It’s Time!

UCET Call for Presenters

The annual Utah Coalition for Educational Technology conference will be held on March 10-11, 2006 at South Hills Middle School. We are looking forward to a great conference. We invite teachers and leaders and others who are doing great things with the curriculum in the classroom or in their schools to submit a proposal to present at the conference. We know there are a lot of you out there and request your participation as a presenter at the conference. The conference strands include: Power Users, Novice, Language Arts, Fine Arts, Social Studies, Math, Science, Innovative Technology, Leadership. Presentation sessions run for 70 or 140 minutes. The registration fee is waived for primary presenters. (If 2 or more are presenting only the 1st registration is waived)

Proposals need to be submitted by February 3rd, 2006. Our presenters make our conference and we look forward to you being a part of it.

Presenter Proposal Link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=793721529645

If You’re Interested in Technology and Education - This is the Conference for You! Register Today and Save!

The 2006 UCET Conference is lining up some great presentations! Conference strands include presentations for power users and novices alike; curriculum focus areas in language arts, fine arts, social studies, math, and science; and sessions on innovative technologies and leadership. We have an exciting keynote speaker, Marc Prensky. Mr. Prensky is an internationally acclaimed speaker, writer, consultant, and designer in the areas of education and learning. If you have heard or read much about Digital Natives (Our Students) vs. Digital Immigrants (Us), you have been exposed to some of Mr. Prensky’s thoughts and ideas. He will share with us his message about how to best work with the Natives. Edutopia just published an article of his, entitled “Adopt and Adapt.” Go have a look...

Link: http://www.edutopia.org/magazine/ed1article.php?id=Art_1423&issue=dec_05#

Conference fees, which include UCET membership privileges for the year and subscription to the monthly UCET newsletter, are $45 if you register online before February 24, 2006. Registration fee after the deadline will be $50. There is a special conference pricing for students (you’ll need to present your current student ID at the registration booth when you pick up your conference materials). The fee for students registering online before February 24th is $20. A student fee of $25 will be charged after the deadline.

Register today at the following link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=729701572799

Please share UCET 2006 information with your peers!
InfoSource Awards Technology Grants to School Districts Across the U.S.

InfoSource recently named six school districts, representing more than 50 elementary, middle, and high schools, that will receive the Integrating Technology in the Classroom Grant, designed to accelerate learning through the innovative use of technology. InfoSource has extended the grant program and plans to award approximately 50 more grants (up to $2.5 million in product value) in 2006.

The InfoSource Integrating Technology in the Classroom Grant Program aims at supporting “in need” school districts by providing the tools and technology needed to improve digital literacy skills for both teachers and students, simplify and enhance the learning process, and make computers and the Internet an integral part of the classroom. The purpose is to provide qualified districts with the How to Master Learn It! Build It! Share It! suite of online tools and technology training. With dial-up or broadband Internet access and the Learn It! Build It! Share It! suite faculty, staff, and students can access online computer and Internet skills training, testing, assignments, grade books, reporting, chat rooms, discussion boards, file sharing, a lesson plan builder, and a lesson plan library. The suite also contains a simple-to-use content authoring tool and test builder so teachers can easily create their own online training and tests. Additionally, parental involvement programs can easily be developed allowing them to view their children’s progress, grades, and activities.

Link:  http://www.prweb.com/releases/2005/12/prweb320479.htm
Source: THE Newsletter for December 14, 2005

Earth Calendar - Celebrate Every Day!

The Earth Calendar is a daybook of holidays and celebrations around the world. For the purpose of this web site a “holiday” is any day that recognizes a cultural event. Click the ‘Today’ button to view holidays observed on this date. Or use the tabs at the top to navigate by date, country and religion. The Earth Calendar is a non-profit website.

Link:  http://www.earthcalendar.net/
Source: THE Newsletter for December 14, 2005

Digital History - Using New Technologies to Enhance Teaching and Research

Digital History was designed and developed to support the teaching of American History in K-12 schools and colleges and is supported by the Department of History and the College of Education at the University of Houston. The site provides a U.S. history textbook, essays, documents, maps, photos, audio files, and more for teachers and students of American history in schools and colleges.

Link:  http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/
Source: THE Newsletter for December 14, 2005

U.S. Bank Internet Scholarship Program

For the past nine years, U.S. Bank scholarships have helped students fund their education. This year, they continue the tradition through their Internet Scholarship Program, which will award up to thirty $1,000 scholarships to high school seniors entering college next fall. They will accept applications through February 28, 2006. There’s no time like the present, so apply today! The Internet Scholarship Program is exclusively for high school seniors graduating in the 2005-2006 school year. Winners will be selected at random.

Link:  http://www.usbank.com/cgi_w/cfm/studentloans/marketing.cfm
**Space Day 2006 Design Challenges - Living and Working on the Moon**

From the Space Day website:  “Are your students looking for a project that’s exciting, lets them work with friends, lets them use their creativity and imagination, and build and design something really cool?

Then you’ve found it.

The Space Day 2006 Design Challenges lets your students become scientists, engineers, and explorers working on the space frontier to design a totally unique solution to some “out-of-this-world” challenges. Using the Moon or any planet, moon, comet, or asteroid in our Solar System as the launching point for exploration, students can choose from among:

**Cosmic Cuisine:** Create a well-balanced meal for one pre-teenaged crew member, including recipes. The meal must be tasty, nutritious, and meet 1/3 of the daily requirements on the food pyramid for a teenager. The food packaging system must be leak-proof and spill-proof. This Challenge is for students in Grade 4.

**Stretch and Fetch:** Design a mechanical device that astronauts can quickly and easily operate that allows them to retrieve an object that is out of reach. The model retriever design must be able to extend at least 100 centimeters beyond its size when closed or collapsed. This Challenge is for students in Grade 5.

**X-Treme Fitness:** Develop more entertaining equipment and interesting ways to exercise in microgravity. Create a piece of exercise equipment for astronauts exploring a planet or moon in our Solar System. This equipment must help them keep bone mass and muscle tone. Any equipment designed must be compact and lightweight and include instruction manuals. This Challenge is for students in Grade 6.

**Galactic Gear:** Design and build a tool that can be used to explore and/or survive on another planet. The tool should have more than one use and be compact enough for an explorer to easily carry. This Challenge is for students in Grade 7 and Club-based groups.

**Extreme Explorer:** Design an exploration vehicle that can explore a region on another planet or moon in our Solar System. Decide what information you want to collect about the planet, and determine how your vehicle will gather that information. This Challenge is for students in Grade 8 and Home School students.

**Space Trek:** Keep an electronic journal about a planet or moon in our Solar System that includes expedition plans, as well as several daily entries about exploring this new environment. This Challenge is for students in Grade 4-5 or 6-8.

The Space Day Design Challenges are open to students in grades 4-8, and will be grouped into 9 categories. Club-based groups may only submit Galactic Gear Design Challenges and Home School groups may only submit Extreme Explorer Design Challenges. Teams that submit solutions received by February 1, 2006, will be considered for national recognition and receive a certificate of appreciation.

Stellar Design Challenge teams will be selected by the Space Day Educational Advisory Committee and recognized at the Space Day Opening Ceremony on Thursday, May 4, 2006, in Washington, D.C.”


Deadline: Feb. 1, 2006
Reading Lists from Questia

Questia Media Inc. has developed a new program called Reading Lists, which are librarian-selected resources such as articles and books on popular topics, organized by subject and grade level. After specifying search criteria, a list appears of all the available Reading Lists. Each list contains five or more books or articles related to the topic. The material on the Web site provides both students and teachers with knowledge that can be utilized in a variety of ways such as for background research, project resources, and required or assigned reading materials.

At present, the readings lists are organized into the following topics for grades 9-12: American History, American Literature, World History, and World Literature.

Link: http://www.questia.com/library/rl_cat

Source: THE Newsletter for December 7, 2005

Additional Food for Thought: Professor in Your Pocket

It was interesting to receive my Newsweek magazine just after distributing the recent UCET newsletter on podcasting. In the November 28, 2005 issue, Peg Tyre wrote an article entitled “Professor in Your Pocket,” which addresses some of the pros and cons of what she calls “coursecasting”. Coursecasts are podcasts where professors or teachers have recorded their class and then made them available online. I think you’ll find it to be interesting reading. Have a look at the article...

Link: http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/10117475/site/newsweek/

Announcing the UELMA Conference

UELMA will be hosting their spring conference Thursday, March 2, 2006. It will be held at the Davis Conference Center. Author and professional storyteller, Rafe Martin, will be their keynote speaker. You can get additional information and registration information at their website.

Link: http://www.uelma.org

The Veterans History Project

The Veterans History Project is a project of the Library of Congress aimed at collecting oral history interviews, memoirs, letters, diaries, photographs, and other original materials from veterans of World Wars I and II, and the Korean, Vietnam, and Persian Gulf Wars and the Afghanistan and Iraq conflicts (2001-present).

Link: http://www.loc.gov/vets/

Source: THE Newsletter for October 26, 2005

Hurricane

This NASA online educational activity for grades 5-8 will allow students to investigate the causes of hurricanes and how they are named and categorized, then practice tracking one across the Atlantic Ocean.

Link: http://www.nasa.gov/audience/foreducators/5-8/features/F_Hurricane.html

ERIC Database - The Education Resources Information Center

The Education Resources Information Center (ERIC), sponsored by the Institute of Education Sciences (IES) of the U.S. Department of Education, produces the world’s premier database of journal and non-journal education literature. The ERIC online system provides the public with a centralized ERIC Web site for searching the ERIC bibliographic database of more than 1.1 million citations going back to 1966. More than 107,000 full-text non-journal documents (issued 1993-2004), previously available through fee-based services only, are now available for free. ERIC is moving forward with its modernization program, and has begun adding materials to the database.

Link: http://www.eric.ed.gov/
Book Review: The World is Flat: A Brief History of the 21st Century, by Thomas L. Friedman

Dr. Carol Strong, Dean of the College of Education and Human Services at Utah State University, gave the college’s Administrative Council a reading assignment to read The World is Flat. I don’t think I’ve ever had a more interesting and enjoyable assignment. The book has some huge implications for education in America.

The premise of the book is that during the past twenty years, the technology foundation was laid that would allow people to collaborate worldwide in ways that have made the world a flatter, much smaller, and more collaborative place. He describes ten flatteners: 1. When the Berlin Wall came down simultaneously to Windows on the PC going global, 2. when Netscape went public, 3. when workflow software began talking to each other, 4. the open-source movement that made tools available globally, 5. oursourcing, 6. offshoring, 7. global supply-chaining, 8. in-forming (the knowledge of the entire world at our fingertips), and 10. the steroids that helped these all become digital, mobile, personal, and virtual.

Mr. Friedman describes a triple convergence that’s happened in just the past five years, where these technologies have matured, melded and blended together seamlessly. However, new technology is not enough in and of itself. The big spurts in productivity come when a new technology is combined with new ways of doing business. At this same time, three billion new players walked onto the playing field from the former Soviet Union, China, India, Eastern Europe, Latin American, and central Asia. These three convergences have created a whole new platform for doing business horizontally, rather than vertically.

As I mentioned earlier, this has tremendous implications for education and the job market of the future. Mr. Friedman points out that the greatest skillset we can obtain in this age is adaptability, the ability to use our minds to come up with new ways of doing business. He counsels that the ability to “learn how to learn” will be most important. Jobs will no longer be lifetime jobs, but people will need to learn and adapt to changes that will come ever more quickly in the future.

I heartily recommend this book to anyone, as it provides an extremely interesting glimpse into what the future may hold for our children in a flat world where one can do business with someone in China as easily as doing business with your next door neighbor. Being in the business of technology and education, I had seen many of the indicators Mr. Friedman talked about, but I had never put it all together in the way that he does.

If you’d like to hear Mr. Friedman talk about his book at the Library of Congress’ Bookfest, you can view a 38 minute webcast that sums up the book very well.

Link: http://www.loc.gov/bookfest/friedman.html

Library of Congress Bookfest - See Webcasts of Top Authors Reviewing their Work

Would you be interested in watching over a hundred top authors and pulitzer prize-winners talk about their work? Well you can. Welcome to the Web site for the 2005 National Book Festival. This is the fifth annual National Book Festival and once again they have an outstanding group of authors who joined the Library of Congress on September 24 on the National Mall in Washington, D.C. to talk about and sign their books. Visit the link below to learn more...

Link: http://www.loc.gov/bookfest/
Free Classroom Video and Teacher’s Guide - The Case of the Physical Fitness Challenge. (For Grades 3-6)

The tree house detectives are eager to win the Presidential Physical Fitness Award, but one of the detectives is not quite up to the challenge. They decide that it is time for a little research to learn more about being fit. They visit NASA to learn more about muscles, bones, and physical activity and why fitness is the key to space exploration.

The NASA SciFiles are a series of hour long videos, each consisting of four 15-minute segments that teach science, math, and technology concepts aligned to national education standards. Each video is accompanied by a teacher’s guide, in this case 90 pages of activities, lesson plans, and additional material to help teach the concepts.

You can get your copy of the video at the following link. You need a username (nasamovies) and a password (aesp) to download the .zip file that contains both the movie in DiVX avi format, and the teacher’s guide in PDF format. The download is large (245 MB), so allow yourself time for the download (don’t try this on a modem). If you’d like a closed-captioned copy of the actual video, you can request one from me (Nathan.Smith@usu.edu) for the cost of the blank videotape for me to record it to plus mailing costs to get it to you.


If for some reason the video won’t play on your computer, use the following link to download the free software that will play the movie on your Windows PC or Mac OS X computer:

Link: http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tlnasa/videos/dnmovies/index.html

A&E Biographies for the Classroom

The A&E Network has several hundred Teacher’s Guides available to download. These guides are written by teachers and include National Standards correlations, as well as vocabulary words and discussion questions.

A&E also has 25,000 biographies online that students and teachers can access. Many have video clips as well.

Link: http://www.biography.com/
Link: http://www.aetv.com/class/
Link: http://www.aetv.com/class/bioproject/
10 - 9 - 8 - 7 - 6… Counting Down! UCET Conference is just five weeks away!

The UCET conference is fast approaching. We need your help! Here’s the checklist...

1. Register and attend the conference! We need your participation. Register online before February 24 and save $$! [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=729701572799](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=729701572799) Remember, your UCET registration is also your membership dues for the year, which entitles you to the UCET newsletter and other membership privileges.

2. If you have a great idea or skill you can share, register a proposal to present at UCET. The main presenter in a session will have his/her registration fee waived. The deadline for registering a presentation has been extended to February 10, 2006. [http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=793721529645](http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=793721529645)

3. We are looking for UCET members who would be willing to serve on the UCET board for a two year term. If you’re interested, please email ucetinfo@ucet.org, and we’ll put you on the ballot. Be sure to give us some information about you to include in the UCET program.


Remember, UCET 2006 will take place on Friday, March 10 and Saturday March 11 at the South Hills Middle School at 13508 S. 4000 W., Riverton, UT 84065. The easiest way to get there is to take the I-15 freeway to the Bangerter Highway exit. Travel west until you reach the 13400 South traffic signal. Turn west and travel about a block or so, and you’ll see the middle school on the south side of the highway. [http://www.ucet.org](http://www.ucet.org) has a Google map link on the page so you can get step-by-step directions from your address.

UCET 2006 is shaping up to be a fantastic conference. We look forward to seeing you there. We hope you enjoy this edition of the UCET newsletter. You’ll find useful opportunities and resources, so read on...
Getting an Education Really Does Pay

A University of California-Berkeley study, “Return on Investment: Educational Choices and Demographic Change in California’s Future,” released November 30, 2005, documents how increased educational investment would bolster the state economy by yielding billions of dollars in tax receipts. Researchers identified that for every additional dollar the state invests in getting a group of freshmen in and through college, that dollar will yield a $3 return on investment. This amount translates to $3 billion in income generated to the state in additional net tax revenue.

Source - Higher Education Technology Roundup

Dictionary of Measurement Units

This dictionary provides an account of the principal units of measurement to be found in use around the world today, and the conversion factors often needed to change them into ‘standard’ units of the SI system. It is divided into two parts:

Part 1: deals mainly with the conversion of measures in one system to their equivalent values in another system. The necessary factors are given to a high degree of accuracy, and there is also access to a wide range of on-line calculators to automate the process.

Part 2: gives a full account of the three principal systems, their definitions, relationships and development, with some guidance on their rules and usage. There are also references to other sources in books and on the Web.

There is also the FAQ which deals with some additional matters of interest related to units, and about which queries are frequently received. Also, you’ll find calculators giving access to 40 different calculators, each devoted to converting units of measure in a particular category. Then there is the Pocket Guide providing a handy list of the conversion units often needed for the more common types of measures.

Link: http://www.projects.ex.ac.uk/trol/dictunit/index.htm

Utah Agriculture in the Classroom

Agriculture in the Classroom is a nationwide program designed to help students develop an awareness and understanding of our food and fiber system, and how agriculture impacts our daily lives. Utah Agriculture in the Classroom (AITC) provides training and resources for teachers to use as a vehicle to teach across existing curriculum. Teachers across the state can help to increase agricultural literacy.

Agriculture in the Classroom does not attempt to add anything to the existing school curriculum. Several AITC instructional units have been designed in conjunction with the Utah State Office of Education. Other materials have been created as a resource for teachers to enhance state required subjects. For example, science standards such as plants, animals, soils, heredity, and microorganisms can be taught using agriculture as the vehicle.

Classroom materials (PDF, PowerPoint files, etc.) and resource information from this website may be reproduced for educational not-for-profit purposes without the written consent of Utah Agriculture in the Classroom provided that the user use the following credit line, “Reproduced with the permission of Utah Agriculture in the Classroom, Utah State University, [online] www.agclassroom.org/ut.” Link: http://extension.usu.edu/aitc/index.html
Create Online Video Tutorials
Digital Camera in the Classroom
Digital Camera II: Advanced Photo Editing
Digital Video Projects
Dreamweaver 1.5: Review and Practice
Dreamweaver Level 1
Dreamweaver Level 2
Electronic Portfolios for Students
Excel for Teachers
Fireworks MX 2004
Flash MX 2004
Geographic Information Systems (GIS)
GIS/GPS Projects
The GPS Classroom
LearnKey Orientation*
Pioneer, Utah’s Online Library*
Podcasting, Blogs and Vlogs
PowerPoint for Teachers
Smart Tools at www.uen.org*
Teaching Thinking with Intel Tools
UEN-TV Workshops*
Use Technology to Teach
Visual Learning with Inspiration
Web Animation with Flash MX 2004
Web Graphics with Fireworks MX 2004
Webquests for Teaching*

**UEN: Spring Training Courses Offered**

The list at the left contains courses offered online and at Utah Education Network’s computer classroom in Salt Lake City for the months of January through May 2006. For information on these and additional courses that you can request, see the UEN Course Descriptions page at...

Link: [http://www.uen.org/development/catalog.shtml](http://www.uen.org/development/catalog.shtml)

Most courses are repeated regularly. The schedule for June, July and August of 2006 will be available May 1, 2006. Be sure to check the course page for exact dates:

Link: [http://www.uen.org/development/courses.do](http://www.uen.org/development/courses.do)

Courses that are marked with an * include significant online participation in addition to any scheduled face-to-face meeting. The courses are wonderful opportunities to extend your technology skills. Enroll today.

For more information on UEN’s professional development opportunities, please visit...

Link: [http://www.uen.org/News/article.cgi?category_id=231&article_id=604](http://www.uen.org/News/article.cgi?category_id=231&article_id=604)

**Educational Conferences in March**

Besides the UCET conference on March 10-11, 2006 at South Hills Middle School, here are some upcoming conferences that may be of interest.

**March 2, 2006: Utah Educational Library Media Association (UELMA)**

Davis Conference Center
Link: [http://www.uelma.org/](http://www.uelma.org/)

**March 2, 2006: The Utah Branch of the International Dyslexia Association**

South Towne Expo Center
Sandy, UT
Link: [http://www.regonline.com/89248](http://www.regonline.com/89248)

**March 4, 2006: Expanding Your Horizons Math / Science / Technology Conference**

Utah Valley State College
This conference is for 6th-12th grade Utah girls, their parents and teachers.
Link: [http://www.uvsc.edu/conted/equity/horizons.htm](http://www.uvsc.edu/conted/equity/horizons.htm)
Pioneer Online Library Celebrates 10th Anniversary with Statewide Contest

Pioneer, Utah’s Online Library celebrates its 10th Year Anniversary this spring with a 50-word essay contest. Entries are due March 17, 2006. Winners will be announced on Pioneer’s 10th birthday, April 10, 2006. All Utahns are invited to participate. Just tell us in 50 words or less how the Pioneer Library benefits you at home, work or school. Submit your entry on paper to your local school, college or public library. The entry deadline is Friday, March 17th. See additional information and download entry form at: http://pioneerlibrary.org.

