

TeacherLINK TechBytes

Newsletter for August 2015
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What is Assistive Technology and UDI?

by Denise Warren (Utah School for the Deaf and Blind)

What makes something "assistive"? Is an iPad assistive technology? Is a stepstool?

The accepted definition of Assistive Technology from the 2004 IDEA is: "(A) In general.--The term 'assistive technology device' means any item, piece of equipment, or product system, whether acquired commercially off the shelf, modified, or customized, that is used to increase, maintain, or improve functional capabilities of a child with a disability."

AT can be as simple as a pencil grip that allows a student with a disability to hold a pencil, to as complex as a screen reading program that allows a student who is totally blind to use a computer or the technology that allows Stephen Hawking to communicate with the world. As classroom teachers, integrating assistive technology into the classroom can be a challenge-but it often doesn't have to be, especially if instruction is planned with access in mind.

Universal Design is the general concept that instead of designing something for the typical user, design it to work for the most users. For example, instead of setting up stairs to enter the building, which would indeed work for most people, set up a ramp that allows nearly everyone access. Design the door to open automatically by proximity, so those who can't open a traditional door (which works for most users) can still enter. Universal Design for Instruction is the same concept: instead of planning instruction to reach the typical user, plan it to reach the most users, lessening the need for adjustments for assistive technology users in your class.

If the writing app or program you are using already has word prediction included, then there is no need for the students who cannot spell to have specialized technology. If your handout is available online, then there is no need for students who are blind to use specialized technology to change the handout to digital form so they can access it. If you are using instructional videos, caption them or have a transcript link for students who cannot hear.

This four page .pdf document from The University of Washington (by Sheryl Burgstahler, Ph.D.) has a great list of features of UDI, and links for more information. <http://tinyurl.com/pg23kuu>

WHAT IS #UTEDCHAT?

Join with UCET in participating in a weekly educational chat on Twitter. Each Wednesday at 9 pm members of UCET can be part of a state-wide Twitter chat on a different educational topic each week. If you're new to Twitter or haven't participated in a Twitter chat please watch the video below for more information. See you Wednesdays at 9 for #utedchat on Twitter.



Welcome to TeachMeAnatomy

<http://teachmeanatomy.info>

From their website:

Containing over 700 vibrant, full-colour images, TeachMeAnatomy is a comprehensive anatomy encyclopedia presented in a visually-appealing, easy-to-read format.

Created by a team of doctors and medical students, each topic combines anatomical knowledge with high-yield clinical pearls, seamlessly bridging the gap between scholarly learning and improved patient care.

Join the millions of healthcare professionals, students, and patients – get started by using the menus on the home page.

What We Do

Produced by a team of doctors, medical students and anatomists, TeachMeAnatomy is a comprehensive anatomy encyclopedia presented in a visually-appealing, easy-to-read format.

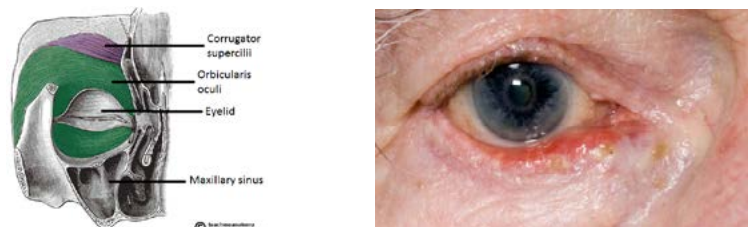
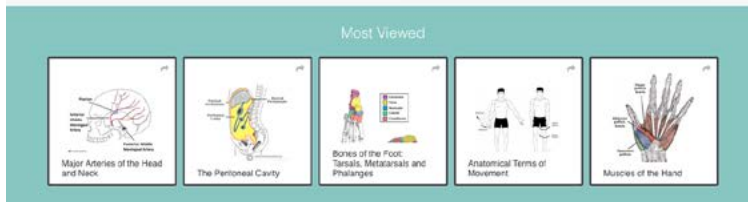
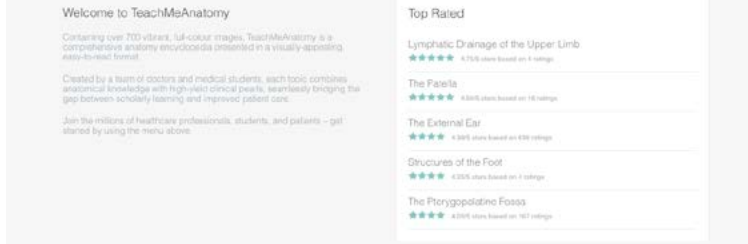
We have been online since 2012. Since then, we have received over 6 million page views from all around the world. All of our content is 100% free (and always will be), and has been used by many educational institutions in their teaching programs.

