must be fluent in information literacy, particularly information literacy aligned to the nine standards set by the American Association of School Libraries at <http://tinyurl.com/6uxv5> [requires Adobe Reader]. The Association of College & Research Libraries' Information Literacy page is a great place to start. *See also: your local classroom teacher, librarian, or library website.*

Delicious

<http://del.icio.us/>

In addition to a having firm grasp of information literacy and its inherent taxonomies, successful students must also be skilled in constructing their own structures of meaning. Social bookmarking sites like Delicious enable students to collaborate with other students and scholars to create individualized toolkits of user-categorized [or "folksonomic"] Internet resources that can be used throughout the students' academic careers. *See also: furl.net and Blackboard's scholar.com.*

CEPR/EPIC

<http://s4s.org/cepr.products.php>

Finally, successful students must be prepared for the intellectual demands and expectations of postsecondary education. CEPR/EPIC presents concrete examples of how K-12 curriculum – even gifted and talented and advanced placement curriculum – may not fully be aligned with the expectations of America's top research universities. CEPR/EPIC also offers specific steps teachers and students can take to remedy this misalignment. Teachers, parents, and college-bound students should pay particular attention to "Understanding University Success," a free Adobe Reader document so significant in its impact that the College Board uses it as a foundational element in the development of PSAT, SAT, and Advanced Placement examinations.

Part Two: Engagement through situated activity

Calibrated Peer Review

<http://cpr.molsci.ucla.edu/>

In alignment with the goals of higher education's writing-across-the-curriculum movement and designed for classes with 15 or more students, Calibrated Peer Review students compose a document based on their instructor's guidelines and then submit that document electronically. Students then receive online training on peer review, are tested on their evaluation skills, and then evaluate their peers' work in a process that is double-blind and anonymous to the students and completely visible to the instructor. In the final step the students evaluate their own work using the same criteria they used to judge the work of their peers. Studies at three different universities in chemistry, biology, and economics independently document that students taught using Calibrated Peer Review assignments perform ~10% better on traditional course exams than students taught through traditional lecture and textbook methods.

Part Three: Engagement through the use of topic-specific media

OpenCourseWare

<http://ocw.mit.edu/>

The Massachusetts Institute of Technology's OpenCourseWare [OCW] project has posted, free of charge, all available course materials – syllabi, lecture notes, assignments, exams, and sometimes even complete audio and video lectures – for over 1,700 MIT courses representing 35 academic disciplines and all five MIT schools. OCW does not grant MIT college credit or degrees, nor does it provide participants access to MIT's faculty, but it does provide teachers and students an opportunity to see and even "borrow" the curriculum used in the classrooms of one of America's premiere research universities. *See also: the OCW Consortium "Use" page at <http://tinyurl.com/35lwkb> and the OCW search tool at <http://ocwfinder.com/>*



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OER Commons

<http://www.oercommons.org/>

OER [Open Educational Resources] Commons is a free, online learning network that enables teachers and professors [pre-K to graduate school] to search, browse, evaluate, download, and discuss freely-available teaching and learning materials. These materials include full courses, course modules, syllabi, lectures, homework assignments, quizzes, lab and classroom activities, pedagogical materials, games, and simulations. OER Commons is relatively new, so its database of resources is small but growing. *See also:*

<http://learn.creativecommons.org/>

Gateway to 21st Century Skills

<http://thegateway.org/>

Sponsored by the National Education Association and others, the Gateway to 21st Century Skills [formerly the Gateway to Educational Materials] is a free meta-search engine for high-quality lesson plans, curriculum units, and other educational resources. You can search the Gateway by keyword[s] or browse the catalog by subject area, type [activity, best practice, lesson plan, etc.], grade level, and more. You can also browse through an updated archive of each state's core academic standards. At last count the Gateway contains 49,000 categorized learning resources from over 700 educational content providers.

MERLOT

<http://merlot.org/>

The Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and Online Teaching is a peer-reviewed repository of exemplary learning materials. Hosted by the California State University system, MERLOT offers a searchable database of recommended learning resources as well as a portal to 16 discipline-oriented community spaces managed by editorial boards of college and university faculty. [Full disclosure: the author of this handout assisted with the creation of MERLOT's community portals.]

Part Four: Engagement through the use of Google's advanced tools

Gaggle

<http://gaggle.net/>

To use Google's advanced tools in your classroom, each student needs a free Google account ... and Google requires each student to have an email address. Gaggle, not affiliated with Google, allows K-12 teachers to create free, anonymous student email addresses that can be controlled and monitored from the teachers' master account.

Google Accounts

<http://tinyurl.com/2362z>

Using this online form, students can create their own Google accounts or teachers can create Google accounts for their students. Google accounts are free and are required to access Google's advanced tools.

Google Docs and Spreadsheets

<http://docs.google.com/>

Google Docs and Spreadsheets is a free, online word processor and spreadsheet editor that enables teachers and students to collaboratively and simultaneously create, store, share, and edit documents and spreadsheets.

Blogger

<http://blogger.com/>

Google's Blogger tool enables teachers and students to easily create, publish, and update online journals. *See also: Blogging 101 presentation at <http://netsquirrel.com/powerpoint/>*

Google Page Creator

<http://pages.google.com/>

Using Google Page Creator's simple WYSIWYG interface, teachers and students can quickly design, create, publish, and update their own web pages hosted by Google.

Google for Educators

<http://www.google.com/educators>

The Google for Educators page offers more information on how to use Google's advanced tools in your classroom, including classroom activities for each Google tool and printable posters offering tips on how to use Google's tools more effectively.



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