Each local library (at your public school, college or public library) will award a Pioneer clock/calculator to the top entry. All of the top entries will then be submitted statewide for a drawing. Each of Pioneer’s three partners (Utah State Library Division, the Utah State Office of Education, and the Utah Academic Library Consortium) will award a grand prize of an Apple iPod Nano on April 10th.

Background: Pioneer, Utah’s Online Library celebrates its 10th Year Anniversary this spring on April 10, 2006. Ten years ago Utah colleges, schools and public libraries formed the Pioneer Library to bring credible online resources to all Utahns. Today, Pioneer receives thousands of visits each day from Utah students, teachers, and citizens of all ages. Pioneer brings Utahns free online access to magazines, journals, newspapers, encyclopedia, maps, pictures and multimedia clips. Pioneer’s key benefits are statewide access, credible resources and cost-effective delivery. For example Pioneer gives public school students statewide, online access to World Book. What would cost over $1,000 dollars per school in hard copy form is available at no charge to K-12 student users.

MathWorld

MathWorld claims to be web’s most complete mathematical resource, assembled over more than a decade by internet encyclopedist Eric W. Weisstein with assistance from the mathematics and internet communities.

MathWorld is a comprehensive and interactive mathematics encyclopedia intended for students, educators, math enthusiasts, and researchers. Like the vibrant and constantly evolving discipline of mathematics, this site is continuously updated to include new material and incorporate new discoveries.

Although it is often difficult to find explanations for technical subjects that are both clear and accessible, this website bridges the gap by placing an interlinked framework of mathematical exposition and illustrative examples at the fingertips of every internet user.

MathWorld is hosted and sponsored by Wolfram Research, Inc., makers of Mathematica, one of the world’s most powerful and flexible software package for doing mathematics.

Link: http://mathworld.wolfram.com/

Explore Africa with PBS

See Africa in ways you’ve not seen before. This site from PBS includes seven sections that allow you to experience the people, countries, and environments of eight different regions; travel through African history in an interactive game; view five different photo essays on important African issues; play a thumb piano, listen to an interactive African folktale, or check out photojournals created by African children; watch video clips; link to other African educational websites, and more.

Link: http://www.pbs.org/wnet/africa/
**Education Technology Plans and Disability Access**

The National Center on Disability and Access to Education (NCDAE) at Utah State University’s Center for Persons with Disabilities recently teamed with the National Center on Accessible Information Technology in Education (AccessIT) at the University of Washington to review state and local education technology plans throughout the country to determine the level of attention given to students with disabilities. The following statement from a local school district in Colorado is indicative of what we found. The “plan provides for meaningful access by all students and educators, regardless of disability, economic status, or other special needs.” Other than this brief mention of students with disabilities, there is nothing specific to ensuring that the needs of these students are met. The State of New York’s education technology plan indicates that, “New York state learning standards will incorporate standards for technology literacy to ensure that every student, regardless of the student’s race, ethnicity, gender, family income, geographic location, or disability will be technologically literate by the time he/she graduates from high school, including the skills needed for success in their future study and employment.”

While unfortunate, this lack of attention to the unique needs of students with disabilities is not unexpected. The most recent National Education Technology Plan released nearly one year ago suffers from the same lack of specificity. When the National plan was released NCDAE indicated, “There is no mention of universal design or assistive technology. It is tragic that so much energy and effort was placed on developing a plan that does not appear to include everybody.” The U.S. Department of Education responded to this concern by indicating that when the plan refers to all children, it means all, including students with disabilities. Given what we know about students with disabilities, addressing their unique needs is essential. The NCDAE takes the position that more specific language is essential to focus attention on the unique needs of these students when developing technology infrastructure and education, including the development of curriculum and teacher training.

As NCDAE and AccessIT continue to review state education technology plans, we look forward to finding exemplary education technology plans (i.e., those that specify measures to include students with disabilities) at the state or local district level. If you are aware of exemplary plans, please contact NCDAE at http://www.ncdae.org/community/contact.cfm or contact Marty Blair (NCDAE) at 435-797-3886 or Pat Brown (AccessIT) at 206-616-2223.

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**Amazing Space!**

Amazing Space is a wonderful site that provides educational content for Hubble Space Telescope discoveries. There you’ll find many online explorations, such as Planet Impact!, Galaxy Hunter, Comets, and more. One nice aspect of the site is an audio/video Flash-based exploration of the night sky, highlighting the constellations and stars found in the North American skies for that particular month. February’s feature is the Orion Nebula.

Amazing Space Link: [http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/](http://amazing-space.stsci.edu/)

February’s “Tonight’s Sky” show (uses Flash Player):

Windward - Outsmart the Weather in a Race Around the World

Windward is the third in a series of free, online, interactive learning modules from the CIC (Cable in the Classroom). It is a virtual around-the-world sailboat race where players have to analyze how to overcome or avoid weather challenges. It offers a unique and effective learning experience using a broadband connection to the internet and high-quality content. Windward was created in partnership with NASA, Discovery Education, and The Weather Channel.

CIC’s goal in creating Windward was to begin a conversation about what’s possible now and in the future with broadband technologies and teaching and learning. Also, they desired to provide educational resources created by networks to educators, parents and consumers.

Windward’s game objective: that players will confront and attempt to overcome a variety of weather challenges - such as developing hurricanes and thunderstorms - in a virtual sailing race around the globe. To be successful, players must read weather maps; analyze data on weather conditions, air and water currents, and other variables to make the choices that allow them to complete the journey swiftly and safely. The object of the game is to make it around the world in the fewest number of days. While this is a single player game, players can invite others to play at the same time and compete against each other.

Targeted at the middle school science learner, it is also designed for kids of all ages and adults to play together - whether at school, in a community center or library, or at home. The site includes tips for parents and educators. You’ll find Windward to be educational, accessible, self-directed, engaging, multisensory, and content rich.

Link: http://www.ciconline.org/windward/

Also, feel free to have a look at the other CIC content and activities online at
Link: http://www.ciconline.org

Requirements for Windward:
Broadband connection to the Internet
Macromedia Flash Player 7.0 or later
800x600 Screen Resolution or better
Educational Video Content from eMedia Available on Pioneer for Utah Educators!

I know educators who weren’t aware of the following excellent resource from UEN. Let me tell you about eMedia. eMedia is a service provided by the Utah Education Network (UEN) to deliver educational media to Utah’s schools. The videos are licensed by the Utah Instructional Media Consortium (UIMC) and digitized and made available over the Internet by UEN. The service will eventually have hundreds of video titles, graphics, and other media items.

Who can use eMedia? Because of our licensing agreements with the media providers, the eMedia service is only open to Utah educators and students through the K-12 Pioneer Library. Items downloaded from eMedia should not be reposted on the internet or redistributed to anyone outside of Utah’s K-12 education system.

Are the videos and other items copyrighted? Yes, the media items found in eMedia are copyrighted. The Utah Instructional Media Consortium (UIMC) licenses the videos for Utah educators to download and use the videos in their classrooms. Information about copyright and what you are allowed to do with each video are available in the Details view for each video.

Who created eMedia? The eMedia service is the result of collaboration between the Utah Education Network, the Utah Instructional Media Consortium and other UEN partners. Each year the eMedia collection will grow as new videos are licensed and additional digital media items are added. The media files and the eMedia software reside on servers owned and managed by the Utah Education Network.

Link: http://pioneerlibrary.org
Link: http://www.uen.org/emedia

Recently, Cory Stokes, the eMedia Service Manager, sent us the following email, which I’d like to include (with his permission):

“If you’ve been into eMedia (www.uen.org/emedia) lately, you probably noticed that we’ve added quite a few new media items. To help you know what’s new, we’ve created a catalog on the left side called “eMedia - New Items”. Any new items added in the last 4-5 weeks will appear in that catalog.

During January we added 85 new items. The bulk are short video writing prompts called “Write Now”. Several storyboard and other videos from the UIMC have also been added. Items of local interest include all of Governor Jon M. Huntsman Jr’s monthly KUED news conferences and the MP3 audio podcast files for upcoming UEN-TV SciFi Friday broadcasts (www.uen.org/tv). These interviews with local science experts focus on where fact and fiction meet in classic old science fiction films.

So what’s in the pipeline for future updates? Many more UIMC titles will be added as well as 500+ videos from PBS (American Experience, Ken Burns, etc...) and local productions from KUED. We currently have almost 10,000 media items somewhere in the process of being added to eMedia.

We hope teachers and students are finding value in this service. If haven’t yet, please take a minute to answer the 6 question eMedia User Survey (link in eMedia). Your feedback helps us plan and prioritize service improvements.

Thanks,
Cory Stokes
eMedia Service Manager”
**Miscellaneous Notes:**

**IE7 Beta Release:** Microsoft recently released the public beta version of Internet Explorer 7, a newer, more secure, web browser. For details and download:

Link: [http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/default.mspx](http://www.microsoft.com/windows/ie/default.mspx)

**Serious Winamp flaw gets fix:** Those who use Nullsoft’s Winamp as their MP3 player will want to update to the new version that patches a serious flaw that could allow a hacker to take control of their PC.

Link: [http://www.winamp.com/player/](http://www.winamp.com/player/)

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**2006 Adobe Design Achievement Awards for Higher Education Students**

It’s time for students to submit their entries for the world’s premier higher education design and film competition. Submit by April 28, 2006.

The Adobe Design Achievement Awards celebrate student achievement reflecting the powerful convergence of technology and the creative arts. The competition — which showcases individual and group projects created with industry-leading Adobe creative software — honors the most talented and promising student graphic designers, photographers, illustrators, animators, digital filmmakers, and computer artists from the world’s top institutions of higher education.

There are nine categories in the 2006 Adobe Design Achievement Awards competition, open to students at post-secondary institutions in 24 countries throughout the world. First-place winning entries will receive US$5,000, a trip to attend the July 20, 2006, awards ceremony in Toronto, Canada, valuable Adobe software products, and studio tours.


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**Watch Video of Stardust Reentry!**


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**CDW-G, Discovery Education Announce Annual ‘Win a Wireless Lab’ Drawing:**

Discovery Education and CDW Government (CDW-G) are sponsoring their fourth annual “Win a Wireless Lab” drawing. The annual contest began in 2002 to give K-12 schools within the U.S. an opportunity to promote technology in the classroom. This year’s sweepstakes will award two grand prize winners and more than 30 runner-up prizes of printers and software from CDW-G and multimedia resources from Discovery Education. The sweepstakes runs through May 1, 2006. Public and private school teachers, administrators, and school and district technology specialists are eligible to enter by filling out an online form at the link below. Winners will be selected by a random drawing from all eligible entries. *(Source: THE Journal Newsletter for January 18, 2006)*

Link: [http://www.discoveryschool.com/cdwg](http://www.discoveryschool.com/cdwg)

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**Sight Word Exercises from Quiz-Tree**

Sierra Vista Software has added a series of free Sight Words exercises to its Quiz-Tree.com Web site. The new animated online exercises have been designed to help children master sight words, which are some of the most frequently used words in the English language (comprising about 50-70 percent of general, non-technical reading material). The exercises have been divided into several groups according to target grades: Pre-Primer, Primer, First Grade, Second Grade, and Third Grade. When an exercise starts, the student will hear one of the sight words. The student’s task is then to assemble, by using a mouse, the word from the letters provided. After the student provides the correct answer, the game will move to the next word. *(Source: THE Journal Newsletter for January 18, 2006)*

Link: [http://www.quiz-tree.com/Sight-Words_main.html](http://www.quiz-tree.com/Sight-Words_main.html)
Copyright Issues Relevant to Digital Preservation and Dissemination of Pre-1972 Commercial Sound Recordings by Libraries and Archives

The Library of Congress (http://www.loc.gov) has announced the completion of a commissioned report that examines copyright issues associated with the preservation of commercial sound recordings. This new report from the Library of Congress and the Council on Library and Information Resources addresses the question of what libraries and archives are legally empowered to do in order to preserve and make accessible for research their holdings of pre-1972 commercial sound recordings. The report, Copyright Issues Relevant to Digital Preservation and Dissemination of Pre-1972 Commercial Sound Recordings by Libraries and Archives, is one of a series of studies undertaken by the National Recording Preservation Board (NRPB), under the auspices of the Library of Congress, and is available free of charge at http://www.clir.org/pubs/reports/pub135/pub135.pdf. (Source: THE Journal Newsletter for January 11, 2006)


February Theme - Presidents, the Presidency, and President’s Day

As you celebrate President’s Day this month, here are some great internet resources that will help you and your students get the most out of it:

The Presidents of the United States: From the White House website, these are brief biographies of each President of the United States.

Link: http://www.whitehouse.gov/history/presidents/

American Presidents: Life Portraits: The American Presidents web site, created for the television series, contains a complete video archive of all American Presidents: Life Portraits programming, plus these additional resources:

• Biographical facts
• Key events of each presidency
• Presidential places
• Reference material

Link: http://www.americanpresidents.org/

IPL POTUS: From the Internet Public Library, POTUS stands for Presidents of the United States. In this resource you will find background information, election results, cabinet members, notable events, and some points of interest on each of the presidents. Links to biographies, historical documents, audio and video files, and other presidential sites are also included.

Link: http://www.ipl.org/div/potus/
Ben Franklin Web Portal

This new Ben Franklin Web portal is a free, comprehensive one-stop site for searching Franklin’s writings and a selectively curated collection of tens of thousands of Web pages related solely to him. Supported by the National Science Foundation, Pennsylvania Commonwealth Libraries, the Carnegie Science Center, and Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center, the portal is designed to help teachers, students, journalists, researchers, historians, and the general public navigate information related to Franklin. The site, which was launched to honor Franklin’s 300th birthday, also offers a unique collection of “Educator Resources” designed to help teachers plan science, history, and civic lessons for students at every grade level.

(Source: THE Journal Newsletter for January 11, 2006)

Link: http://ben.clusty.com

2006 Zaner-Bloser Contest

This contest is open to all students in grades 1-8 whose school uses Zaner-Bloser Handwriting. By participating you may enable one or more of your students to win many prizes including $500 U.S. Savings bonds and FLY Pentop Computers. The schools with winners also receive prizes! The classroom of the Grand National Champion will win a new computer valued at $1,000 along with Zaner-Bloser Handwriting Software valued at $120. And new this year... The teacher of the Grand National Champion will win a trip for two to Boston, home of John Hancock, to commemorate National Handwriting week! Travel must be completed within one year of receipt of travel voucher.


Deadline: March 1, 2006

MIT’s OpenCourseWare - Free Instruction

MIT is publishing all its courses online as a free and open educational resource for faculty, students, and self-learners around the world. OCW supports MIT’s mission to advance knowledge and education, and serve the world in the 21st century. OCW is a publication of MIT course materials that does not require any registration, is not a degree-granting or certificate-granting activity, and does not provide access to MIT faculty. MIT OCW is a large-scale, Web-based electronic publishing initiative funded jointly by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, and MIT.

MIT OCW’s goals are to: Provide free, searchable, access to MIT’s course materials for educators, students, and self-learners around the world. They hope also to extend the reach and impact of MIT OCW and the “opencourseware” concept. MIT OCW would not be possible without the support and generosity of the MIT faculty who choose to share their research, pedagogy, and knowledge to benefit others. They expect MIT OCW to reach a steady - though never static - state by 2007. Between now and then, they will publish the materials from virtually all of MIT’s undergraduate and graduate courses.

MIT will be continually evaluating the access, use, and impact of MIT OCW over the course of the next five years. With 1,250 courses published as of December 2005, they are still in a learning stage of this MIT initiative and they will benefit enormously from your feedback, as they strive to make MIT OCW as rich and useful as possible for users of the material. Link: http://ocw.mit.edu/
Princeton to Offer Free “Vodcasts” of Lectures on Web

Princeton University (NJ) has added “vodcasts” - shared videos that can be watched using Apple Inc.’s iTunes - to the podcasts, or downloadable sound files, it already offers on its Web-based University Channel. The service makes academic lectures and events available to the public via the Web. Apple recently introduced vodcasting technology in conjunction with the video-enabled iPod as a way of sharing video files over iTunes. Subscribers are notified when podcasts and vodcasts are available directly on the website or for downloading onto a computer. Both options are free of charge. (News Update from Campus Technology for Tuesday, November 1, 2005)

Link: http://uc.princeton.edu/main/

Girls Going Places Entrepreneurship Award Program
Deadline: Feb. 24, 2006
http://www.guardianlife.com/womens_channel/girls_going_places/girls_going_places.html

US Bank Internet Scholarship Program
Deadline: Feb. 28, 2006
http://www.usbank.com/cgi_w/cfm/studentloans/marketing.cfm

School Librarian’s Workshop Scholarship
Deadline: March 1, 2006
http://www.ala.org/ala/aasl/aaslawards/schoollibrarians/aaslschoollibrarians.htm

(Source: THE Journal Newsletter for February 1, 2006)

XX Olympic Winter Games: 10-26 February 2006

As the 20th Olympic winter games begin soon, it will provide teachers with opportunities for student writing, research, datakeeping, cultural investigations, and much more. The following site provides official information on the XXth Olympic Winter Games which take place from the 10th to 26th February, 2006. It features Olympic Torch updates, education, general facts and figures, photo gallery, and the Toronto 2006 Program.

Link: http://www.torino2006.org

Wikipedia Article - Olympics
Link: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Olympic_Games
Make scientific concepts come alive with free 3D images

Teachers and students looking for images to make scientific concepts come alive can take advantage of Zygote Media Group’s free 3D clip art at 3DScience.com, an online marketplace and community dedicated to scientific visualization. Visitors to the site can see various visual depictions of medical and scientific phenomena, including the Avian Bird Flu virus and the HIV virus. The site’s low-resolution images are available free of charge and are well suited for use online or in PowerPoint presentations. High-resolution images, ideal for reproduction in print media, are available at a discounted rate for educators. “Educational institutions across the globe ... want the best resources available to provide the highest quality education possible at an affordable cost structure,” said Bryan Brandenburg, chief executive officer of Zygote Media Group. “3DScience.com hopes to help by continuously providing the best human anatomy and scientific visualization to educators and students at the lowest prices.” Through a new academic licensing program, schools and other learning institutions also will receive a 30-percent discount on Zygote’s 3D human anatomy collections, the company said. (Source: eSchool News - http://www.eschoolnews.com/resources/links/showLink.cfm?linkID=279)

Link: http://www.3dscience.com

$50,000 for Abraham Lincoln fellowships

Quoted from their website: “Study American history with a Horace Mann Abraham Lincoln fellowship. Horace Mann and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum (ALPLM) in Springfield, Ill. have joined together to give you the opportunity to receive a $1,000 fellowship to study the life and legacy of our 16th president. The fellowships features a five-day institute in June and July, 2006.

With this new partnership, Horace Mann and the ALPLM Foundation have agreed to offer 50 fellowships to educators to travel to Springfield to study Lincoln at his new presidential library and museum.

We will accept applications Sept. 5, 2005 (Labor Day) through March 4, 2006, the day Lincoln was inaugurated as president. The fellowship is open to any full-time educator, teaching kindergarten through 12th grade in the U.S. We’ll award one fellowship in each state.”

Link: http://www.horacemann.com/educator-resources/abraham-lincoln-fellowship-feature.html

An Open Invitation to Share with UCET Membership

I hope you have enjoyed the notices of opportunities, the links to online teacher treasures, and other materials we’ve shared with you in the UCET newsletters. Since beginning the newsletter back in October 2005, our desire has been to give UCET members even more information and resources than the excellent yearly UCET conference.

May I invite you to share this type of information with your UCET peers? Although I always seems to have tons of material crossing my desk that I can share with you, I’m more interested in sharing things you have found to be useful and exciting in your classroom. I don’t often have the opportunity to be in the trenches (classroom) in my current position, so your front-line view on things is important. I’ve really not had very much feedback on what you think of the newsletters, on what you’d like to see more (or less) of. Your suggestions, contributions of information about resources you use, and feedback on the newsletter would be helpful and very much appreciated.

I look forward to being able to meet you at the 2006 UCET conference at South Hills Middle School on March 10-11. In the meantime, please feel free to email me at Nathan.Smith@usu.edu.

Here’s wishing you a great February! Sincerely, Nathan Smith, UCET Board - UCET Newsletter
Contents for this issue:

Click on any title below to be taken to that part of the issue.