Testimonials

“Your website helped me to make sense of the myriad connections of the MSK unit...the color-coded pictures were amazing.”

“Brief but concise, brilliant when reviewing anatomy forgotten in the early years”

“This excellent studying tool has strengthened my class study material as well as my knowledge, and I feel better prepared than ever”



Free Printable Paper

<http://www.printablepaper.net>

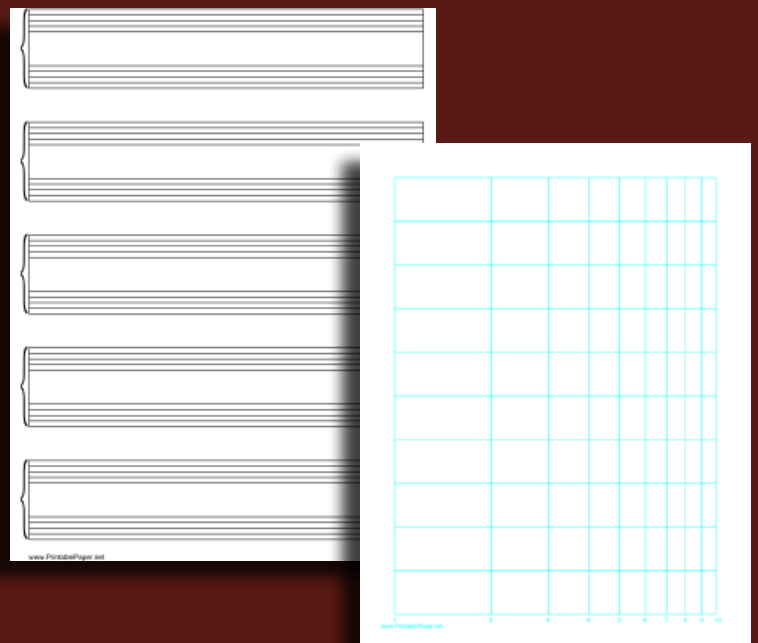
1,597 papers you can download and print for free. We've got graph paper, lined paper, financial paper, music paper, and more. (Or get them all on CD-ROM for \$39.)

Printable Paper has been featured by LifeHacker, Kim Komando, Woman's World magazine, and the Today Show.

Many of the printable papers would be great for educators to use. For example, there are lined papers, graph papers, logarithmic graph papers, music staff papers, printable calendars, and many more.

Have a look at some of the thumbnails at right for examples. Having access to these to print may be less expensive than buying reams in the local marketplace.

Enjoy and use this great resource!



The National Academy of Engineering Grand Challenges: 1 - Advance Personalized Learning

<http://engineeringchallenges.org/9127.aspx>

The National Academy of Engineering have posted 14 grand challenges for future engineers to tackle. From their website: "President Barack Obama greets science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) leaders including National Academy of Engineering President C. D. Mote Jr. during the 2015 White House Science Fair, in the Map Room of the White House, March 23, 2015. (Official White House Photo by Pete Souza)

In a letter of commitment presented to President Barack Obama today, more than 120 U.S. engineering schools announced plans to educate a new generation of engineers expressly equipped to tackle some of the most pressing issues facing society in the 21st century.

These "Grand Challenges," identified through initiatives such as the White House Strategy for American Innovation, the National Academy of Engineering (NAE) Grand Challenges for Engineering, and the United Nations Millennium Development Goals, include complex yet critical goals such as engineering better medicines, making solar energy cost-competitive with coal, securing cyberspace, and advancing personalized learning tools to deliver better education to more individuals.

Each of the 122 signing schools has pledged to graduate a minimum of 20 students per year who have been specially prepared to lead the way in solving such large-scale problems, with the goal of training more than 20,000 formally recognized "Grand Challenge Engineers" over the next decade." (Source)

I watched a marvelous video that was given by Chris Anderson on "How YouTube is Driving Innovation." I'd like to share that and several other thought-provoking videos along that line with you. They are worth watching-



ing! TED's Chris Anderson says the rise of web video is driving a worldwide phenomenon he calls Crowd Accelerated Innovation -- a self-fueling cycle of learning that could be as significant as the invention of print. But to tap into its power, organizations will need to embrace radical openness. And for TED, it means the dawn of a whole new chapter ...

How come TED's head guy Chris Anderson is giving his own TEDTalk? Well, it all started with an idea that wouldn't go away -- an insight into the true significance of web video, and what it might mean for the world's future.

(Click the image of the video above to hyperlink to the video!)



Sir Ken Robinson: Bring on the learning revolution! In this poignant, funny follow-up to his fabled 2006 talk, Sir Ken Robinson makes the case for a radical shift from standardized schools to personalized learning -- creating conditions where kids' natural talents can flourish.