The 2006 UCET Conference is set to go!
Publishing Documents as PDF Files - Free PrimoPDF Driver for Windows
Apple Learning Interchange (ALI): Igniting conversation, imagination, and improvement in education
KnowItAll.org - SC’s ETC Web Portal
Take a Virtual Tour of the Louvre Museum
$100 Laptop Project for Bridging the Knowledge Divide in Education
NationalAtlas.gov - Make your own maps online
USA Geography Games and Facts from Sheppard Software
The Geography Site
Making Schools Work
$50,000 and Newspaper Recognition for Outstanding K-12 Educators
$20,000 for Spreading Music Knowledge and Appreciation
March Holidays and Celebrations
Economic Education Web
Dave’s ESL Cafe
Lindbergh Grant
ASM International Foundation Teacher Grants
Healthy Sprouts Awards
Parting Tips

The 2006 UCET Conference is set to go!

Combine terrific vendor support, a cartload of great presentations all lined up and ready to go, over-the-shoulder presentations in the vendor area, a wonderful keynote speaker, and a large group of educators enthused about using technology and what do you have? UCET 2006!

It’s not too late to participate with us. You can still register and attend on-site at the South Hills Middle School in Riverton, Utah, on March 10-11. On-site registration is $50, which includes the conference, food, and UCET membership dues for the year. University and college students may attend at half-price, provided they present a current student activity card at the registration desk. Please join with us for a great technology conference.

All things related to the conference (maps, schedules, the program, online presenter materials, and more) can be found online at the UCET website.

This year, we’ll be doing a number of over-the-shoulder presentations in the vendor area. These are short (20 minute) demonstrations of educational software that will run continuously on Friday.

Again, too, there will be some great prizes to be given away Saturday at the conference closing. UCET Vendors will provide punch cards again for a special drawing of a video iPod!
Publishing documents as PDF files (Acrobat Reader)

We often have a need to share information with teachers, parents, or other audiences. Increasingly, we are sharing this information electronically. Since the portable document format (PDF) created by Adobe has become the defacto standard for sharing documents worldwide, this article will explore how to publish your word processing documents, PowerPoint presentations, spreadsheets, and most any other kind of document you’re likely to produce as a PDF document. It’s quite easy - in most cases, just as easy as printing your file. We’ll look at both Windows and Macintosh solutions to doing this as well.

Adobe Acrobat is the most common software solution for creating PDF files. Why not take a moment and take a multimedia tour of Acrobat’s capabilities at http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobatpro/requirements.html? With Acrobat, you can easily create pdf files by printing to the PDFwriter driver Acrobat installs. Acrobat also has a number of other tools for more advanced pdf creation, such as a tool for creating form fields, adding multimedia, and much more. As an educator, you can purchase Acrobat at a discount. Many states and universities have site licensing agreements with Adobe. However, to view and read PDF files, all one needs is the free Acrobat Reader (http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html)

Of course, the full version of Acrobat costs, so you’ll be excited to learn that there are some free solutions for creating PDF files out there. For all you Macintosh OS X users, printing to PDF is built right into the operating system. All you need do is print. In your print dialog box, you’ll see a PDF drop-down dialog that will allow you to print to PDF. (See illustration above: this illustration is using Mac OS X 10.4.4) Once you’ve selected this option, you’ll be prompted to give the file a name, then click the Save button, and your PDF file has been created.

Unfortunately, PDF printing is not built into the Windows operating system yet. But don’t despair. There is a free utility you can download, entitled PrimoPDF (http://www.primopdf.com/), which installs a PrimoPDF printer driver in your print dialog box. Once installed, you can convert to PDF from any application by simply ‘printing’ to the PrimoPDF printer. Within minutes, you can create high-quality PDFs by converting from Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and virtually any other printable file type. PrimoPDF is a free PDF Converter - not a trial version. It can create PDF output optimized for print, screen, ebook, or prepress. There are no annoying pop-up ads, no registration requirement - no catch! It’s a high-quality, easy to use PDF creator for all Windows users. Now that the new version 2.0 has been released, you can also secure PDFs with 40-/128-bit encryption, allowing the highest level of security for your PDF files. Settings include password to open, password to change, disable printing, disable text/graphics copying, disable commenting, disable text editing, disable page addition. As well, you can add document information (e.g. title, author, subject, keywords) to converted PDF files, resulting in faster and easier searching of PDF documents.

Continued on the next page...
Once installed, using PrimoPDF is easy. Just use whatever application you use to create your document, such as Word, WordPerfect, PowerPoint, etc. When you’ve finished your document, saved it, and are ready to print it out, just use your File->Print command and choose the PrimoPDF driver as the printer.

When you click the print button, the PrimoPDF dialog will appear. At that point, you choose the setting (optimized for putting on the web - the For Screen setting, or optimized for print). Next click the Browse button, give the file a name, and click save. PrimoPDF will then generate a PDF file out of your document.

The most enticing aspect about PDF files is that they faithfully keep the formatting of your original document.

Once your file is saved as a PDF, you can put it on a webserver, email it as an attachment, or share it on disc. Nearly all computer users have the ability to open a PDF file, and if they don’t, you can direct them to the free Acrobat Reader download.
Apple Learning Interchange (ALI): Igniting conversation, imagination, and improvement in education.

As educators search for great resources and content on the internet, some resources really stand out. One of those is the Apple Learning Interchange (or ALI for short), sponsored by Apple Computer. Apple created a PDF file (http://ali.apple.com/ali_common/ALI_single.pdf) that does a great job of introducing ALI to educators. I’ll quote some of it below...

“Teaching and learning come to life: Education today is evolving. In technology-savvy schools, in rural as well as urban areas, lessons are coming alive, and student interest, attendance, and test scores are on the rise. One of the factors contributing to this success is digital teaching and learning. Today’s “digital kids” have grown up with technology and are comfortable using it. Schools across North America are finding that when students have access to computers in the classroom, they become more engaged and collaborative. In fact, research shows they even perform better academically.

At Apple, we celebrate this renaissance of learning and have created the Apple Learning Interchange to showcase the exemplary efforts of educators everywhere.

Our goal is to share thought-provoking content that will ignite conversations among educators, stimulate the imagination of learners, and improve the quality of education around the world.

The Apple Learning Interchange provides:

• Engaging lesson plans and classroom activities
• Innovative teaching strategies rich with technology
• Opportunities for professional development right from your desk
• Virtual field trips that bring the world to your classroom

Learn from content experts and your colleagues. Through the use of QuickTime video and other media, the Apple Learning Interchange provides a window into other educators’ classrooms so that you can watch them at work and literally see what they do to engage students and enrich the content they are teaching.

Digital tools for digital schools. To be successful and engaged in learning, digital kids need a different set of learning tools. And so do their teachers. The Apple Learning Interchange showcases these tools in meaningful contexts. You’ll see exemplary uses of digital media tools like iLife to address higher-order thinking skills. And best of all, there are thousands of resources to download immediately for use in your own classroom, such as:

• QuickTime movies
• Web links
• Presentations
• Student work
• Concept maps
• Images
• Step guides
• MP3 audio files
• Assessment practices
• Rubrics

Windows users are always welcome. Educators using Windows-based PCs with QuickTime can also take advantage of the wealth of resources available on the site. The beauty of the Apple Learning Interchange is that schools—even those using multiple platforms—can enjoy its benefits without extensive IT support.”

Link: http://ali.apple.com/
KnowItAll - SC ETV Web Portal

Created by ETV for K-12 students, teachers, and parents, Knowitall.org is a free, online collection of resources designed for classroom use. This educational web portal contains interactive sites, simulations, image collections, virtual field trips and streaming video that support and provide quality inquiry-based experiences for students on the Internet.

Funded by South Carolina’s educational system, Knowitall’s web portal contains sections for students, teachers, by subject, by grade level, and a site A-Z listing of educational resources.

This extensive site contains a wealth of resources that teachers will want to use.

Link: http://www.knowitall.org/

If you’ve been interested in NASA’s video resources for the classroom, many of them can be streamed through Windows Media Player from this site:

Link: http://www.knowitall.org/nasa/

Take a Virtual Tour of the Louvre Museum (Quicktime VR)

The Louvre Museum provides about 60 panoramic inside and outside-views of the Museum. This “virtual tour” was made possible thanks to QuickTime VR technology. These pictures were designed to help the visitor feel what it is like to be in the Museum, rather than to show actual exhibits. To explore the actual exhibits, see “Discover the Louvre.”

Link: http://www.louvre.or.jp/louvre/QTVR/anglais/

Discover the Louvre

From its beginnings as a royal fortress to the public institution we see today, discover the Musée du Louvre: its role, its aims, and the expertise of the people who make it work. Tour its galleries and gardens, examine the artwork in detail, explore the history of the museum. With special sections for young people under 18, and another for 18-25 year olds, this is a site you can explore for weeks and weeks. A great resource for art students.

Link: http://www.louvre.fr/liv/commun/home_flash.jsp?bmLocale=en
$100 Laptop Project for Bridging the Knowledge Divide in Education? Yes!

One Laptop per Child (OLPC) is a Delaware-based, non-profit organization created by Nicholas Negroponte and other faculty members from the MIT Media Lab to design, manufacture, and distribute laptops that are sufficiently inexpensive to provide every child in the world access to knowledge and modern forms of education. The laptops will be sold to governments and issued to children by schools on a basis of one laptop per child. These machines will be rugged, Linux-based, and so energy efficient that hand-cranking alone can generate sufficient power for operation. Mesh networking will give many machines Internet access from one connection. The pricing goal will start near $100 and then steadily decrease. The corporate members are Advanced Micro Devices (AMD), Brightstar, Google, News Corporation, Nortel, and Red Hat.

The One Laptop per Child (OLPC) board of directors today announced that Quanta Computer Inc. of Taiwan was chosen as the original design manufacturer (ODM) for the $100 laptop project. The decision was made after the board reviewed bids from several possible manufacturing companies.

In announcing the selection of Quanta, OLPC Chairman Nicholas Negroponte said, “Any previous doubt that a very-low-cost laptop could be made for education in the developing world has just gone away.” Quanta has agreed to devote significant engineering resources from the Quanta Research Institute (QRI) in Q1 and Q2, 2006, with a target of bringing the product to market in Q4. The launch of 5-15 million units will be both in large-scale pilot projects in seven culturally diverse countries (China, India, Brazil, Argentina, Egypt, Nigeria, and Thailand), with one million units in each of these countries, and an additional modest allocation of machines to seed developer communities in a number of other selected countries. A commercial version of the machine will be explored in parallel.

“Quanta would like to contribute its industry-leading laptop technologies to the future success of the project, in hope of affording children worldwide with opportunities not only to close the ‘digital divide,’ but also to bridge the ‘knowledge divide.’ This project signifies a new stage and scale for the laptop industry by including those children never before considered to be laptop users,” said Quanta founder and chairman, Barry Lam. (Source: OLPC Press Release)

Link:  http://laptop.media.mit.edu
Welcome to the National Atlas of the United States of America®. You’ve seen other atlases. They’re typically big books of paper maps. The pages in this atlas are here on the Internet whenever you need them. This is a new portrayal of America in maps. We use new technologies, but we honor traditions of accuracy, reliability, and innovation. You’ve found the single best Federal source for national maps and geographic information on the Web. The people and places of the United States are here.

**What you can do in the National Atlas of the United States?**

You can customize your own map for printing or viewing.  
Investigate the layers that you can mix and match when making your own map.  
Print pre-formatted maps on a variety of topics.  
Order larger maps suitable for the wall of your office, home, or classroom.  
Play with interactive maps.  
Learn about topics that interest you.  
Download accurate, reliable, and integrated data to use in your GIS application.

In the National Atlas Map Maker, you can assemble, view, and print your own maps. You can choose from hundreds of layers of geographic information to make maps. Each map layer can be displayed individually or mixed with others as you tailor a map to your needs. For example, you can make a map showing America’s streams and lakes. And you can add new map layers showing additional geographic information, such as state boundaries, county boundaries, roads, railroads, and towns and cities.

Do you need a simple prepared map that you can print at home, at school, or in the office? Look at the expanding list of maps formatted to be viewed, printed, or downloaded in the Printable Maps section.

There are also many maps you can order from the U.S. Geological Services at this site.

Link: [http://www.nationalatlas.gov/index.html](http://www.nationalatlas.gov/index.html)
USA Geography Games and Facts

From Sheppard Software, this site hosts and designs educational software and online games with these goals: 1) To add sound and visual effects to make learning fun and more memorable. 2) To design games with many difficulty levels so that players will continue to be challenged no matter how far they progress. 3) To provide games that will exercise players’ brains.

By using Sheppard Software’s learning games you will gain a permanent mental map of the United States of America, its states, capitals, and geography. This knowledge is the key to learning more about the wonderful world around you. Have fun and enjoy. Good Luck and don’t forget to try their other geography learning games at

Link: http://www.sheppardsoftware.com

USA Geography Games and Facts link: http://www.sheppardsoftware.com/web_games.htm

The Geography Site

From the site: “The Geography Site is committed to providing the best quality Internet resources for teachers, students and anyone with an interest in geography and how our amazing planet works. Unlike many other ‘revision’ sites, everything here is totally free to use. Whether you are a teacher looking for online lessons, a student seeking revision notes, curious about the world around you, or you are looking for a good geographical joke, it’s here.

You can discover how glaciers and volcanoes shape our world, learn new geographical skills, find an image in the image library, or just browse and discover new things. To start exploring, select a topic from the menu, and choose from hundreds of pages, all written by qualified teachers and illustrated by images commissioned especially for the Geography Site.” Link: http://www.geography-site.co.uk/
New Programming from PBS - Making Schools Work

No topic worries American families more than the quality of our schools. MAKING SCHOOLS WORK with Hedrick Smith offers a rare and often surprising look at success in unexpected places, with enormous implications for public schools nationwide.

This web site follows the PBS production team into classrooms from coast to coast to see how some American communities are creating a small revolution in our schools. Don’t expect one magic formula. You’ll see different strategies. The common denominator is results – lifting scores and closing achievement gaps, not just for a few hundred children but for nearly two million, from our inner cities to rural America.

Some topics covered at the website are grouping, getting buy-in, time on task, the dropout problem, teacher training, what does equity mean?, and how long for reform? The site provides some interesting and thought-provoking reading, as well as provide schedules of when the programs are aired on PBS.

Link: [http://www.pbs.org/makingschoolswork/](http://www.pbs.org/makingschoolswork/)

$50,000 and Newspaper Recognition for Outstanding K-12 Educators

Grant Title: 2006 All-USA Teacher Team
Organization: USA Today
Eligibility: K-12 teachers
Value: 20 awards of up to $2,500 each
Deadline: April 29, 2006

The 2006 All-USA Teacher Team recognizes outstanding K-12 teachers. Twenty individuals and instructional teams will be featured in USA Today as representatives of all outstanding teachers. Winners will have their photographs published and their accomplishments noted in the newspaper, and they will receive trophies and share $2,500 cash awards with their schools. (Each winning teacher receives $500. An individual winner receives $500, with $2,000 going to his or her school; each member on a team of four receives $500, with $500 going to the school.) Teachers can be nominated by anyone willing to put in writing why they are outstanding; nominees must complete the form explaining how they achieve their success. (Source: eSchool News Online)

Link: [http://allstars.usatoday.com](http://allstars.usatoday.com) The forms are available in the box of links on the right side of the page.

$20,000 for Spreading Music Knowledge and Appreciation

Grant Title: The Aaron Copland Fund for Music Performing Ensembles Program
Organization: The American Music Center
Eligibility: Nonprofits with a music focus
Value: $1,000 - $20,000
Deadline: June 30, 2006

The program’s objective is to support organizations whose performances encourage and improve public knowledge and appreciation of serious contemporary American music. Funds are available for general operating support or project support to professional performing ensembles with a history of substantial commitment to contemporary American music and with plans to continue that commitment. (Source: eSchool News Online)

Link: [http://www.amc.net/resources/grants/performing.html](http://www.amc.net/resources/grants/performing.html)
March Holidays and Celebrations

Dr. LeBeau’s HomePage, A Resource for Teachers, Students and Curious Adults (Link: [http://www.suelebeau.com/](http://www.suelebeau.com/)) is a site that contains links to many instructional resources by topic. Run by Sue LeBeau, you’ll find resources on nearly every educational topic here. The section I’d like to feature this month is the “Celebrations by Month.” If you’d like to find information about holidays and happenings in March, for example, here you’ll find links to birthdays of famous people such as Albert Einstein, Alexander Graham Bell, and Dr. Suess; holiday information on Ash Wednesday, St. Patrick’s Day, and Easter; and events such as the swallows returning to Capistrano, the first day of spring, women’s history month, and more.

Dr. LeBeau has over 30 years of experience teaching in the elementary and middle school grades. She holds a Doctor of Education degree in Organizational Leadership in Instructional Technology, a Master of Arts Degree in Instructional Technology, a Master of Education degree, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in Elementary Education. She is the recipient of the Teacher of the Year Award for both 1993 and 1994, is listed in Who’s Who Among America’s Teachers for 1994, Who’s Who Among Students in American Universities and Colleges for 2002, and recipient of the Teacher Recognition Award from Johns Hopkins University for 2001. Sue is also the recipient of the Technology Fellowship: Mentoring and Modeling Program for Monmouth County from the state of NJ for 2001-2002 school year, where she trained teachers across the state on how to integrate technology in the classroom.

Link to Celebrations by Month: [http://www.suelebeau.com/months.htm](http://www.suelebeau.com/months.htm)

Economic Education Web

Summary: The mission of EcEdWeb, the Economic Education Website, is to provide support for economic education in all forms and at all levels. Select from the menu at the top of the webpage to find exciting material for teaching economics.

Link: [http://ecedweb.unomaha.edu/](http://ecedweb.unomaha.edu/)

Dave’s ESL Cafe

One of the top sites on the internet for ESL (English as a second language) and EFL (English as a foreign language) teachers and students. Dave Sperling keeps the site fresh, interesting, and filled with resources.

Dennis Oliver, in the Internet TESL Journal, wrote “The Cafe’s emphasis on participatory elements is, I feel, one of the major reasons for its uniqueness and success. Most other ESOL sites, no matter how well done, are primarily (if not entirely) “read-only” repositories of information: one is limited to accessing the resources put online by a site’s creator. Dave’s Cafe is also information-rich, but it provides visitors with something extra: the chance to become part of the Cafe themselves through asking their own questions, responding to messages posted by others, joining in a discussion thread, posting an online resume or background summary, and so on. Other ESOL sites have some of these elements, but the activities of most are limited to clicking and reading.”

Link: [http://www.eslcafe.com/](http://www.eslcafe.com/)
**Lindbergh Grant**

Agency: CHARLES A. AND ANNE MORROW LINDBERGH FOUNDATION

Program: Lindbergh Grant

Eligibility: Citizens from all countries may apply.

Purpose: Over the last 27 years, the Lindbergh Foundation has endeavored to honor the Lindberghs’ legacy by funding projects that improve the quality of all life by seeking a balance between technological advancements and environmental preservation. Each year, the Lindbergh Foundation awards 8-10 grants in amounts up to $10,580 each (the cost of building the Spirit of St. Louis in 1927). Over the years, Lindbergh Grants have become increasingly well known, supporting innovative ideas often at an early stage in their development and establishing pilot projects that subsequently receive significant additional funding from other sources. You are invited to visit our web site and view our new informational video to learn more about our mission and programs. (Please note that funding cannot be used for tuition.)

Deadline: **June 08, 2006**

Maximum Award: $10,580

Number Of Awards: 8-10

Period: One year.

We welcome your comments, suggestions, and questions. Please feel free to contact us at:
The Charles A. and Anne Morrow Lindbergh Foundation
2150 Third Avenue North, Suite 310
Anoka, MN 55303-2200
Phone: 763-576-1596
Fax: 763-576-1664
E-mail: info@lindberghfoundation.org

Website: [http://www.lindberghfoundation.org](http://www.lindberghfoundation.org)


(Source: GrantAlert.com for both articles on this page)

**ASM International Foundation Teacher Grants**

Agency: ASM International Foundation

Eligibility: K-12 teachers.

Purpose: The purpose of these grants is to enhance awareness of materials science and the role of materials scientists in society.

Deadline: **May 25, 2006**

Maximum Award: $500

Number Of Awards: 10

Period: One year.

More Information:
ASM International Foundation, Attn: “Living In a Material World” Program, Materials Park, OH 44073-0002.
jeane.deatherage@asminternational.org
(800) 336-5152 (U.S. and Canada)

Link: [http://www.asminternational.org/content/Foundation/LivingintheMaterialWorld/Living_Material_World.htm](http://www.asminternational.org/content/Foundation/LivingintheMaterialWorld/Living_Material_World.htm)
Healthy Sprouts Awards

Agency: Gardener’s Supply and National Gardening Association

Program: Healthy Sprouts Awards

Eligibility: To be eligible for the 2006 Healthy Sprouts Awards, your school or organization must plan to garden in 2007 with at least 15 children between the ages of 3 and 18. The selection of winners is based on the demonstrated relationship between the garden program and nutrition and hunger issues in the United States.

Purpose: As a way to encourage the growth of health-focused youth gardens, NGA recognizes outstanding programs via the Healthy Sprouts Awards, sponsored by Gardener’s Supply. These awards support school and youth garden programs that teach about nutrition and the issue of hunger in the United States.

Deadline: October 15, 2006

Maximum Award: $200

Number Of Awards: 25

Period: One year.

More Information:
National Gardening Association
1100 Dorset Street
South Burlington, VT 05403
Phone: 800-538-7476 (800-LETSGRO)
Fax: 802-864-6889

Interested in learning more about our grants programs, contact Donna: donna@garden.org

Link: http://www.kidsgardening.com/healthysprouts1.asp
(Source: GrantAlert.com)

A Parting Tip:

Windows Users: When you have many application windows open and you want to quickly get to the desktop, most people use the “Show Desktop” icon. If you don’t have that icon anymore, or would like to know the shortcut, here it is... There are two keyboard shortcuts that do almost, but not quite, the same thing. Press Windows-D (hold down the Windows key and press D) and everything is minimalized on the screen, including control panel and properties dialog boxes. This command leaves nothing but the desktop showing. This key combination acts as a toggle switch - press it again and the windows are restored. The other shortcut is Windows-M, which minimizes normal windows but not the dialog boxes. Another interesting action of this key combination is that if you open a dialog box in an application, then press Windows-M, everything is minimalized except that dialog box and application. For other useful Windows XP shortcuts...

Link: http://www.tweakhound.com/xp/XPshort.htm

Macintosh Users: Mac OS X users (Panther and Tiger) have some interesting keypress shortcuts, too. By default, the F11 key shoves all the windows off-screen and exposes the desktop for you. Pressing F11 again returns the windows to their normal positions.

For a wonderful beginner’s guide to Macintosh OS X, have a look at Apple’s Mac 101 training online:

Link: http://www.apple.com/support/mac101/
UCET Board Preparing for the UCET 2007 Conference...

UCET is pleased to announce that next year’s UCET conference will be held at Murray High School on March 2 & 3, 2007. Please mark your calendars.

We’ve been looking through your conference evaluations and feedback, and held a special board meeting on March 16 to go over your suggestions and initiate plans for next year’s conference. Thank you for your feedback! The Murray High School will give the conference a little more elbow room and parking, as well as a faster internet feed. However, all in all, what we’re hearing from you is that the 2006 conference was one of the best ever. Our sincere thanks to South Hills Middle School, the exhibitors, and everyone else who put so much hard work into making the conference the success it was. We’ll take what we learned from this one, both what worked and what didn’t, and try to put together an even better conference next year.

We’re pleased that Mr. David Warlick will be our keynote speaker at UCET 2007. David Warlick, a 30 year educator, has been a classroom teacher, district administrator, and staff consultant with the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction. For the past ten years, Mr. Warlick has been the director of The Landmark Project, a web development, consulting, and innovations firm in Raleigh, North Carolina. His web site, Landmarks for Schools, serves more than six-million visits a month. David is also the author of three books on instructional technology and 21st century literacy, and has spoken to audiences throughout the U.S., Europe, Asia, and South America.

We are going to ask your help preparing for next year’s conference. We’re planning to have registration for the conference, presentation proposals, and exhibitors available earlier. You can help us plan next year’s conference by telling us what you want in the way of presentations, strands, exhibitors, etc. It’s your chance to propose your ideal UCET conference...

1. What presentation topics would you be interested in?
2. What instructional level would you like to see for the topics in #1? (Beginner, Intermediate, or Advanced User)
3. What general conference strands would you like to see?
4. What over-the-shoulder presentations would you like to see?
5. What kinds of exhibitor companies would you like to see represented? You can mention specific companies or just the general industry type.

Please email your suggestions to me - Nathan Smith, UCET Newsletter Editor (nathan.smith@usu.edu). Make the email’s subject line “UCET 2007 Suggestions”. I’ll have my mail program filter these into a mail folder on my computer, and I will take your suggestions to our UCET summer retreat, where we start planning the conference in earnest. Please have your suggestions to me no later than May 31, 2006. Thank you!
Blue Frog 1.8 - Freeware Spam Protection and Do Not Intrude Registry

Software Publisher’s Description:
Blue Frog actively fights spam and makes spammers leave you alone. Blue Frog automatically posts complaints on the sites advertised by the spam you receive. Report your spam from any desktop e-mail client or let Blue Frog report Gmail, Hotmail, and Yahoo spam directly from the Firefox browser. Filtering spam is not enough. Blue Frog protects your e-mail accounts or your entire mail domain by making spammers remove your from their mailing lists. Version 1.8 may include unspecified updates, enhancements, or bug fixes. (Source: ZDNet)

Link:  http://www.bluesecurity.com

I quote part of a review from:  http://www.thewhir.com/features/Blue_Security_Unveils_Anti_Spam_Registry.cfm

“January 11, 2005 -- (WEB HOST INDUSTRY REVIEW) -- The proliferation of spam continues as service providers struggle to find effective solutions for its prevention. And, in another of a continuing series of community efforts to limit that proliferation, Blue Security (bluesecurity.com) recently announced the launch of its Do Not Intrude Registry, a free service designed to help consumers and businesses avoid spam.

Eran Reshef, founder and CEO of Blue Security, says that according to the first amendment, every US citizen is entitled to be left alone. And those rights, as they relate to spam, were specifically addressed by the CAN-SPAM Act, signed into law by George Bush in 2003. “You have the right to opt out and ask spammers to remove you from the list,” says Reshef.

Exercising these rights are a part of the community-based framework that underpins Blue Security’s Do Not Intrude Registry. It works like the national do not call registry developed recently to prevent unwanted calls from telemarketers, but instead of phone numbers, email address are submitted.

Consumers and business join the “Blue Community” by adding their email addresses or email domains to the registry and downloading the Blue Frog software program. Spammers are obliged to stop spamming those in the registry. If they do not, and a community member receives spam, Blue Security identifies the spammer and uses scripts in Blue Frog to automatically post complaints. Reports are then sent to government agencies and ISPs, requesting that actions be taken against these sites. After being inundated with complaints, the spammer, it is hoped, will stop sending spam to those in the registry in an effort to halt the complaint process.

While the process makes a few key assumptions about the intentions of spammers, Reshef says it works because spammers have a strong incentive to stop sending spam to those who have declared their intention not to receive it. The fewer complaints a spammer generates, the less friction they create and the better it is for their “business,” says Reshef. And since the service’s launch, he says, spammers are complying in growing numbers.”

Most of the reviews I read say it’s too early to tell if this method of canning spam actually works well or not, but most were hopeful that it would. One reviewer (http://www.demo.com/demoletter/009595.html) said that early results seemed fairly promising. Although the idea has been tried by other companies, this combination of registry and free client seems to be working. I look forward to the day that I can eliminate email spam the same way the national “Do Not Call” directory seems to have done for phone salespeople.
A Project to Revive Children’s Stories Recorded in the 40’s and 50’s

Kiddie Records Weekly is a two year project celebrating the golden age of children’s records. This brief but prolific period spanned from the mid forties through the early fifties, producing a wealth of all-time classics. Many of these recordings were extravagant Hollywood productions on major record labels and featured big time celebrities and composers.

Over the years, these forgotten treasures have slipped off the radar and now stand on the brink of extinction. Kiddie Record’s mission is to give them a new lease on life by sharing them with today’s generation of online listeners. Each recording has been carefully transferred from the original 78s and encoded to MP3 format for you to download and enjoy. You’ll find a new addition every week, all year long.

So whether you are hearing these records for the first time or reuniting with a childhood favorite from long ago, they hope you take great pleasure in your trip down memory lane! At this time, there are 70 records online, along with the image files of the covers, back cover, included storybooks, and record labels. New records will be added weekly through 2006.

Link:  http://www.kiddierecords.com

StoryNory - iPod Ready Stories for Kids

This fun and free site contains audio stories that you can either listen to online or on your iPod or MP3 player. Some titles include The Flying Trunk, Tim learns where Easter Eggs come from, The Princess and the Pea, Favourite Stories, Kiss a the Cat, The Owl and the Pussycat, How Prince Bertie became Bertie the Frog, Jack and the Beanstalk, The Elephant’s Child, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, The Sleeping Beauty, The Cat’s Elopement, The Snow Queen, and many more. A fun site for younger children.

Link:  http://storynory.com

Radio WillowWeb - Podcast Radio for Kids - by Kids

Radio WillowWeb is a podcast for kids and by kids from the students at Willowdale Elemetary School in Omaha, Nebraska. Each new show is called a Willowcast. Each Willowcast can be heard on WillowWeb as an mp3 digital audio file.

Besides the podcasts, the site also shows use of technology by the school in the form of blogs, Willowdale Whispers (their online newsletter in pdf format), calendars, and more. From their website, “As an innovator and leader in educational technology, Willowdale Elementary School uses technology to enhance teaching and learning. We provide students access to the tools that are shaping our global society in order to match their learning needs, give students an authentic audience, and support learning and achievement. Willowdale teachers use technology as a communication tool to connect to families, the community, and the world. Teachers strive to infuse technology into each subject area and grade level. Teachers craft lessons that have students use technology and information for a genuine purpose as technology is not introduced for its own sake. Use of technology is part of the daily work for all employees to increase productivity, communication, and management and to model life skills for students. Willowdale’s thoughtful and productive use of technology makes our school a better place to teach and learn while preparing students to meet the challenges of the 21st century.” This site is a good “technology idea” site for elementary schools.

Link:  http://www.mpsomaha.org/willow/index.html
300 free educational licenses for assessment and polling software

Grant Title: Get on TRAX Grants
Organization: LearnStar Inc.
Eligibility: K-12 schools
Value: Software licenses
Deadline: April 21, 2006

LearnStar, which developed SmartTRAX software, will be giving grants of 100 licenses each to one elementary, middle, and high school based on need, enthusiasm, technology integration, innovation, and methodology. SmartTRAX is an interactive educational program offering academic competitions, quizzes, real-time polling, testing, and performance assessment tools.

Contact: http://www.learnstar.com/funding.htm
(Source: http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1400)

$50,000 for student newspaper partnerships

Grant Title: Student/Newspaper Partnership Grants
Organization: Newspaper Association of America Foundation
Eligibility: High school and junior high school teachers and administrators and representatives from newspapers or universities
Value: Up to 20 awards worth $2,500 each
Deadline: April 30, 2006

The Newspaper Association of American Foundation will award Student/Newspaper Partnership Grants to student newspapers that are in danger of closing or have stopped publishing. The grants provide seed money to help establish or revive student newspapers, and grants will be awarded to schools that present proposals to create a newspaper where none exists or stabilize and strengthen newspapers that are at risk of going under. Grants can be used to cover newspaper production and distribution costs and to train the adviser and staff members.

Contact: http://www.naafoundation.org/Awards-and-Grants.aspx
(Source: http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1400)

Caedes, the Desktop Wallpaper and Artist Community

This site, featured on the Kim Komando technology show (see http://www.komando.com/kool_show.asp?showID=5292638), is a community of digital artists, illustrators and photographers that place their work online for others to freely critique or download as personal desktop wallpapers for their PC or Macintosh.

One nice feature of this site is that it is moderated, and users may only upload images which they have full intellectual property or fair use rights to or which are in the public domain. Unacceptable subject matter for images such as pornography, nudity, wildlife copulation, registered trademarks, copyrighted logos, copyrighted characters, celebrities, screenshots of games, frames from a movie or television show, or pointless snapshots are rejected.

I’ve been a member of the site for a couple years now, and have found the site to be “kid safe” for the most part. Several members are middle school age, and receive great feedback on their submissions.

Link: http://www.caedes.net

Anyday - Today In History

This site, maintained by Scope Systems, allows you to pick a month and day, and it will give you a large list of historical birthdates, deaths, events, holidays celebrated around the world, and more.

Link: http://www.scopesys.com/anyday/

History Channel - This Day In History

Similar to the Anyday site above, but more organized and professionally maintained. The page has a lead story (for example: March 21 had a story on the Selma to Montgomery march by civil rights demonstrators on March 21, 1965). It also has links to categories such as general interest, literary, entertainment, crime, wars, etc. There is also a link to a broadband video presentation “This Day in History.” An excellent site for those seeking what happened on this day in history.

Link: http://www.historychannel.com/tdih/tdih.jsp?category=leadstory
$50 million in software to help U.S. global competitiveness

Grant Title: 2006 Grant Program
Organization: Learn.com
Eligibility: K-12 schools, colleges, and universities
Value: Software licenses worth $3,995 each
Deadline: May 31, 2006

Learn.com’s 2006 Grant Program offers software to help U.S. educational institutions in their efforts to bring eLearning to campuses while extending their reach using the web. Software grant recipients receive individual user licenses to the Learn.com CourseMaker Studio 3.7 course authoring tool. Over a span of 90 days, Learn.com will donate up to 12,515 CourseMaker Studio licenses.

Contact: http://www.learn.com/learncenter.asp?id=178409&mode=show&
(Source: http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1382)

Grant: Califone Audio-Enhanced Classroom Kit Grants

Califone and Recorded Books will award in 2006 three Audio-Enhanced Classroom Kit Grants, each up to $5,000 in value, to support your use of unabridged audiobooks to help struggling students achieve their full academic potential.

Each Audio-Enhanced Classroom Kit will include Califone audio equipment and Recorded Books at the appropriate reading and interest levels as follows:

*A Califone Performer Plus CD/Cassette/Radio with remote control for whole-class novel study
*A Recorded Books Grade Level Collection featuring 20 novels on CD with matching print versions
*A Recorded Books Intervention Library featuring 10 high-interest novels two or more grade-levels below grade on CD with matching print versions
*2 Califone CD Learning Centers with four stereo headphones and miniature stereo jackbox with individual volume controls for use by two literature circles
*A Recorded Books Drawstring Book Pack to hold students’ CD, print book, and CD player—and to carry them from school to home and back for study at home for each student in the class, up to 30 book packs
*3 Audio/Print Storage Crates
*A Califone Personal CD Player with stereo headphones for individual listen-and-read practice for each student in the class, up to 30 players

Applications must be submitted no later than April 30, 2006. Grant recipients will be announced by June 30, 2006 and will receive their Audio-Enhanced Classroom Packages in time for the fall 2006 semester.

Audio-Enhanced Classroom Grants are given directly to educators to support their work in literacy development through the use of unabridged audiobooks and state-of-the-art playback equipment. Grant applications are accepted from any current teacher or administrator in an accredited K-12 school within the United States.

Macintosh: Using Audacity to Record Any Audio Your Computer Is Playing...

There are times when you’d like to be able to record the audio coming out of your Macintosh and save it. You may need to add a piece of streaming audio to a PowerPoint presentation. Or you may be doing one of a hundred other audio projects. The good news is that you can do this inexpensively and easily. This article will walk you through the process. This article assumes you are using Macintosh OS X. However, you could do this in OS 9, too.

First, if you haven’t already, you’ll need to download the free Audacity audio editor...

Link: http://audacity.sourceforge.net

Be sure also to download the Lame.lib file so you can export your audio as MP3 from Audacity.

Link: http://spaghetticode.org/lame/LameLib-Carbon-3.91.sit

Save the lame.lib file inside your Audacity program folder. You’ll need this file later on.

Once you have Audacity installed on your computer, you’ll need one more component. You’ll need an inexpensive cable that has a 1/8 inch stereo mini jack on both ends. This is the same mini jack your headphone set uses - the kind you’d plug into an iPod or other portable MP3 player. Use this cable to connect the headphone plug into the line-in plug on the back of your Macintosh. (Please note that Apple sold some models of Macintosh without a line-in plug - but most of the recent models do have this hardware feature.)

Now we’re almost set. There are a couple of software settings we need to set. You’ll need to go into your System preferences and set the input to Line-In (see the first illustration on the next page). Start an application playing audio through your Macintosh’s speakers (which are now plugged from the headphone port to the Line-In port, so you won’t hear any audio), such as going into iTunes and doing a streaming radio station, or into Safari or Firefox and doing a streaming audio from NPR. Once it’s playing make sure your computer’s volume is turned about half way up. Now go back to the System preferences and adjust the input volume slider until you see it averaging about 3/4 volume (again, see the first illustration on the next page).

Now you are set to actually begin recording. This will involve having two applications running at the same time, the one that will be playing the audio and Audacity, which will be recording the audio.

Continued on the next page
Pull up Audacity and click on the record button (the button with the red circle). Switch to your other application, let’s say - Safari - and begin playing your streaming audio. Now switch back to Audacity, and you should see it recording your audio stream (see illustration at the bottom of this page). The audio recording in Audacity should be giving you a graph like the one below, which is almost touching the top and bottom of the scale. If it is exceeding that, your audio is too loud, and is clipping. Go back to your system preferences and turn the input volume down. On the other hand, if your volume is too low, you’ll see only a small waveform on the graph. Adjust the Input Volume accordingly. If you had to make adjustments, stop the recording and close the file. Then try it again. Once you’ve completed recording your audio, click the yellow stop button.

After you’ve recorded the file, you can edit out anything you didn’t want by highlighting that audio section with your mouse and hitting the delete key on your keyboard. Audacity comes with filters to fade in, fade out, remove noise, and many other effects. It’s quite easy to use.

Once you’ve edited your audio piece, it’s time to save it. In Audacity, you can save your audio as a Windows WAV file (large file size, uncompressed), an MP3 file (much smaller file size, compressed), and an Ogg Vorbis file (a free open-source method of compressing audio that’s less well known than MP3). Let’s choose to save as an MP3. Audacity will ask you where that Lame.lib file you downloaded is located. Go select it within your Audacity program folder (after this first time, Audacity will remember where the lame file is and not ask anymore). Then you have the option of adding MP3 tag information such as artist, title, etc. Then your MP3 file will be created. Hopefully you found this tutorial helpful. You’ll find documentation and tutorials for Audacity in the website’s help tab.
Windows: Using Audacity to Record Any Audio Your Computer Is Playing…

You'll want to read the Macintosh version of this on the previous pages first. The same method described there basically works on a Windows PC, too. Plug the jack into the line-in plug on the back of your PC (usually color coded blue) and the other end into the headphone plug (usually color coded green). NOTE: Don’t plug it into the microphone plug (color coded pink or red)!
The microphone jack is too sensitive (has a high gain) and you’ll just get distorted audio. Double click the volume symbol in your system tray to bring up the volume control panel. Adjust the line-in volume to about half way and make sure the mute checkbox is unchecked. Other than that, the process is basically the same for the PC as it was for the Mac.

However, if your sound card supports it, there is an easier way for the PC that eliminates the need for the cable described in the Macintosh article. Pull up Audacity, In the drop down shown in the illustration (above right), choose Wave Out Mix. This is going to route anything going through your sound card into Audacity. Be sure to open up your volume controls panel (double click on the volume icon in your system tray at the bottom right of your desktop) and make sure the wave volume is turned up about halfway to three-quarters. Also make sure the mute box is unchecked.

In Audacity, click on the record button. Then go into whatever program you’re going to play the audio in and start it playing. I’m using iTunes in the illustration below. One nice feature about this method is that you can hear the audio through your speakers as you’re recording in Audacity. So when you switch back to audacity, you’ll see the program recording your audio as you listen to it.

Once your audio is done, click the yellow stop button in Audacity. You can then edit your recording. You can use your mouse to drag anywhere along the audio graph to highlight a section. You can press the delete key on your keyboard to delete a highlighted section. You can use the filters in the Effects menu to fade a selection in or out. There is a noise removal tool that it quite good. If you have a consistent hiss or hum in the background, highlight just a short piece of only that hiss or hum (you’re trying to get just an isolated piece of hum or hiss with no other audio going on). Go into the effects menu and choose noise removal. In that dialog, click the button that says “Get Noise Profile.” Then click OK. Now highlight the entire audio piece and choose Noise Removal again. You can listen to a preview and adjust the amount of removal to use. Once you’re satisfied with the preview, click “Remove Noise,” and Audacity will remove that from your file. Audacity is a powerful, free audio editor. Enjoy!