Transforming Education : Will Richardson at (co)lab summit 2013 A parent of two teenagers, Will Richardson has spent the last dozen years developing an international reputation as a leading thinker and writer about the intersection of social online learning networks and education.



Creating Innovators : Tony Wagner at (co)lab summit 2013 Tony Wagner is the first Innovation Education Fellow at the Technology & Entrepreneurship Center at Harvard. Prior to this, he was the founder and co-director of the Change Leadership Group at the Harvard Graduate School of Education for more than a decade.

It would be interesting to have your feedback on this. Feel free to contact me at Nathan.Smith@usu.edu



Freaks3d Printer

<https://vimeo.com/133408764>

A company in China has developed the world's first portable 3D printer - the Freaks3D. Kickstarter campaigns have already exceeded their funding goal by a factor of 5. Weighing in at 6 pounds, the printer is easily transported to other locations - a feature that would be very handy in schools. They also say that the printer does not need to preheat the filament, and that it runs silently.

At the moment, \$300 donation will get you the printer kit and instructions.

AlternativeTo - Find Alternatives to Software

<http://alternativeto.net>

From their website: "We have one mission: helping you find the right software for your computer, mobile phone or tablet. Our main focus is to give you alternatives to software you already know and want to replace.

Based on our users recommendations we list great alternatives to the applications you want to replace. By joining the site you can participate in the process of making these recommendations better, so please join in!

The best ways to follow AlternativeTo and talk to us is to subscribe to our blog at blog.alternativeto.net and to follow @AlternativeTo on Twitter."

The screenshot shows the AlternativeTo website interface. At the top, there's a search bar with the text "Find an alternative to...". Below the search bar, there are navigation tabs for various platforms: All Platforms, Windows, Mac, Linux, Web / Cloud, iPhone, iPad, Android, Windows Phone, Self-Hosted, Pebble, Firefox, Chrome, and More. The main content area features a featured article titled "The Salesforce1 Platform" with a sub-headline "What is IaaS vs. PaaS vs. SaaS? Read This E-book to Find Out Now." Below this, there are sections for "Tired of crappy software?" and "Apps We Like - Pocket Casts". The "Apps We Like" section includes a description of Pocket Casts and a list of social media links (Facebook, Twitter, Google Plus, YouTube, LinkedIn, and a DONATE button). At the bottom, there's a section for "Call Recording Software" with a sub-headline "Learn why 400+ organizations switched to Calabro WFO solutions." and a "CONTRIBUTE TO THE SITE" button.

10 Text-to-Speech Tools for Your Classroom...

<http://elearningindustry.com/top-10-text-to-speech-tts-software-elearning>

The link above will take you to an article, "Top 10 Text To Speech (TTS) Software For eLearning," by Christopher Pappas, dated 27 July, 2015. He describes 10 of the top text-to-speech applications that can enhance e-learning. For your convenience, I've listed the 10 below with links. But read the article for descriptions.

Ivona - <http://www.ivona.com/>

NaturalReader - <http://www.naturalreaders.com/>

Zabaware Text To Speech Reader - <http://www.zabaware.com/reader/>

iSpeech - <http://www.ispeech.org/>

Acapela Group Virtual Speaker - <http://www.acapela-group.com/virtual-speaker/>

TextSpeechPro - <http://www.textspeechpro.com/>

AudioBookMaker - <http://audiobookmaker.com/>

TextAloud 3 - <http://www.nextup.com/>

Read The Words - <http://www.readthewords.com/Default.aspx>

Voice Reader - http://www.linguattec.net/products/tts/voice_reader

Chris ends his article with, "Also, if you are an educator and you are looking for free text to speech tools that your students will love, check the article **18 Free Text To Speech Tools For Educators**. At this article you will find a list of free TTS tools to relax your students' tired eyes, convert any written text into spoken words, run a PowerPoint presentation by also having a narration of the text on your slides, and a lot more.

Last but not least, now that you know what is the best text to speech software available, you may be interested in learning more about eLearning narration. Read the article **7 eLearning Script Writing Tips To Perfect Your eLearning Course Narrative** and find out how you can create an eLearning course narrative that is powerful and polished."

Thank you, Chris for sharing with us!

fischertechnik Offers Free Elementary STEM Curriculum

Source: <http://www.studica.com/blog/fischertechnik-offers-free-elementary-stem-curriculum>

On the heels of the recent release of fischertechnik Education's elementary STEM sets, the company announced it will offer educators access to the complete fischertechnik Introduction to STEM I curriculum. That's right. They are so confident in the positive impact the Introduction to STEM I set will have on your classroom that they are giving you a download of the curriculum in its entirety, free of charge.