Link for lame_enc.dll file you’ll need for MP3 encoding:
http://www-users.york.ac.uk/~raa110/audacity/lame.html
**The BellSouth Education Gateway**

The BellSouth Education Gateway Web site is designed to help educators and students make the most of their teaching and learning experiences through technology and the power of the Internet. The site contains resources on technology funding, professional development, success stories, as well as information on Web-based projects and other ideas for using technology in the classroom. *(Source: THE Journal Newsletter for March 22, 2006)*

Link: [http://k12.bellsouth.com/](http://k12.bellsouth.com/)

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**Google Mars**

Google Mars allows users to view the mountains, craters, canyons, dunes, and key landmarks of the Red Planet either by a color-coded altitude map, black-and-white photographs, or an infrared map. Google worked with planetary scientists at Arizona State University to develop digital versions of the Martian surface. *(Source: THE Journal Newsletter for March 22, 2006)*

Link: [http://www.google.com/mars/](http://www.google.com/mars/)

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**Other Mars Resources**

- **Mars Exploration Rover Mission**

- **Mars Global Surveyor**

- **Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter**

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**The EPA Environmental Kids Club**

The EPA Environmental Kids Club Web site is a great classroom resource that educators can use to help students explore the environment and learn how to protect it through games, pictures, and stories. *(Source: THE Journal Newsletter for March 15, 2006)*

Link: [http://www.epa.gov/kids/](http://www.epa.gov/kids/)
Deaf Education Website

A result of two projects funded by the U.S. Department of Education’s PT3 initiative, this Web site promotes educational enhancement for the field of deaf education by providing resources that help prepare new teachers and support the ongoing professional development of existing teachers. The site also provides an impressive array of learning resources and opportunities that are available to deaf/hard-of-hearing students and those educators who work with them, such as a job bank, a calendar of events, and the DeafWeb search engine. (Source: THE Journal Newsletter for March 8, 2006)

Link: http://www.deafed.net/

Whats going on in April???

April - a month we celebrate the return of springtime. It also brings a number of other observances that could be used for classroom teaching and discussion. For example, April is...

Holocaust Month - National Poetry Month Jazz Appreciation Month Cancer Control Month Garden Month Guitar Month Frog Month Child Abuse Prevention Month Autism Awareness Month Anxiety Month Mathematics Education Month Kite Flying Month

Some April dates are...

April 1: April Fool’s Day
April 13: Thomas Jefferson’s Birthday
April 14: Good Friday
April 16: Easter Sunday
April 22: Earth Day
April 26: Administrative Professionals Day (National Secretary’s Day)

For an even larger list of April observances, visit http://www.butlerwebs.com/holidays/april.htm

Free Basic Math Practice Worksheets

I created a Macintosh based worksheet generation program a number of years ago. It was based in HyperCard, which is now showing its age. To make the resource available for everyone, I printed many hundreds of pages as PDF files and compiled them into four “books”: Addition, Subraction, Multiplication, and Division. These I’d like to make available for free to educators that need them:

Addition Workbook - 450 pages of addition worksheets with answer keys - (zipped pdf 2.2 MB)
Link: http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tresources/aids/Math/addition.zip

Subtraction Workbook - 416 pages of subtraction worksheets with answer keys - (zipped pdf 1.2 MB)
Link: http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tresources/aids/Math/subtraction.zip

Multiplication Workbook - 508 pages of multiplication worksheets with answer keys - (zipped pdf 1.3 MB)
Link: http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tresources/aids/Math/multiplication.zip

Division Workbook - 764 pages of division worksheets with answer keys - (zipped pdf 1.8 MB)
Link: http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tresources/aids/Math/division.zip
When is Technology Worth the Price? Answering Common Sense Questions About Purchasing Technology Solutions

By Nathan Smith, Director of Technology, College of Education and Human Services, Utah State University

Photo above by Nathan Smith. All other photos in this article come from the MasterClips Clipart Collection.

Perhaps this scene is a familiar one: You are approached by your principal, dean, or other purchasing authority and told, “We have $30,000 that we must spend before the end of this fiscal year for new equipment. What equipment would you like to buy for your school?” Of course, this takes you by surprise. You’d like some research time, but an answer is needed now. Too often, when obtaining funds from grants, legislators, district offices, etc., we make technology purchases that overlook important considerations. Considerations such as dealing with technology implementations, the impact of change, how it will affect our dealings with others, and sustaining its long term use. This article will focus a few basic common sense questions to ask, as well as points to consider when deciding to purchase technology solutions.

Will it be worth the price? Purchasing technology equipment is analogous to buying a ticket to ride the roller coaster at an amusement park. It’s fun while the ride lasts, but all too soon the ride is over - and if you want to go again, you must purchase another ticket. This is the biggest complaint about technology - legislators and administrators liken it to a black hole forever sucking in funds. When is the ride worth the price? Here are some thoughts I’ve had over the years that I’ve been involved with technology:

1. **It is worth the price when it actually saves money over the implementation period.** This is the “no-brainer” answer to “Will it be worth the price?” If the cost of hardware, software, change implementation, and support is less than what you’d save by purchasing into the technology, you’re definitely a winner. However, be careful to factor in the costs of the other questions asked later in the article.

2. **It is worth the price when it increases the ability to add “the human touch” to what you do.** As human beings,
much of what we perceive as valuable is inseparably connected with the quality of the interactions we have with others. We choose doctors who take time to carefully listen to and answer our questions, and who provide the most expert care. Our perceived quality of care is closely linked with our perception of the quality of the human interactions that take place while visiting the doctor’s office - from our initial contact with the receptionist, to our dealings with the nurse, and finally our visit the doctor.

Technology versus “the human touch” is an area too often overlooked. Technology implementation almost always impacts the quality of human interactions - either negatively or positively. In the earlier example, what if the doctor felt like replacing the receptionist with a technology solution? Would elimination of that important first human contact negatively impact the doctor’s business? A good question. As another example, think of the last time you called an organization, and the first thing you heard was, “This is an automated phone menu. Please listen carefully to the following list of choices...” Before long, you are wishing to talk to a real person without having to wait through that whole list (and often a series of sub-lists linked to your choice). Some systems reduce the quality of human interaction, and careful consideration should be given before implementing such solutions. In business, such a small thing as getting an automated phone menu may be enough to drive your customer to the competition where he can speak with a “real” person.

There are some situations where technology allows an organization to refocus human interactions from less critical to more important areas. You must carefully weigh the balance between what is lost and gained.

Education is deeply involved in the business of human interactions. In the long run, when technology solutions will provide more and more learning opportunities outside the classroom, the quality of our interactions may be the only reason we will retain employment in the field of education. When technology solutions can take over chores that free employee time to better focus on “the human touch”, the cost of the technology purchase may well be worth the price.

3. **It is worth the price when it achieves an objective or goal more cost effectively than any other method.** Picture this scenario. An elementary teacher usually will spend the first week or two of each school year listening to each student read, giving placement tests, and analyzing where each student needs instruction. If that teacher could take her class into a computer lab, where sophisticated software accurately analyzed each student’s performance, and provided a report that gave each student’s placement score and a list of instructional needs - and did it all within an hour - would that be worth two weeks of student and teacher time? Now think of this multiplied by the number of teachers and in the school or district? Sometimes the price of the technology admission ticket can be justified by the time savings a technology solution can bring.
Now think of having access to the internet, and the resources it can bring into the classroom. Has having access to such resources changed the purchases your school has made? Has online access to dictionaries and other online resources reduced spending on the paper copies in your school? Has inexpensive online access to technology training materials online reduced the cost of creating and providing that same training in your district, or increased the access to such training? These are a few of the questions that need to be asked when determining the value of having internet access in the schools. Online access to resources may be less expensive in the long run than the cost of adding and supporting the internet infrastructure needed to support access in this manner.

There are hundreds of examples I can think of here, but for brevity’s sake, let’s move on.

4. **It may be worth the price if it provides a competitive edge by adding capabilities you’ve not had before.** Sometimes a technology purchase will give you a competitive edge over competing institutions. In general, schools have not had to compete as businesses in a free market economy, but even that has been changing over recent years. With charter schools becoming more popular, this issue of being competitive enough to attract a student body will take on more importance. There may come a time when a technology purchase needs to be considered because of the social expectations that such technology will be in place in your institution.

5. **It may or may not be worth the price, but it has been mandated by legislation.** Sometimes the poorest reason for purchasing technology, it’s one that we face nevertheless. Consider the technology implementations brought about by No Child Left Behind legislation. The issue of who can make the best educational choices for educating our children - local, state, or federal - would be a subject worthy of a library of books. We’ll not go there in this short article.

6. **It is worth the price because it makes sense and is the right thing to do.** This is probably the area where it is hardest to make a good decision, but if the right decision is made it can have profound implications for and impact on your organization. The purchase of technology is a gamble sometimes. For instance, you are a principal, and one of your teachers comes to you with what she feels is a great idea. It involves technology purchases, and she lays out a convincing argument about how this will benefit the children in her classroom. Now the decision is in your lap. Do you approve or disapprove the purchase? What will be the effect of your decision on the performance of that teacher? On her morale? Will you retain that teacher long if you choose not to support her ideas? I have seen many instances where one very motivated person can make a difference that impacts the entire institution in positive ways. I’m sure you can think of examples, too. We all seek to employ intelligent people who have a vision to implement, a vision we shared in our decision to hire them. Do we then stand in the way implementing their vision? Sometimes, it is worth the price because it makes sense and is the right thing to do. But it takes faith in your people to accomplish success.

Now that we’ve covered the first question, “Is it worth the price?” - let’s briefly explore a few more questions that need to be addressed when making a technology purchase decision...

**What will it take to implement the changes this technology will require?** Change is hard. Technology purchases go to waste because not enough time and consideration were given to what it would take to implement the change that occurs when technology is purchased and used. Those impacted by the change need to have “buy in” on the decision - feel like they had a choice. If they don’t, it will most likely fail - even though the
solution is a workable one. There needs to be an implementation plan that includes familiarizing and training those who will use the technology, and helping them become efficient in its use and implementation. You have to become a propagandist, and an evangelist, promoting the change you’re proposing. If you’re careful to implement a good change support structure, the implementation will take place successfully.

**What support infrastructure needs to be purchased and implemented along with the technology purchase?** I find this is the most often overlooked question, yet one most critical to the success of any technology implementation. Basically - when someone needs help, where can they get needed answers? When something breaks, who fixes it? Who trains your people, and helps them gain a vision of how the technology can be used effectively and well? If any of these pieces are missing, the technology purchase is wasted completely. It will end up not being used, and will sit gathering dust in a closet or shelf. When purchasing equipment for the university, I make sure I have a 3 year on-site next-day warranty service. When the warranty has expired, I either purchase a yearly maintenance contract, or hire employees who have the skills to fix equipment and answer questions. All too often, a grant will come along that allows the purchase of a room full of computers - but it’s a one-time fund. I have seen so many examples of purchasing with one-time funds, where consideration is not given to this important aspect of the purchase. Part of any technology purchase decision must be for its maintenance, training, and help desk issues.

**With the constant demand for scarce dollars from so many critical sources, what will be sacrificed to purchase a technology?** This is an important consideration in education. I’ve seen reports of districts who sacrificed arts and music programs to fund No Child Left Behind technology purchases. I’ve heard of special programs being sacrificed to bring technology into a school. At what cost? These are difficult decisions to make.

**How will we evaluate the purchase at the end of its implementation period?** Now we’re back where we began - the analogy of a carnival ride admission ticket. The end of the ride came too quickly. We must make a decision to buy another ticket for this ride, or move on to different ride. The evaluation process is important. Was it really worth the price? If you had it to do over again, would you make the same decision? Often, funding for future technology implementations will be given only when you can adequately prove your last purchase was worthwhile, and back it up with clear and accurate data. When making a decision to continue or change, it’s important to research any new technologies that have come into being since your last purchase. Do they offer advantages that your current system does not? Is it worth going through the change process all over again to implement a new and different solution? Or is the current system good enough, but just needs new equipment and upgrades?

As you can tell, successful implementation of technology purchases requires some forethought, planning, and funding to be successful. Hopefully these few ideas will help you as your institution makes new purchases. This is certainly not an exhaustive treatise on the subject. I’m certain you have questions and pointers that I’ve not listed here. Perhaps you have some “war” stories to share about technology implementation as well. Please feel free to do so. I can be reached by e-mail: Nathan.Smith@USU.edu.

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**MyClassInfo - a Free Teacher Calendaring, Message, and Sign-Up Sheet Tool**

MyClassInfo is a free online service for parent-teacher communication. How does it work? First, teachers create a class account. Then, once the account is created, teachers can send invites to parents to create parent accounts. MyClassInfo provides the following features: 1) Calendar. Teachers can create daily posts and announcements on a monthly calendar. Use this feature to inform parents about things happening at school. 2) Messages. Teachers can send private messages to parents and vice versa. Use this feature to discuss individual kids’ progress and needs. 3) Sign Up Sheet. Teachers can create sign up sheets and parents can sign up online. Use this feature to start a donation list, for example.

How much does it cost? MyClassInfo is free for both teachers and parents. According to their website, they intend to keep it free forever.

Link: [http://www.myclassinfo.org](http://www.myclassinfo.org)
Free Professional Development Modules Available from the George Lucas Educational Foundation

The Edutopia site contains free teaching modules developed by education faculty and professional developers. They can be used as extension units in your existing courses, or can be used independently in workshops and meetings.

Each module includes articles, video footage, PowerPoint® presentations, and class activities. They draw from the wealth of the George Lucas Educational Foundation’s archives of best practices and correlate with ISTE/NCATE NETS standards.

GLEF will be adding additional modules over time and welcome your suggestions for future topics and feedback on these modules. E-mail them at feedback@glef.org.

The development modules fall into two basic categories at this time: Innovative Classrooms and Educational Leadership. Below is a list of modules in each area:

**Innovative Classrooms**
- Project-Based Learning, Assessment
- Technology Integration
- Technology Integration: Language Arts & Social Studies
- Technology Integration: Math & Science
- Exploratory Learning with a Digital Microscope
- Project-Based Learning, An Integral Approach: CSI
- Theory of Multiple Intelligences

**Educational Leadership**
- View of the Principal and the Job
- Teacher Supervision & Development


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**EmTech - Emerging Technologies Educational Resources**

EmTech maintains a deep list of links to resources for educators, students, and parents. For example, you can visit any state’s department of education website, visit sites for administrators, sites for special education, sites for alternative assessment strategies, and many more.

Link: [http://www.emtech.net/](http://www.emtech.net/)

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**Looking at Fossils in 3D!**

Welcome to 3D Museum Website, maintained by the Vertebrate Paleobiology Lab of the University of California, Davis. This site was designed to explore the ways of communicating 3D morphological data over the Internet. There are a number of fossils that you can view, zoom in or out on, rotate on any axis, as well as descriptions of each specimen. The site is continually adding new specimens to the collection. Viewing options include WF - Java based, ICF - plug-in required; IE only, and 3DC - plug-in required; PC only

Link: [http://3dmuseum.geology.ucdavis.edu/](http://3dmuseum.geology.ucdavis.edu/)
Learn Photoshop Tips and Tricks Through Free Video Podcasts!

Join Scott Kelby, Dave Cross, Matt Kloskowski and special guests such as Ben Wilmore for amazing tricks and quick tips using Photoshop. Each entertaining half hour program features four demonstrations that range from very basic to quite advanced techniques and skills. If you have iTunes, you can search “Photoshop” in the podcast directory and subscribe there. Otherwise, go to...

Link: http://www.photoshoptv.com/

Another Great Photoshop Tips and Tricks Video Podcast!

Photoshop Killer Tips is a FREE video Podcast of tips and tricks for Adobe® Photoshop, you can learn more about how to subscribe for free on the site below or in the iTunes podcast directory.

Get your daily video dose of the coolest insider tips, timesaving shortcuts, workarounds, and undocumented tricks with Photoshop Killer Tips with Matt Kloskowski. One of the Photoshop Guys of Photoshop TV, Matt shows you hidden tips, tricks, and productivity secrets in an easy to follow, fast to download and fun to watch daily video podcast. If you want a podcast that will make you better and faster in Photoshop every day, and you don’t have a lot of time to spend watching, then tune in each weekday to Photoshop Killer Tips.

Brought to you by the National Association of Photoshop Professionals (NAPP).

Link: http://www.photoshopkillertips.com/

And one more! Radiant Vista - The Photoshop Workbench Video Podcast.

For some, Photoshop is one of the most challenging aspects of digital photography! It is often overwhelming to work on your images and be unsure of which direction you should take your processing. The Radiant Vista offers a free 15 to 20 minute video every week, which are available for download from this website. The video will feature a user-submitted image, where suggestions on getting the most out of your image in the digital darkroom will be demonstrated. These suggestions follow a general workflow making it very easy to pick up tips and tricks.

Videos are available in Quicktime, Windows Media, or iPod Video formats. You can also subscribe to this video podcast through the iTunes podcast directory. Radiant Vista’s site has many tutorials in PDF format. You’ll want to check out the other sections as well - audio podcast question/answer sessions, a daily critique video, and more. Many of you have expressed a desire to learn Photoshop in your UCET feedback. Here are some opportunities to get started early! Link: http://www.radiantvista.com/workbench/
Commercial Educational Offerings Propagate on the Web…

As educators, we watch with interest as new educational offerings and technologies become available. Some offer new, free resources to our classrooms. Some compete with us. Some entice schools to buy their products for use in the classrooms. Some offer supplementary services at a price for students seeking extra help or learning opportunities. This page contains a small sampling of sites talked about in recent educational newsletters and journals. Have a look at them - their inclusion here doesn't constitute an endorsement of any kind. The first two are paid subscription sites, the rest are free resources.

Homework Helper Site from Discovery Channel

COSMEO is a new homework help tool and comprehensive digital library from Discovery Communications that provides simple homework help, interactive learning games, and more than 30,000 video clips that are correlated to grade level and state curriculum standards. It lets K-12 students instantly reference video clips and other learning tools for any required assignment in all key subject areas. Although this site has a subscription price, you can try it out for 30 days. (Source - THE Newsletter for March 29, 2006)

Link:  http://www.cosmeo.com/

The Student Nest - Live One-on-One Tutoring

From their website: Using proprietary technology, studentnest.com allows the student and the certified tutor to participate in two-way audio conversations using a hands-free headset and a mousepen. Studentnest.com offers a wide variety of tutoring programs to fit almost any budget. All studentnest.com tutoring programs are 100% guaranteed. Try a Free Trial Session today and see for yourself how studentnest.com takes tutoring to the next level.

Link:  http://www.studentnest.com/

RedZee Search - Filtered Search Results for Kids

RedZee Search is a new, free search engine for schools that filters out pornographic results while delivering accurate and relevant searches. Set up like Google, RedZee can search Web sites, video, images, and much more. (Source - THE Newsletter for April 5, 2006)

Link:  http://www.redzee.com/

BrainPOP in Spanish

BrainPOP en Español uses BrainPOP’s popular format to present its award-winning content in science, math, social studies, language arts, health, and technology in Spanish. A 12-month subscription for schools starts at $100. (Source - THE Newsletter for April 12, 2006) Link: http://es.brainpop.com/

SearchEdu.com

SearchEDU is an index of pages built by crawling education web sites. Also, you’ll find quick links to reference resources, calculators and conversion tools, and more.

Link:  http://www.searchedu.com/
**RGK Foundation Grants**

From their website: “RGK Foundation awards grants in the broad areas of Education, Community, and Medicine/Health. The Foundation’s primary interests within Education include programs that focus on formal K-12 education (particularly mathematics, science and reading), teacher development, literacy, and higher education.

Within Community, the Foundation supports a broad range of human services, community improvement, abuse prevention, and youth development programs. Human service programs of particular interest to the Foundation include children and family services, early childhood development, and parenting education. The Foundation supports a variety of Community Improvement programs including those that enhance non-profit management and promote philanthropy and voluntarism. Youth development programs supported by the Foundation typically include after-school educational enrichment programs that supplement and enhance formal education systems to increase the chances for successful outcomes in school and life. The Foundation is also interested in programs that attract female and minority students into the fields of mathematics, science, and technology.

Deadlines: There is no deadline for submitting an electronic Letter of Inquiry. Foundation staff reviews electronic Letters of Inquiry on an ongoing basis and typically responds within two days, although we ask that you allow up to two weeks for a response.”

The next committee review is scheduled to take place on June 2, 2006.


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**ALA Great Web Site for Kids**

A free, organized directory of sites selected by members of the American Library Association using rigorous evaluation guidelines to assure high quality content, authority and “strength of character.”

Link: [http://www.ala.org/greatsites](http://www.ala.org/greatsites)

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**FirstGov for Kids**

Free from the U.S. Federal Citizen Information Center, this directory provides links to government-related kids’ sites along with some of the best kids’ sites from other organizations, grouped by subject.


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**Presidential Freedom Scholarship (Deadline-May 12)**

The Presidential Freedom Scholarships promote student service and civic engagement. These scholarships, funded in part by the Corporation for National and Community Service, a federal agency, recognize high school students for outstanding leadership in service to their community and neighbors.

High school students across the nation are solving the problems in their communities, demonstrating compassion for others, and servicing those who need support. The President has called upon Americans to serve their communities and the nation. Many students have answered that call to service. Outstanding high school students are eligible for recognition through a Presidential Freedom Scholarship.

Link: [http://www.learnandserve.gov/about/programs/pfs.asp](http://www.learnandserve.gov/about/programs/pfs.asp)

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**Interactive Tools for Teaching Grant**

Eligibility: K-12 Educators

Application Deadline: May 26, 2006

Description: Can you think of ways to get more participation from your students? Share your thoughts for a chance to win thousands of dollars worth of the latest classroom technology and help make your idea a reality. To enter, simply write a brief bio about yourself along with a lesson plan idea on how you can use Qwizdom interactive response systems in your classroom.

Award: 10 selected teachers will receive a complete class set of Qwizdom Q3 IR or Q4 RF wireless response devices, Interact teacher software, base receiver, USB cables, instructor remote, carrying case, training session, and a curriculum package of their choice. (Total approximate value: $4,000).

Link: [http://www.qwizdom.com/grant/index.htm](http://www.qwizdom.com/grant/index.htm)
It’s Summer!

Now that the kids are out of school, you have the summer to look forward to. Will you have some free time? I hope so. Teachers need relaxation time, a time to unwind, to think, to gear back up for the next school year. Perhaps it’s a time to get some training, or to brush up on skills.

We’d like to direct your attention to the summer courses offered by the UEN. You can view and register for courses such as using digital cameras, digital video, webpage creation with DreamWeaver, Microsoft Office training, podcasting, and much more, at the following URL:

Link: http://profdev.uen.org/pdms/register/view_course_by_month

Also consider the Integrating Technology and Curriculum workshops:

Link: http://profdev.uen.org/pdms/register/course_details/63

Just a reminder: If you wish to suggest any sessions for next year’s UCET conference on March 2 & 3, 2007, at Murray High School - please email me at Nathan.Smith@usu.edu and make those suggestions! The UCET board members will be meeting this summer to hammer everything out. We would love to have your suggestions.

Here’s wishing you a glorious summer! You deserve it!

In This Issue!

Ready for some relaxation? We’ll explore some fun techniques to try in Photoshop. We’ll learn how to turn a photograph into a digital painting. We’ll also show you a simple trick for correcting color in your digital photos. Don’t have Photoshop? No problem. You can download a free 30 day trial version at http://www.adobe.com.

As always, we’ll give you some great internet resources to explore, as well as a few opportunities for grants and funding.

Be sure to check the UCET website every week or so through the summer. We’ll be keeping fresh content, opportunities, and links to resources there as well.

Link: http://www.ucet.org
BACK-TO-SCHOOL GRANTS

In 2006, the Dollar General Back-to-School grant program will award two $5,000 Back-to-School grants per state of operation to assist schools in meeting some of the financial challenges they face in implementing new programs or purchasing new equipment, materials or software for their school library or literacy program. *(Source: Edtopia News for May 10, 2006)*

Deadline for Application: August 11, 2006


ASCAP MUSIC EDUCATION SUPPORT

The ASCAP Foundation, established in 1975, is a publicly supported charitable organization which is tax exempt under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is dedicated to supporting American music creators and encouraging their development through music education and talent development programs. The ASCAP Foundation is pleased to consider proposals from other 501(c)(3) organizations engaging in music education and talent development programs that are consistent with the mission and objectives of The ASCAP Foundation and which support music education programs for aspiring songwriters and composers. Our average grant is approximately $5,000.

The ASCAP Foundation Board of Directors review grant applications once a year. To be considered for a 2007 ASCAP Foundation grant you must complete The ASCAP Foundation Grant Application form and submit the requested documents to be received by The ASCAP Foundation no later than October 1, 2006. You will be notified in January 2007 regarding the outcome of your grant request. *(Source: Edtopia News for May 10, 2006)*

Deadline for 2007 application: October 1, 2006

Link: [http://www.ascapfoundation.org/grants.html](http://www.ascapfoundation.org/grants.html)

PHISHING FOR FUNDING

The Mockingbird Foundation, which was established to “celebrate the music of Phish and the spirit of their fans,” has contributed more than $250,000 to music education for children. For more information, visit

Link: [http://www.mockingbirdfoundation.org/funding/](http://www.mockingbirdfoundation.org/funding/)

Next deadline is August 1, 2006. *(Source: Edtopia News for May 10, 2006)*

UPDATE: KIDDIERECORDS.COM

If school kept you too busy to look at the kiddierecords site, a project to make children’s stories on the old 78 RPM vinyl records available to a modern audience through MP3 audio files, go take a look now. So far, for 2006, they’ve released the following for free download...

Peter and the Wolf, Mr. Toad, Tickety Tock, Foodini Goes A’ Huntin’, Foodini’s Trip to the Moon, The Snow Goose, Pan the Piper, The Story of Jesus, Uncle Remus Stories, Rudyard Kipling’s Jungle Book, Let’s Play, Maxie the Taxi, The Flying Mouse, Tweety Pie, Woody Meets Davy Crockett, Sugar Cookie Flats, Lost Horizon, The Twelve Dancing Princesses, Bill and Coo, Grimm’s Fairy Tales, Whizzer the Talking Airplane, Little Black Sambo, Deep Is the Well, Cherub the Chick, The Case of the Midnight Marauder, and The Cask of Amontillado. Other releases are scheduled through the rest of 2006.

Photoshop Tutorial - Creating a Sketch Out of a Photograph - Part 1

This is a simple four step tutorial for taking a digital photo and turning into something that looks like a pencil sketch. Be sure to play around with the settings in each step. Experiment and see what they do. Ready? Let’s give it a try. I’m using a stock photo I found on a free photo site for this demonstration. NOTE: The CTRL keys are for Windows PC. Macintosh users will use the Command key, or Open Apple key instead of the CTRL key.

**Step 1:** Open your photograph in Photoshop. Go into the Image menu - Adjustments and try Auto Levels or any other auto adjustments needed so you have good contrast and color.

**Step 2:** Duplicate your photo into a new layer (CTRL-J). Desaturate the photo by doing Image -> Adjustments -> Desaturate.

**Step 3:** Duplicate the desaturated layer (CTRL-J). Invert it by doing CTRL-I or going into the Image-Adjustments-Invert menu. Change it’s layer blending (in the Layers palette) mode to Color Dodge or Linear Dodge. You now should have a totally white image (or mostly white).

**Step 4:** Now go to the filter menu and do Blur -> Motion Blur. Adjust the level and angle settings until you’re happy with the result. Simple and quick. If the sketch is too light, go into the Image-Adjustments-Levels menu dialog and slide the left triangle under the graph to the right until it touches the edge of the graph.

One other thing you can do is bring the color layer on top and set it’s layer palette blending mode to hue or color and make this a color sketch.
Instant Handbrake - DVD conversion to iPod H264 video or PSP MP4 video

From the author of Handbrake, a DVD to MPEG-4 ripper/ converter, Instant Handbrake is a free, new product that automatically converts your DVDs into the required formats for play on the video iPod or Sony PlayStation Portable. It lets you create iPod-compatible MPEG-4 or H.264 files, or PSP-compatible MPEG-4 files. The default is to automatically crop the picture to fill the screen (4:3 on the iPod, 16:9 on the PSP), or you can choose to keep the original format.

The program, available for Macintosh OS X, is quite simple to use. You open the program, then pop in your DVD. Once the DVD is recognized, you click “Continue” and wait a moment for it to read the files on the disc. (see illustration above)

Once loaded, you have a simple menu of drop-down choices... (see illustration at right).

After selecting your preferred options, simply click the “Convert” button and go for a walk. I’ve found that the conversion time usually is about equal to the movie’s length for most recent Macintoshes.

Once the conversion is complete, you just use iTunes to drag the movie into your video iPod. Although it’s still Beta, Instant Handbrake worked flawlessly for me on fifty different DVDs I tested it on. It’s an excellent conversion utility.

Link: [http://handbrake.m0k.org/](http://handbrake.m0k.org/)

Link to download Instant Handbrake: [http://handbrake.m0k.org/?page_id=26](http://handbrake.m0k.org/?page_id=26)

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Google to Challenge Excel

The New York Times reports that Google intends to release a test version of an online spreadsheet program in order to make it simple to share data and lists online. The program, named “Google Spreadsheets,” will be able to both read and create files in the Excel file format. This development is viewed as another step in Google’s march to develop an alternative to the Microsoft desktop computing environment. Source: eSchool News Today email listserv for June 6, 2006

Want to try it? Link: [http://www.google.com/googlespreadsheets/tour1.html](http://www.google.com/googlespreadsheets/tour1.html)
Photoshop Tutorial - Creating a Sketch Out of a Photograph - Part 2

This is a continuation of the earlier article. We’ll use a stock photo of a young girl for this demonstration (1). Here’s a review of the steps from part 1 to get to this point... (Macintosh users use the Command key wherever it says CTRL in these instructions):

1) Desaturate the photo (CTRL-SHIFT-U)
2) Duplicate step 1 into new layer (CTRL-J). Invert it so it becomes a negative. (CTRL-I).
3) Set layer blending mode to LINEAR DODGE. Image will turn white (or mostly white).
4) Do Filter -> Blur -> Motion Blur and set the angle to 29 and the distance to 140 (play with these settings until you’re satisfied with the result). (2)

Problem: You can see that the process above produces a very light sketch, and the edges are not well defined. Let’s take this a little further, then, using some other filters in Photoshop.

5) Copy the original photo into a new layer at the top of the layers list. If it’s color, desaturate it. Set its layer blending mode to MULTIPLY. Then do FILTERS->STYLIZE->FIND EDGES. Usually this is too strong, so reduce the opacity of the layer until it blends in well with the rest of the image. Then go in the LAYERS menu and flatten the image. (3)
6) Go into the IMAGE->ADJUSTMENTS->LEVELS dialog and adjust the images darks, lights, and midtones until you are satisfied with the result. (4)

If you want it to be a sepia tone sketch, you can go to IMAGE->ADJUSTMENTS ->HUE & SATURATION and click the colorize box. Then adjust the hue and saturation sliders to your preferences. (5)

There are many other things you can try in the filters to add an artistic “look” to a photo. Play around with combinations of filters and layer blending modes. For an example, look at illustration (6). I’ve added new layer set to COLOR mode and painted color into the image.

I hope you enjoyed the tutorials. As always, experiment! That’s one of the most enjoyable aspects of playing in Photoshop.
Gallery of Photos Manipulated Into Sketches in Photoshop.

The techniques described in parts 1 and 2 were the starting point for each of the photo-manipulation sketches I’ve done on this page.

Photoshop has many filters, such as watercolor, rough pastels, colored pencil, and more. In each case, I began with the steps described previously, then copied the original photo into a new layer at the top of the layer stack. Then I’d run a filter or filters and set the blending mode to overlay or multiply.

Then I’d add new layers on top and draw or paint on those layers to add elements. Sometimes I’d select just certain areas and copy them into a new layer and play with just that section. The power of layers is that you can do this without disturbing anything in any of the other layers. In the top two images, for example, I copied a portion of the clouds into a new layer and then ran the Filter - Blur - Motion Blur filter to give the clouds a streaky effect. I’d then reduce the opacity of the layer somewhat so the layers underneath would show through and blend in.

If you’d like to view larger versions of these, you can visit my gallery at Caedes...

Link: http://www.caedes.net/Zephir.cgi?lib=Caedes::Gallery&author=nmsmith&page=1

On that page, you’ll see a dropdown menu that will allow you to sort the images in my gallery by date. Choose that selection and then click the view button. These will be some of the most recent entries.

Also, you’ll find many tutorials (including some of mine) there in the tutorials gallery.
Photoshop Tutorial: Salvaging a Photo With a Color Cast Problem

Sometimes you may have some old photos which have yellowed terribly over the years, or for some other reason have a bad color cast problem. In Photoshop, the IMAGE-ADJUSTMENTS-AUTO LEVELS will fix this problem most of the time, but there are times it doesn’t.

Here’s an easy trick that will help solve the color cast problem. Image 1 is a photo of my father when he was in Japan while on duty in the U.S. Air Force in the early 50’s. As you can see, it has yellowed over the years. (1) Let’s use this technique on this photo and see what result we can get.

The first step in this procedure is to create a duplicate of the original photo. In Photoshop we do this by clicking on the original layer in the layers palette to select it. Then press CTRL-J (COMMAND-J on a Mac). This duplicates the layer. (2)

The second step is to go into the filters menu and select BLUR-AVERAGE. What the average command does is look at all the colors in an image and gives you an exact average. So now you’re looking at a screen that looks like (3).

In art class we learned that we can neutralize a color by adding in its opposite color. So we INVERT (CTRL-I) this and end up with the exact opposite color. (4)

The next step is to set the layer blending mode to OVERLAY or SOFT LIGHT. Most of the time this alone will fix the problem immediately. You can tell that the white scarf is now really white where the flash hits it the most. (5) Sometimes you may want to adjust the opacity of this overlay layer to lessen the neutralizing effect. In this case, we’ll need to adjust just a little more. Go into the Layers menu and flatten the image.

The final adjustments are made in the levels dialog box. (Image-Adjustments- Levels). You’ll notice that you can work in RGB mode, or with each color channel individually. Here I’m adding more blue in the blue channel by sliding the center slider to the left. (6) For reds, greens, or blues, adjust the sliders just under the graph slightly until you end up with just the right adjustment. (7)
$100,000 in college scholarships for math and science projects

Grant Title: 2006-07 Siemens Competition in Math, Science and Technology
Organization: Siemens Foundation
Eligibility: Students
Value: College scholarships ranging from $1,000-$100,000;
Deadline: October 2, 2006

The Siemens Competition is a signature program of the Siemens Foundation, which distributes nearly $2 million annually to promote math and science education in the United States. The competition is administered by the College Board. Students may enter as individuals or as members of a team. Entries are judged at the regional level in November by scientists and faculty at six research universities: Carnegie Mellon University; Georgia Institute of Technology; Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Stanford University; University of Notre Dame; and The University of Texas at Austin. The Siemens Competition attracts entries from high school science and math students nationwide. (Source: eSchool News This Week for June 5, 2006)

Link:  http://www.siemens-foundation.org/competition/2006Registration.htm

Flag Day is June 14! Explore the History of the American Flag!

Have you ever wondered...
How Military Service Flag or Blue Star Service Banner of the United States Armed Forces came to be?
About evolution of the Flag of the United States?
About the history of the Pledge of Allegiance?
Or the history of Flag Day?
How did the flag become known as “OLD GLORY”?
Why was Francis Scott Key there on September 14th, 1814?

This site explores these and other topics. Also, you find pictures, history, and descriptions of all the American flags through time. There are patriotic song lyrics, frequently asked questions (FAQs), and links to other flag sites.

Link: http://www.usflag.org/
Free Classroom Video - NASA Destination Tomorrow - Program 23

NASA's Destination Tomorrow™ is a series of 30-minute educational programs that focus on NASA research, including new technologies, advanced aerodynamics, past achievements and medical breakthroughs. Each exciting program gives the audience an inside look at NASA and demonstrates how research and technology relates to our everyday lives. If it’s cutting edge technology, medical breakthroughs or advanced aeronautical research - NASA's Destination Tomorrow will bring it to you first.

These programs air on many PBS, cable, and ITV stations throughout the U.S. The program is also broadcast internationally through the Voice of America.

NASA's Destination Tomorrow Program #23 will look back at the successful Cassini-Huygens mission to Saturn and Titan. They also revisit robotic exploration that will enable future human missions to the Moon and Mars, GPS technology, and the development of the Space Shuttle program in the Retrospective segment.

NASA Destination Tomorrow focuses on content for grades 9-Adult. You can obtain a video from your local NASA Educator Resource Center or view the video online at the following links...

KnowItAll:  http://www.knowitall.org/nasa/destination/index.html

Just Released for Teachers - NASA Connect: Team Extreme: The Statistics of Success & NASA Connect: The Path of Totality: Angular Distance

NASA CONNECT™ is an annual series of FREE integrated math, science, and technology programs for students in grades 6–8. Each program has three components: (1) a 30-minute television broadcast that can be viewed live or taped for later use, (2) an educator guide describing a hands-on activity, and (3) an interactive web activity that provides educators an opportunity to use technology in the classroom setting. These three components — television broadcast, educator guide, and web activity — are designed as an integrated instructional package.

Team Extreme: The Statistics of Success - How many people are involved in a successful mission? This program focuses on NASA's Space Operations Mission Directorate and the teamwork required to produce a successful space mission. Students will learn about the numerous systems, skills, and capabilities involved in a mission and how NASA manages and integrates these systems. Students will draw a parallel between the teamwork used in a NASA mission and find out how teamwork energizes the popular sport of auto racing. Using hands-on lessons and web-based activities, students will develop an understanding of statistical analysis and how people use statistics to make decisions.

(continued on the next page)
The Path of Totality: Measuring Angular Size and Distance - This program draws its content from the Science Mission Directorate’s Sun-Earth Forum. Students will learn about the natural phenomenon that creates a total eclipse and the relative movement of objects in our solar system. Students also will explore the history, mythology, and current science surrounding these amazing events. Using hands-on lessons, web-based activities, and simple tools, students will measure and approximate the angular size and distance of objects in the sky.

Again, you can obtain a video from your local NASA Educator Resource Center or view the video online at the following links...

KnowItAll:  http://www.knowitall.org/nasa/connect/index.html   NASA Connect Website:  http://connect.larc.nasa.gov/

Utah’s NASA Educator Resource Center is located at Utah State University in the Adele & Dale Young Education Technology Center (or YETC, for short). Nathan Smith, the center’s Director, has provided many of NASA’s materials online at http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/tnasa/

The link, “Digitized NASA movies for AESP Presentations” contains digitized versions of several hundred NASA videos that have been copyright cleared for teacher use in the classroom, including the videos discussed here. The digitized versions on TeacherLINK are not disability accessible (closed captioned) - because they were meant for preview purposes only. Because of this, they are password protected from general public access.

As an educator, you may access them, however. The username is nasamovies and the password is aesp. They are case sensitive, so be sure your caps lock is off. Download these from a fast internet connection, as they are large files.

As a teacher, you are welcome to make arrangements with your local NASA Educator Resource Center to have any of these videos duplicated for your classroom. If you bring your own blank media to record to at the YETC there is no charge for copying the videos. The YETC has the duplicating equipment you’ll need. If you have us do them for you, we’ll need to charge for for materials and shipping, because NASA doesn’t cover these expenses.

NASA has many wonderful educator resources available. Please take time to have a look at them.

Link:  http://education.nasa.gov/

Free Font Utility from LinoType for Macintosh OS X

OS X on the Macintosh comes with a system program, Font Book, which is a nice, but limited utility. To get features such as auto-activation of fonts, you needed to purchase a program like Extensis’ Suitcase Fusion or Insider Software’s FontAgent Pro.

Until now, that is. LinoType has released a free, yet very powerful font manager - FontExplorer X. Sporting an iTunes-like interface, this program is very easy to use. It has features like automatic font activation, including the option to specify which applications use auto-activation. It installs plug-ins for inDesign, Illustrator, and QuarkExpress. You can customize your font previews. You can also compare fonts on screen.

FontExplorer X provides powerful export options such as creating a .zip archive or disk image when exporting fonts or font sets.

And similar to iTunes store link, it includes a link to Linotypes font store, where you can purchase and download Linotype fonts. From the Linotype website... “FontExplorer X sets a new standard for font management software. Linotype is pleased to announce the missing link to your font collection. With the new FontExplorer™ X, font management, font sorting, font shopping and font discovery are simple and fun!”

Link:  http://www.linotype.com/2006/tools.html
Google Earth is Now Available for Macintosh!

Want to know more about a specific location? Dive right in -- Google Earth combines satellite imagery, maps and the power of Google Search to put the world’s geographic information at your fingertips.

- Fly from space to your neighborhood.
- Type in an address and zoom right in. Search for schools, parks, restaurants, and hotels.
- Get driving directions.
- Tilt and rotate the view to see 3D terrain and buildings.
- Save and share your searches and favorites. Even add your own annotations.

The recently released download for Macintosh OS X (version 10.3.9 or later-see illustration below) is now available. Both Windows and Macintosh versions can be downloaded at...

Link: [http://earth.google.com/](http://earth.google.com/)

eMints Suggested Lesson Plans for Using Google Earth in the Classroom

**Discovery: Earth Science** - This lesson plan, originally designed for GPS satellite maps, can be adjusted for learning landscapes using Google Earth.


**Introduction to Latitude and Longitude** - This lesson plan is designed to help students learn how and why to use the latitude and longitude grid. Use the Google Earth software instead of offered maps.

UEN Professional Development Courses for July 2006

The Utah Education Network is offering professional development courses through the summer. Be sure to take advantage of these wonderful training opportunities. Most of their courses are free, or there’s only a nominal fee for materials. For July, the following courses are on the schedule...