Early STEM education is an integral component of a student's success in higher education and future career industries. The fischertechnik Education Introduction to STEM sets provide elementary school teachers with the tools to help students establish an interest and aptitude in STEM subjects as early as possible. This curriculum uses simple machines as the basis for engaging students in the world of technology they experience every day.

The fischertechnik Introduction to STEM I curriculum was developed with noted educator and STEM expert, Tom White. As such, it was designed to meet current Common Core and Next Generation Science Standards. Both of these academic standards support curricula that are research and evidence based and engage higher-order thinking skills. Introduction to STEM I addresses each set of standards, while preserving a unified goal for students to achieve.

fischertechnik Introduction to STEM I (recommended for grades 2-4) introduces your students to everyday technology by integrating new concepts into your lesson plans. Simple changes, such as using STEM-centric vocabulary, can make a huge impact in your classroom. Using terminology like "experiment", "model" and "design" serve as building blocks for higher education. The ability to associate lessons with real-world experiences also makes a difference in how students' retain STEM material. [Introduction to STEM I curriculum](#) is successful not because of its complexity, but rather its ability to create and foster student comprehension and exploration of STEM concepts.

Free Sample Activity Kit Available for Classrooms

C Clamp The best way for educators to know if something is going to work in their classrooms is to try it out. That is why fischertechnik Education offers a free sample activity from its Introduction to STEM I kit. Students and teachers can explore how the system works and see firsthand the impact it has on learning.

The [Sample Activity Kit](#) provides parts to build a C-clamp model, which is 1 of the 40 models included in Introduction to STEM I. This model of a C-clamp is used to teach students about how gears work, and focuses on key STEM concepts. It also includes access to a download containing step-by-step building instructions and related material from the Introduction to STEM I curriculum. Successful elementary STEM education starts here free of charge. **Order yours today!**

The screenshot shows the ForAllRubrics website. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the ForAllRubrics logo, links for Teachers, Schools & Districts, Blog, Sign Up, and Login. The main heading reads "The Rubric and Badging Platform for Teaching and Learning". Below this, there are two buttons: "FREE FOR TEACHERS" with a "Get Started" button, and "SCHOOL & DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS" with a "Learn More" button. The central part of the image displays a tablet and a smartphone showing the software interface. The tablet screen shows a "WRITING EXPLANATORY TEXT" assignment with a table of student scores. The table has columns for "Student Name", "Ability", and "Score".

Student Name	Ability	Score
Angelina Abakumova	08/16/2015	13/21
Dafnia Annas	08/16/2015	13/21

ForAllRubrics - The Rubric and Badging Platform for Teaching and Learning

<https://www.forallrubrics.com>

The best rubric software around: Does what you need, easy to use and includes outstanding support.

For Teachers: Classroom Assessment

- Easily create your own rubrics
- Complete rubrics on iPads, tablets or phones
- Collect data offline with no internet access
- Compute scores automatically
- Print rubrics or save as PDF or spreadsheet

For Schools: Data Management

- Real-time reporting of school, class and student data
- Analyze your data on our secure website
- Download all of your data for archiving
- Report on progress and item analysis
- Manage a library of rubrics available to teachers

Convert Anything to Anything with CloudConvert

<https://cloudconvert.com>

This is a free/paid service site. 208 different formats are supported. CloudConvert supports the conversion between more than 200 different audio, video, document, ebook, archive, image, spreadsheet and presentation formats. Check the [supported formats](#) for more details.

Your file conversion happens in the cloud. There is no need to install any software on your computer! Upload your files to CloudConvert and they will do the job for you. Don't worry, your files are safe and only you can access them. They will be deleted again as soon as your conversion is finished.

Most conversion types support advanced options, for example setting the codecs of audio/video files. Also, they support batch converting, merging from multiple files and archive packing!

Learn & Teach Typing, Free

<https://www.typing.com>

From the website:

How much does Typing.com cost?

Typing.com is free! Make sure to register for a free account to save your typing progress and statistics!

Why is Typing.com free?

We believe learning a skill as fundamental as touch typing should be available to everybody of all ages, skill levels, and even languages! How can the internet grow if it takes us an hour to type an email?

But... how is it free?

Typing.com displays fun and interesting ads to help pay for the cost of building and maintaining Typing.com. If you would prefer not to see advertisements, you can upgrade to a Premium Account

and you will never see another ad again.

How do I get rid of the advertisements?

You can sign up for a Premium Account to remove ads forever. When logged into your Typing.com account you will see a large box in the top left corner next to the top advertisement.

How does the Scoreboard work?

Every Sunday morning the Scoreboard is updated with the previous week's fastest, and busiest typists. The Scoreboard is calculated from typing exercises only. Typing test results are not used.

How do I cancel my account?

Simply stop using it and after a few months of inactivity your account will be cleared out.