- Digital Camera in the Classroom
- Dreamweaver 1.5: Review and Practice
- Dreamweaver Level 2
- Integrating Technology and Curriculum
- Podcasting, Blogs and Vlogs
- Use Technology to Teach
- Web Graphics w/Fireworks

Specific dates, times, and class and registration information can be had at the following link:

http://profdev.uen.org/pdms/register/view_course_by_month

NECC 2006 - July 5-7 - San Diego, California

NECC, or the National Educational Computing Conference, is probably the premiere technology in education conference worldwide. To be held in San Diego this year, NECC is offering over 500 speaker sessions and 160 workshops related to technology and education. Former MIT professor Nicholas Negroponte will be showing his $100 laptop, slated for worldwide distribution to children in third world countries (see UCET’s March 2006 newsletter).

For an introduction to the conference, watch Leslie Conery, the Deputy CEO of ISTE, give a personal video welcome to NECC 2006.

Link: http://www.eschoolnews.com/cic/

Many of the NECC sessions will be podcast on Apple’s iTunes podcast directory at no charge. You’ll find them in the education section of the podcast directory when they become available.

Link: http://www.apple.com/itunes/podcasts/

For more information and registration, please visit their site at...

Link: http://web.uoregon.edu/ISTE/NECC2006/
**Microsoft is Offering a New Way to Test Drive Office 2007**

Take the 2007 Microsoft Office release out for a test drive!

You are just a few clicks away from a free online test drive of the latest version of Microsoft Office programs. Take them out for a spin in this quick, easy-to-use, browser-based trial experience.

The real-time test drive does not require product installation or download—it’s the fastest way to try out 2007 Microsoft Office system programs. In just minutes you can start exploring Microsoft Office through your Web browser on your own, or follow the step-by-step tutorials to experience all of its useful features. The test drive requires Windows 98, 2000, or XP and Internet Explorer 5.5 or later. With them, you can test drive the following 2007 releases...

- Microsoft Office Access 2007
- Microsoft Office Excel 2007
- Microsoft Office InfoPath 2007
- Microsoft Office OneNote 2007
- Microsoft Office Outlook 2007
- Microsoft Office Outlook 2007 with Business Contact Manager
- Microsoft Office Outlook Web Access
- Microsoft Office PowerPoint 2007
- Microsoft Office Publisher 2007
- Microsoft Office SharePoint Designer 2007
- Microsoft Office Visio 2007
- Microsoft Office Word 2007
- Microsoft Windows SharePoint Services
- Microsoft Office Project Server 2007
- Microsoft Office SharePoint Server 2007


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**Grant: $3,000 to connect math to other subjects**

- **Grant Title**: NCTM Connecting Mathematics to Other Subject Areas Grants for Grades 9-12 Teachers
- **Organization**: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics
- **Eligibility**: Grades 9-12 mathematics teachers who are members of NCTM
- **Value**: $3,000 each; number of awards varies
- **Deadline**: November 3, 2006

The purpose of this grant is to create senior high classroom materials or lessons connecting mathematics to other fields. For 2007-2008, grants with a maximum of $3,000 each will be awarded to educators currently teaching mathematics in grades 9-12. Materials may be in the form of books, visual displays, computer programs or displays, slide shows, videotapes, or other appropriate medium. The focus of these materials should be on showing the connectivity of mathematics to other fields or to the world around us. Any acquisition of equipment must support the proposed plan but not be the primary focus of the grant. Any published sources must be documented. Entries will be judged on the following criteria: clarity of plans for developing and evaluating materials, overall creativity of planned materials and their connectivity to other fields or disciplines, and anticipated impact on students’ learning. *(Source: eSchool News - [http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1475](http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1475))*

Link:  [http://www.nctm.org/about/met/pappas.htm](http://www.nctm.org/about/met/pappas.htm)
Contest: $11,500 to boost reading instruction and comprehension

Grant Title: ETA/Cuisenaire Magnificent Classroom Makeover
Organization: ETA/Cuisenaire
Eligibility: Grades PreK-6 teachers
Value: $11,500 in equipment and prizes
Deadline: July 15, 2006

ETA/Cuisenaire is offering a classroom makeover with a grand prize of $10,000 and two runners-up prizes of $1,000 and $500. The grand prize includes books, reading and teacher support materials, and a full day of district-wide professional development with a literary specialist. *(Source: eSchool News - [http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1475]*)

Contact: [http://www.etacuisenaire.com/makeover/makeover.jsp](http://www.etacuisenaire.com/makeover/makeover.jsp)

National Weather Association (NWA) SOL HIRSCH EDUCATION FUND GRANTS

$500 grants are available annually from the NWA for teachers in grades K-12 to improve the education of their students in Meteorology.

Applications are due by 1 August each year.

The NWA Education Committee needs help from all members to spread the word to teachers in grades K-12 that $500 grants are available annually from the NWA to help improve the education of their students in meteorology. The teachers selected will be able to use the funds to take an accredited course in atmospheric sciences, attend a relevant workshop or conference, or purchase scientific materials or equipment for the classroom. Seven grants or more are possible each year (since 2004) thanks to the many members who have contributed to this fund in honor of Sol Hirsch who retired in 1992 after being the NWA Executive Director for 11 years.

Link: [http://www.nwas.org/solhirsch.html](http://www.nwas.org/solhirsch.html)

Shell Science Teaching Award

Sponsor: Shell Oil Company
Eligibility: K–12 classroom science teachers.

This award recognizes one outstanding classroom science teacher who has had a positive impact on his or her students, school, and community through exemplary science teaching.

Awards: $10,000 and an all-expense paid trip to attend NSTA’s National Conference; two finalists will also receive all-expense-paid trips to the conference.

Deadline: October 15, 2006. Late or faxed applications will not be accepted.

Link: [http://www.nsta.org/192](http://www.nsta.org/192)

July Topic: Amelia Earhart

Born July 24, 1897 (missing as of July 2, 1937), Amelia Earhart endures in the American consciousness as one of the world’s most celebrated aviators. Visit the official Amelia Earhart site at the following URL...

Link: [http://www.ameliaearhart.com/](http://www.ameliaearhart.com/)
Convert analog video sources directly to digital with hardware encoding…

The ADSTech DVDXpressDX2 is a very user friendly hardware/software combination for converting any analog video into digital video. With it, you can transfer video from VHS tapes, digital or analog camcorders directly to DVD or CD. Its real-time hardware conversion produces DVD quality results. It also has options for digitizing movies for your Sony PSP, Apple iPod or Zen Vision!

DVDXpressDX2, which sells for about $60.00, features the capability capture audio and video via the USB port to your Windows computer hard drive or to write directly to CD or DVD. It has “Audio-Lock” technology for perfect lip synch. You can capture video directly to popular video formats; DVD (MPEG-2), SVCD, VCD (MPEG-1), MPEG-4 and DivX. You can also capture directly to Sony PSP video and Apple iPod video formats.

The interface features brightness, contrast, saturation, sharpness and hue controls. Use the Included CapWiz application for easy video capture direct to your desired video compression format. The hardware encoding chip inside DVD Xpress creates the highest quality video without putting extra strain on your PC.

I found the hardware and software extremely easy to use. Once you’ve instsled the CapWiz capture wizard (see illustrations below) software, it’s basically a four step process. You tell it whether it’s NTSC or PAL format. Secondly, you identify whether you’ve connected an RCA cable or S-Video cable for the video feed. Third, you tell the program whether you want to record directly to the hard drive or to CD or DVD media. And last, you identify the format you want the file encoded to. Then it’s just a matter of watching the preview screen and clicking on the record button. Since everything is encoded in the hardware, there is no rendering time involved. Once you click the stop button, your file is ready to go.

Link: http://www.adstech.com/
NetStumbler v0.4

Setting up a wireless network isn’t easy--and the hardest part is making sure that you have it working properly. Netstumbler helps you optimize your wireless network by showing you whether it has any holes. With NetStumbler, you can locate WLAN areas with poor coverage and detect other networks that may be interfering with your network. You can also detect unauthorized access points.

NetStumbler is donateware; that means you can use the software for free, but you can show your appreciation and support future versions by donating at the software author’s site. The author refers to it tongue-in-cheek as “beggarware.” (Source - PCWorld.com)

Link: http://www.pcworld.com/downloads/file_description/0,fid,23439,findid,51212,00.asp

GEM - Gateway to 21st Century Skills

GEM is a 700 member Consortium effort to provide educators with quick and easy access to thousands of educational resources found on various federal, state, university, non-profit, and commercial Internet sites. Sponsored, in part, by NEA (National Education Association), you’ll find a wealth of educational materials organized by topic, grade level, and keyword.

Just a quick note - In order to upgrade servers and to provide new enhancements to GEM services, the Gateway to 21st Century Skills will be unavailable from Thursday, June 29 through Friday, June 30.

Link: http://thegateway.org

StraightForward Media’s Teacher Scholarships.

StraightForward offers four scholarships per year exclusively to students who will become teachers. They $500 scholarships are offered four times a year. You can apply online now -- check the deadline schedule below for the current application dates.

If today’s date is between The current deadline is:

Oct. 15 - Jan. 14 January 14
Jan. 15 - April 14 April 14
April 15 - July 14 July 14
July 15 - Oct. 14 October 1

Link: http://www.straightforwardmedia.com/education/

An open invitation to share with other UCET members…

The UCET newsletter is an open resource to teachers, administrators, and technology professionals in education. It’s UCET’s goal to create a monthly newsletter that meets your needs. This can be successfully achieved through active participation by UCET members. The UCET presidency and board invite you to submit articles, fantastic internet resources, tutorials, etc., to the newsletter editor for possible inclusion in future newsletters. Hey, folks, there is a lot of talent and knowledge accumulated between all the UCET members. Please submit your entries to Nathan Smith, UCET Newsletter Editor. He can be reached by email at Nathan.Smith@USU.edu

Also, a reminder that the UCET Board will be meeting in July - if you have any suggestions for next year’s UCET conference, now is the time to make your voice heard. Have a great summer!
Partnership to Promote National Internet Safety Campaign

San Francisco, CA – July 13, 2006 – Common Sense Media, an organization dedicated to improving the media and entertainment lives of kids and families, the PTA, and Fox Interactive Media (FIM) announced a major national Internet safety campaign designed to reach millions of parents. The goal of the campaign, which includes an Internet Survival Guide for Parents independently created and distributed by Common Sense Media (with an accompanying website at www.commonsense.com), as well as online advertisements running across the Fox Interactive Media network, is to help parents keep their kids Internet safe and smart.

“As part of our commitment to Internet safety, we have a responsibility to help parents and their teens to work together to engage in safe online practices,” said Hemanshu Nigam, Chief Security Officer at MySpace.com and FIM. “Kiefer Sutherland carries our Internet safety message to families in a compelling way, and the more informed parents are, the safer families will be online. We’re grateful to Kiefer and to Common Sense Media and the National PTA for their help on this important project.”

In a recent national poll released by Common Sense Media, 85% of parents considered the Internet the most risky form of media for their kids. At the same time, the poll showed that 77% of parents surveyed think the Internet is an important tool to help their kids learn and 91% said they thought the Internet helps their kids explore subjects they are passionate about.

“In order to protect children from running into trouble on the Internet, parents need to know where their kids live online and need simple, practical information to help keep their kids safe,” said James P. Steyer, CEO of Common Sense Media. “We want to empower parents with Internet safety tools so that they can confidently embrace the online world their kids study and play in.”

The campaign includes:

• National television PSA campaign with the PTA featuring “24” star Kiefer Sutherland

• National online banner advertising campaign across Fox Interactive Media’s network of Internet properties

• A website dedicated to Internet safety and resources located at commonsense.com, featuring:
  • A downloadable guidebook to Internet safety for parents
  • downloadable Internet safety tip card for parents and teens
  • Links to the commonsense.com site from PTA.org and Fox Interactive Media’s network of sites

Link: http://www.commonsense.com/

(Background photo courtesy of Stock.Xchng)
Kids In Need Teacher Grants Help Teachers Realize Their Dreams

Kids In Need Teacher Grants provide K-12 educators with funding to provide innovative learning opportunities for their students. The SHOPA Kids In Need Foundation helps to engage students in the learning process by supporting our most creative and important educational resource — our nation’s teachers.

**How are the Teacher Grants funded?**

The Teacher Grants are funded by the retail and education credit union sponsors.

**How do teachers get an application?**

Retail sponsors and designated education credit unions make the grant applications available at their outlets during the back-to-school season. Applications from the sponsors are also available on their Web site. Applications for 2006-2007 will be available mid-July of 2006.

**How many Teacher Grants are awarded?**

For the 2005-2006 academic year, the SHOPA Kids In Need Foundation awarded more than $103,000 to 240 teachers from a field of more than 1,800 grant applications. Teacher Grant awards range from $100 to $500 each and are used to finance creative classroom projects. Typically, 200-300 grants are awarded each year.

**What is the selection criteria?**

The Teacher Grant applications go through a four-tiered assessment process. The applications are judged according to the rubric which emphasizes innovativeness and merit, clarity of objectives, replication feasibility, suitability of evaluation methods, and cost effectiveness. Members of the Foundation’s Teacher Grants Committee complete the final round of evaluation of the grant applications in late October. See details of the requirements on their website.

**Who is eligible?**

All certified K-12 teachers in the U.S. are eligible.

**What type of projects are funded?**

At the end of the academic year, teachers report on the outcome of the funded projects. Some examples of winning projects include:

- Twilight Zone “Eye of the Beholder” - This project consisted of remaking a Twilight Zone episode in its entirety from the original script. Students cast the drama, built the sets, designed and rigged the lighting and sound, applied the make-up, ran the cameras, edited the video tape, designed the titles and credits, and put on an event for the premiere showing of the completed video.

- Charged Cars - Math in Motion - Students designed and built a battery-operated vehicle with a wheelbase of 40 cm designed to be mathematically accurate to travel and stop at any designated point between 1 and 10 meters.

Winning projects are put in the form of lesson plans and are published as a Best Practices Guide. The Guide is distributed to other teachers through the Kids In Need Resource Centers and from the Foundation office.

Teacher Inspiration Award: Recognizing a journalism teacher who through excellent instruction inspired others to pursue scholastic journalism teaching and/or advising...

**Purpose**

This award recognizes a teacher who, through the teaching and/or advising of journalism, inspired others to pursue journalism teaching as a career and who has made a positive difference in the teaching community.

**Entry Criteria:** A narrative of at least 500 words should explain how the teacher being nominated inspired the person making the nomination. The nomination must be from a teacher who is a member of JEA and who advises a publication, teaches journalism classes or is retired after having spent at least 10 years in scholastic journalism. Retired journalism teachers and advisers, along with those currently teaching or advising may be nominated. Up to three additional letters of support maybe included. Nominations of unsuccessful candidates are retained for a maximum of two additional years and the original nominator is invited to send updated information by the appropriate deadline.

**Award Nominations:** Retired journalism teachers and advisers, along with those currently teaching or advising, may be nominated. The nomination packet should include the essay on letter-size paper and the completed entry form with the following information:

- The nominated teacher/adviser’s name, address, phone and e-mail address.
- The nominator’s name, school, address, phone and e-mail address.

**Award Recognition:** This is a juried award. Entries are evaluated by a national panel of journalism educators consisting of members of the JEA Awards Committee or individual designated by the JEA awards committee chair. The award program will include one winner with a cash prize of $1,000. Honorable mentions may be given. The winner and honorable mentions, if any, will be recognized at the spring JEA/NSPA National High School Journalism Convention awards luncheon where the winner will be asked to speak. The winner’s travel and hotel will be paid to the spring convention.

**Deadline:** The entry must be postmarked on or before Oct. 1. Details can be found at their website

Link: [http://www.jea.org/awards/teacherinspire.html](http://www.jea.org/awards/teacherinspire.html)

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**Google SketchUp 5.0.297 for Windows and Macintosh**

Google SketchUp (free) is an easy-to-learn 3D modeling program that enables you to explore the world in 3D. With just a few simple tools, you can create 3D models of houses, sheds, decks, home additions, woodworking projects - even space ships. And once you’ve built your models, you can place them in Google Earth, post them to the 3D Warehouse, or print hard copies.

Google SketchUp is free for personal use. No registration is required.

SketchUp is available for Macintosh OSX and Windows.

Link: [http://sketchup.google.com/](http://sketchup.google.com/)
XML Nanny 2.0 - Free Software

XML Nanny is a developer tool that provides an Aqua interface for checking XHTML and XML documents for Well-Formedness and Validity either locally or across the network.

XML Nanny is the perfect tool for the web author who cares! Checking your XHTML document’s validity either locally or remotely is a snap, and XML Nanny’s detailed error messages let you know about those embarrassing validation errors so you can debug them immediately.

XML Nanny cares for your XHTML documents in places the W3C web-based validation service can’t reach... Suppose you are developing a standards-based web site or application on your local web server or behind a firewall. The W3C validator can’t reach your document to validate it. XML Nanny can.

REQUIREMENTS:

Mac OS X 10.4 or later. (Source - MacUpdate.com)

Link: http://www.macupdate.com/info.php/id/19204

SmartBoard Lessons Podcasts

The purpose of this site is to accompany a podcast that focuses on using SMART Boards in the classroom. Each episode features a lesson, a podcast, and user comments. The hosts, Joan Badger and Ben Hazzard, have been recognized as SMART Exemplary Educators, Peer Educators, Tradeshow Teachers, and Conference Presenters on the use of SMARTBoards in the classroom. Joan teaches Grade 6 in Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada. Ben has taught from Grades 4 through 7 in Brampton, Ontario, Canada and then Sarnia, Ontario, Canada.

The goal of this podcast is to share lesson ideas that use technology to engage students in learning with a focus on SMARTBoard Interactive Whiteboards between educators. It will be a maximum of 20 minutes so that teachers can listen on lunch breaks or recesses as they mark papers or on their way to school in the morning via their iPod. We are always looking for other educators who would like to share their lesson ideas with others. Email Ben (ben@mrhazzard.com) or Joan (jbadger@pembinatrails.ca) with your ideas!

Link and source: http://pdtogo.com/smart/

ReelBean for Macintosh OSX - Free Software

ReelBean is a movie converter and player offering many features that are normally only available in expensive pro video applications. As a Universal binary ReelBean runs on new Intel-based Mac computers and PowerPC-based machines.

ReelBean allows you to view and edit videos in most of the common formats, including QuickTime, MPEG4, H.264, AVI and many others.

ReelBean also allows you to export your videos to many video and audio formats, including all those shown in this screenshot of the export drawer.

ReelBean allows you to edit videos, extract sections of audio and video into separate files, and displays detailed video information and properties panels. It can be used to extract the audio from a movie and export it directly into iTunes. ReelBean will also play DVDs in a sleek borderless window.

Individual frames or image sequences from movies can also be saved as image files.

ReelBean’s attractive player window makes it easy to navigate and manipulate a video, whether viewing or editing. Additional panels provide further details about the video, and allow the individual tracks (video, audio, etc) of a movie to be extracted separately.

The innovative scene selection drawer allows the type of fast access to individual scenes and sections of a video that are normally only found built into DVD players.

Link: http://www.js8media.com/reelbean/
**Ohloh - Open Source Projects Indexed and Evaluated**

“A few former Microsoft employees have launched a Web site that evaluates open-source projects. The site, Ohloh, is not a reviews site, but instead a directory of open-source software, its co-founder said.

“We collect from the infrastructure the open-source community uses to develop the software,” Ohloh co-founder and CEO Scott Collison told CNET News.com. “It also serves as an open-source directory. You can find open-source projects and compare them, and gradually find one that’s right for you.” (Source - [http://news.zdnet.com/2100-3513_22-6094497.html](http://news.zdnet.com/2100-3513_22-6094497.html))

The Ohloh site describes itself this way... “Explore Open Source - We’re mapping the open source world by collecting objective information on open source software. Search our site for the most current software metrics and project information on open source software projects.”

The service is to provide information about open source projects, including license information and estimates of how much an open-source project could cost.

Link:  [http://www.ohloh.net/](http://www.ohloh.net/)

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**Training on How to Secure Your Windows PC**

We hear a lot about computer security these days - usually negative. Computers getting hacked, identity theft, viruses and worms, keyboard loggers that try to steal your passwords and credit card information. Computers users, of necessity, have had to become informed how to combat these intrusions, or suffer the consequences. If you feel you feel you need a little more background and training, Microsoft has developed some security primers that will help you. These videos and articles are short, succinct, and helpful. The link below will take you to a video entitled...

Video: Security basics - Watch this video to get started learning about how to improve the security of your computer and your personal information online.


Be sure to click on the “Watch more videos about computer security at home” link, which will take you to another page of training videos, which includes the following...

- 3 things you can do to prevent spyware (2:56 minutes)
- What you should know about phishing scams (3:32 minutes)
- Defending against viruses and worms (3:44 minutes)
- Keeping your computer up to date (3:18 minutes)
- Dealing with spam e-mail (3:13 minutes)
- Protecting your privacy and personal information online (3:14 minutes)
- Using online newsgroups (3:26 minutes)
- Teaching your kids about online safety (3:54 minutes)

You should also check out Security at Home homepage:  [http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/default.mspx](http://www.microsoft.com/athome/security/default.mspx)
Awards up to $65,000 to expand family literacy

Grant Title: The Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy
Organization: The Barbara Bush Foundation
Eligibility: Nonprofits
Value: Awards of up to $65,000
Deadline: September 8, 2006

The foundation's grant-making program seeks to develop or expand projects that are designed to support the development of literacy skills for adult primary care givers and their children. In order to be considered eligible for a grant, an organization must meet the following criteria: the organization must have current non-profit or public status and have been in existence for two or more years as of the date of the application; the organization must have maintained fiscal accountability; and the organization must operate an instructional literacy program that has been in existence for at least two years and includes one or more of the following components: literacy for adults, parent education, pre-literacy or literacy instruction for children preK-grade 3, and intergenerational literacy activities (Parent and Child Together time or P.A.C.T. time).

Link: [http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com/nga.html](http://www.barbarabushfoundation.com/nga.html)
(Source: eSchool News - [http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1475](http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1475))

$7,000 for professional development and other studies

Grant Title: The National Education Association Foundation Learning and Leadership Grants
Organization: The National Education Association Foundation
Eligibility: Educators at public K-12 schools or public institutions of higher education
Value: Between $2,000 and $5,000
Deadline: October 15, 2006

Grants support public school teachers, public education support professionals, and/or faculty and staff in public institutions of higher education for one of the following two purposes: grants to individuals fund participation in high-quality professional development experiences, such as summer institutes or action research; and grants to groups fund collegial study, including study groups, action research, lesson study, or mentoring experiences for faculty or staff new to an assignment. All professional development must improve practice, curriculum, and student achievement. Grant funds may be used for fees, travel expenses, books, or other materials that enable applicants to learn subject matter, instructional approaches, and skills. Recipients are expected to exercise professional leadership by sharing their new learning with their colleagues.

(Source: eSchool News - [http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1475](http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/opps.cfm#1475))

Learning History Through Podcasts

More educational websites are turning to podcasting to add another dimension to their offerings. In an eSchool News article, three such sites were described. Please go exploring!

Colonial Williamsburg Podcasts: [http://www.history.org/Media/podcasts.cfm](http://www.history.org/Media/podcasts.cfm)
Smithsonian Podcasts: [http://www.smithsonian.org/podcasts/default.htm](http://www.smithsonian.org/podcasts/default.htm)
Grant Title: Adobe Software Donation

Organization: Adobe Systems Inc.
Eligibility: Schools and nonprofits
Deadline: Ongoing Grant
Value: Software

Adobe Systems Inc. supports K-12 schools and nonprofits by donating up to four packages of its latest software. Eligible organizations have a core mission that focus on at least one of the following: improving K-12 student performance; developing curriculum for K-12 classrooms; developing and providing K-12 teacher training and development; and working to prevent hunger and homelessness. The program is managed by Gifts In Kind International. Requests are reviewed every other month based on the primary services the organization provides. Organizations may only apply once in a 12-month period.

Link: http://www.adobe.com/aboutadobe/philanthropy/software.html

Grant Title: Allstate Foundation Grants

Organization: The Allstate Foundation
Eligibility: Schools
Deadline: Ongoing Grant
Value: Up to $10,000

The Allstate Foundation makes grants to nonprofit organizations, including public K-12 schools, for projects that are related to automobile and highway safety, homes and neighborhoods, and personal safety and security. Under the personal safety and security initiative, programs that raise awareness of poverty, child abuse, drugs, and violence prevention are eligible for consideration. Applicants should offer safeguards against gangs, guns, sexual harassment, and domestic violence. Grants typically range from $5,000 to $10,000. There are no deadlines.

Link: http://www.allstate.com/Community/PageRender.asp?Page=funding.html

eSchool News List of Ongoing Grant Opportunities for Education

The two grants listed above on this page came from this eSchool News webpage. For a long list of over a hundred more ongoing grant opportunities similar to these, please visit the following link...

Link: http://www.eschoolnews.com/erc/funding/ongoing.cfm
August Topic - Bugs

Summer is a great time to start a collection, and nothing seems more abundant than insects. The Bug Club, the junior division of the Amateur Entomologists’ Society based in London, England, provides an easy-to-use interactive tool for determining the order of unknown (or known!) insects. Students click a series of insect characteristics (Does it have wings? How many? Does it have antenna? Long or short?) and are guided through the order-identification process. The Bug Club also offers a section on choosing and keeping pet bugs, and a list of bug related books and links. Additional site features include a newsletter, discussion forum, and membership options. 
(Source: EducationWorld.com)

Link: http://www.projects.ex.ac.uk/bugclub/bugid.html

Texas Cooperative Extension at Texas A&M University provides a wonderful insect and arthropod field guide online.

Link: http://insects.tamu.edu/fieldguide/

The National Wildlife Federation has a marvelously packed website called eNature...

Link: http://www.enature.com/home/

eNature is filled with online field guides for birds, amphibians, mammals, fish, insects, reptiles, trees, wildflowers, and much more. The insect field guide is located at...

Link: http://www.enature.com/fieldguides/intermediate.asp?curGroupID=4

Also, don’t forget a great Utah resource, SURWEB, which contains collections of images, including these...

Insects of Utah
Insects of Utah (Common)
Insects of Utah (Nocturnal)

Link: http://www.surweb.org/

Have a great summer!
This Month’s Topic: Presenting in the Classroom!

Welcome back to school! Chances are, you’re presenting often as you teach your students. Many of you use Microsoft PowerPoint as your tool of choice. This issue is devoted to jazzing up your presentations with multimedia - sound and video. Have you wanted to learn how to do that in PowerPoint? Well, here’s your chance to sit down and learn!

We’ll show you how to insert sound and video into your presentation. You’ll learn how to change how a sound starts, and how to make it repeat if you want. Tired of the icon sitting on your slide? We’ll show you how to hide it. You’ll learn how to play an audio CD while giving your presentation, and how to control the parameters of how it plays.

For video, you’ll learn what kinds of video clips PowerPoint will accept and play. What? It doesn’t play in PowerPoint, but will play in Media Player? We’ll show you how to hyperlink to the movie and make it play in Media Player. We’ll introduce you to various options you can choose for playing a movie in PowerPoint. You’ll learn how to show or hide the movie, and how to make it play full screen.

Finally, have you ever had the experience of having the perfect presentation, and then when trying to show it on a different computer, nothing worked? You’ll learn how to package your presentation to a folder or CD, so your presentation will work on another PC, and so you can distribute it to your audience and have it work on theirs.

As always, we’ll throw in a few teacher treasures, grants, and other opportunities. We hope you enjoy this month’s UCET newsletter - and better yet, find it a handy resource and guide as you prepare your PowerPoint presentations. For the purposes of our articles, we’ll focus on PowerPoint 2003 for Windows. Many of the instructions work on Macs.

For your information, there are some wonderful tutorials Microsoft has put together on all the Office 2003 products. Nobody ever can seem to find them, however. Here’s the link: http://office.microsoft.com/en-gb/training/default.aspx

What Kinds of Multimedia Files Can PowerPoint Handle?

This is a complicated question to answer. It depends on a number of factors, such as what version of Windows you have installed, what version of Windows Media Player, and the video formats (codecs) you’ve installed on your computer. You’ll have the best luck with Windows XP and PowerPoint 2003. In general, though, if your multimedia clips are one of the following types - you should be able to insert them into PowerPoint...

**Sounds:** MP3 or .WAV files work the best. (Macintosh users can also add .AIFF to that list)

**Movies:** .AVI, .MPG or .MPEG, or .WMV movie files work the best. (Macintosh users: If it will play in your QuickTime player, it will probably work in PowerPoint).

Again, these are general guidelines. There are so many variables that come into play here - and that’s what frustrates most PowerPoint users. Since it can vary so much from computer to computer, I generally build my presentation on the computer I’m going to present on - that way I’m certain it will work when I actually present.

You Need to Know!!! - Are Multimedia Files You’ve Inserted Into PowerPoint Embedded in the .PPT file or are They Just Links?

One common service request I get comes from teachers who create wonderful PowerPoint presentations that include movies and sounds. They saved the PowerPoint file to their disc to present on another computer, and found when they got there that the movies and sounds were missing. They thought PowerPoint embedded the inserted multimedia right into the PowerPoint file itself. However, in most cases, this is not so. PowerPoint only makes a link to the multimedia files - so those files must travel along with the PowerPoint file if the whole thing is going to work.

The only exception is a .WAV file. By default, if the sound is a .wav file and 100 kilobytes (KB) or less in size, it’s embedded. By embedded, I mean that it actually becomes a part of your .PPT file. By the way, did you know that you can change this 100-KB limit? In PowerPoint, go to the Tools menu and choose OPTIONS. On the GENERAL tab in the dialog box, you can raise the maximum size of an embedded .WAV file to 50,000-KB. The only thing you’ll need to remember is that these embedded audio files dramatically increase the size of your PowerPoint file.

Again, unless you’ve changed the default, a .wav file that is more than 100 KB and all other types of sound files are linked to your presentation. All inserted movies become linked files as well. They play from a location outside the .ppt file and are not a physical part of it.

So, if you’re going to show the presentation on another computer, you need to make sure your linked sound files have been copied to the same folder as the presentation you will be showing. (Do this copying before you actually insert them into your presentation!) Then when you move between computers to present, you take the entire folder with you!

One wonderful feature of PowerPoint 2003 is the Package for CD (File menu). If you forgot to do the instruction in the previous paragraph, it helps simplify these file path problems by copying all the files to one location (a CD or folder) with your presentation and updating all the links for the media files—definitely the best way to proceed if you’re distributing or moving your presentation from your computer. It also has the added advantage of copying the free PowerPoint player program, so people who don’t own PowerPoint licenses can still watch your presentation!
Working with Sound in PowerPoint 2003

INSERTING AND STARTING THE SOUND: OK, you’re ready to insert a sound. You’ll need to record or collect one first. .WAV files and .MP3 files are the best bet. You can use a free program, Audacity, to record, edit and save audio files. Please refer to the Audacity tutorials in the April 2006 UCET Newsletter for more on this topic.

On one of your PowerPoint slides, choose INSERT -> MOVIES AND SOUNDS -> and select SOUND FROM FILE... Browse to your .WAV or .MP3 file and click OK. A sound icon will be dropped dead center in your PowerPoint slide and you’ll be asked whether you want this sound to play automatically in the presentation, or to have the presentation wait until you actually click the sound icon. Make your choice, then go into slide show mode to try it out.

CHANGING THE SEQUENCE IN WHICH A SOUND WILL PLAY: If you clicked “automatically,” the sound will begin playing at whatever point in the animation sequence you inserted it. For example, let’s say your slide already had bullet points that you’ve animated to fly in one at a time. The sound will play after all the bullet points have been revealed. In the slide editing mode, you can change the sequence by right-clicking on the sound icon and selecting CUSTOM ANIMATION... The custom animation task pane will appear, listing the entire animation sequence. You can change the order by dragging each event up or down in the list.

I often use this drag-to-change-the-sequence feature to have a bullet point appear in the presentation, then use an audio file to talk about that point, have another bullet point appear, talk about that one, etc.

ADDING MULTIPLE SOUNDS: If you insert additional sounds on the same slide, all these icons are dropped one on top of the other, dead center in your screen. By default, the sounds will play in the order that you inserted them. However, if you’ve chosen to click the icons to begin playing their sounds, you’ll need to move them off each other and on to different locations on the screen.

CHANGING THE DURATION OF A SOUND: If you right-click on the sound’s icon and choose CUSTOM ANIMATION..., then double click on the sound in the animation sequence list, you’ll get a dialog box with three tabs: Effect, Timing, and Sound Settings. On the Effect tab, you can choose to start a sound from the beginning, from the last position, and from a time in minutes and seconds from the beginning of an audio file.

This tab also gives you options for stopping a sound: You can have the sound stop when you click the mouse, stop after the current slide, or stop after X number of slides in your show (you fill in the value of X). If you want a sound, such as a piece of music, to play continuously during your slide, or over a number of slides, you need to specify when it should stop. Otherwise, by default, a sound will stop the next time you click or go to the next slide. Remember, for these options to work, you sound will need to be as long as the display of slide(s) you’ve specified.
On the Timing tab, you can set when a sound will start (after previous slide, with the previous slide, or on click). Here’s where you can change your mind if you told it to play automatically or on a click when you first inserted the sound. You can also set the delay, have the sound repeat, or set up something else on the slide to “trigger” the sound. For example, you can have a graphic on the slide be the trigger that, when clicked, would start the sound.

On the Sound Settings tab, you can adjust the volume, hide the sound icon during the slide show, and get other information about the sound such as where it’s located on your hard drive, and how long the sound is. Another shortcut to many of these options is to right-click on the sound icon and choose EDIT SOUND OBJECT.

RECORDING A NARRATION: PowerPoint 2003 has another audio feature in the Slide Show menu, Record Narration... Most who use this feature use it as the last step in creating a PowerPoint presentation. When you select this command, a dialog appears that allows you to set the microphone levels, recording quality, and place where your audio will be stored. Plug in your microphone headset or other input device and set the recording levels. Then click OK. Your slide show will start playing, at the same time recording your narration as you run through your slide show. At the end of your slide show, you can save both the audio narrations and the slide timings (or just the narrations, and discard the timings). If you only wish to record a sound (as opposed to doing the whole narration thing), you can do that in PowerPoint as well. Go to the INSERT menu, MOVIES AND SOUNDS, and select RECORD SOUND.

USING AN AUDIO CD FOR SOUND IN A POWERPOINT PRESENTATION: You may have seen presenters use an audio CD as a sound source in their presentation. You can do that, too. Just be sure to take the CD with you when you go to present - you’ll need it.

To play an audio CD in your presentation, go to the INSERT menu, choose MOVIES AND SOUNDS, and PLAY CD AUDIO TRACK... A dialog will appear that lets you choose the starting audio track (and allows you also to set the time, which defaults to 0 - the beginning of the track), and the ending track and time (which defaults to the end time of that track). With the time settings you can tell PowerPoint to play only a portion of a track (or tracks). You can also choose to loop this region of the audio CD until you stop it with a click (or other stopping point you specify). Remember, the last track’s ending time measures only that track’s length, not the length of the whole CD or the number of tracks you’ve chosen to play.

As with inserting other sounds, the play of an audio CD will stop by default when you click the mouse or move to the next slide.
If you want the CD to play over multiple slides, you must follow the same steps described on the previous page in the “CHANGING THE DURATION OF A SOUND” section.

Note that if you’re using multiple tracks on the CD, you won’t be able to do anything about the silence between the tracks - it’ll still be there. Also, there isn’t any automatic way to time your CD to your slide show. If you want to jump around to different tracks on your CD, just insert PLAY AUDIO TRACK... multiple times and adjust each to play the track you want. If you choose to play them “automatically” they will play in the order that you inserted them.

IT’S TIME TO EXPERIMENT WITH THIS ON YOUR OWN!: To really learn how to use sound in PowerPoint effectively, you must be willing to spend a little time experimenting with it. Microsoft Office Online has a wonderful step by step tutorial that you can try. It will teach you how to do all I’ve described here, plus a little more. At the end of the tutorial you can download a PDF file entitled “QUICK REFERENCE CARD - PLAYING SOUND” that is a two page summary of all the steps and commands for each task you’ve learned to do in the tutorial. Be sure to download and print this out - it will be your “cheat sheet” for using sound in PowerPoint.


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**iSquint - A Free iPod Video Converter for the Mac**

iSquint is an iPod video conversion app for Mac OS X. It’s many times faster than QuickTime Pro, works with almost all popular video formats, and it’s free. It’s also really easy. Just drag in your file, and click Start.

You can also choose “TV” or “iPod” size, set your quality, or even go all-out by playing in the Advanced drawer. On a 1GHz G4, iSquint can convert most video files to iPod-screen-sized videos in realtime.

Features:

- Fast MPEG-4 and H.264 conversion from almost every popular video format, from 3GP to XviD.
- QuickTime Pro and DivX codec not required.
- DivX/XviD AVIs, all forms of MPEG video, and many other formats QuickTime chokes on are supported.
- Batch Processing of multiple files. Save in-place, or to a different folder.
- Automatic aspect ratio detection. Anamorphic MPEG-2 and HDV detected too.
- Quality slider. Leave it as is to trust me, mess with it if you know better, or completely ignore it and play with the...
- Advanced settings drawer. Change every aspect of the conversion process.
- Just a few of the supported formats: .mov .mp4 .avi .dv .mpg .vob .3gp .asf .wmv .flv .m4v

Link:  http://www.isquint.org/
Working with Video Files in PowerPoint 2003

INSERTING A MOVIE: Inserting a movie into PowerPoint 2003 is similar to inserting a sound. PowerPoint seems to like .MPEG (.MPG), .AVI, and .WMV files the best.

While we’re talking about movies and getting them into PowerPoint, let me take a little side trip here. Most Windows XP users are not aware they have a free, yet powerful program for editing video on their hard drive - Windows Movie Maker. If you go to your C: drive -> PROGRAM FILES - MOVIE MAKER folder, you’ll find the application.

Movie Maker allows you to import many types of movies, edit them, and save them as .WMV files. If you have the right hardware, you can also connect your digital camcorder to your computer, and pull video directly into Movie Maker. However, that’s another tutorial for later on.

Returning to PowerPoint - go to the INSERT menu, choose MOVIES AND SOUNDS, and select MOVIE FROM FILE... You’ll browse to your movie file and click OK. The movie will be inserted in the middle of your screen, and you’ll be asked if you wish the movie to play automatically within your slide show, or if you’d prefer to not have it play until you click on it. Make your choice, and go try it out in Slide Show.

RESIZING A MOVIE: Once it’s plopped into the middle of your screen, you can move and/or resize a movie. Click in the center of a movie and drag it to a new position on the screen. Drag on a corner handle to resize the movie. If you make a small movie larger by dragging the handles, the movie becomes more pixelated - like taking a small picture and stretching it bigger. However, you’ll find that even though you lose a little quality, most of today’s video codecs produce a pretty decent image even when enlarged.

Another option for enlarging the movie to fill more of the screen is available to you. If you right-click on the movie, choose EDIT MOVIE OBJECT and you’ll see the dialog at the left. Here you have the choice of looping the movie over and over until it’s stopped (by default, a click or moving to the next slide). You can adjust the volume. You can hide the movie while it’s not playing. And you can make it zoom to full screen when it plays (the choice I use the most). The dialog box also informs you where the movie is on your computer. Remember that movies are not embedded into a PowerPoint file, just linked to. If you plan on using your presentation on another computer, knowing where your movie file is comes in handy.
OTHER MOVIE OPTIONS IN THE CUSTOM ANIMATION TASK PANE: As we learned in working with audio in PowerPoint, you can right-click on the movie and choose CUSTOM ANIMATION..., which will bring up the Custom Animation Task Pane. Double clicking on a movie in the sequence list in the pane will bring up the EFFECTS OPTIONS dialog box, which has three tabs: Effect, Timing, and Movie Settings...

The Effect tab gives you options of sounds and visual effects you can add to a movie. I haven’t found these too useful. The sounds are the same kinds of sounds you can add to bullet points as they fly in - something you don’t really need for a movie. The after animation drop down allows you to choose a color to dim to, hide after animation, or hide on next mouse click.

The timing tab is very useful. Here’s where you can choose to have a movie play automatically after the previous animation sequence, or wait until you click on it. You can set a delay. The best part on this dialog is the Triggers option. If I put a graphic on the slide, I can select it to trigger the movie. For example, you could put a graphic on the screen that says “Play Movie” and use it to trigger the movie, which could then zoom to full screen and play, and once done, hide itself. For trigger options you can add to a movie, click on the movie you want to use in the sequence list of the animation task pane, then click on the CHANGE button, select MOVIE ACTIONS, and choose the one you want. Sweet!

The Movie Settings tab allows you to adjust the volume, hide the movie while it’s not playing, and zoom to full screen. As well, it informs you where the movie physically resides on your hard drive.

HERE’S AN ONLINE TUTORIAL THAT WILL TEACH YOU HOW TO DO ALL THESE THINGS!: Microsoft has developed a great tutorial that goes into even more detail than I have here. Go try it out! When you’re finished be sure to click on the QUICK REFERENCE-PLAYING MOVIES pdf file, and print it out. It will become your “cheat sheet” that lists all the steps to do the tasks we’ve talked about...

What Do I Do When a Movie Won’t Play in PowerPoint, but Will Play In QuickTime or Windows Media Player?

HyperLink to it! What is a HyperLink? It is a link from your slide show to a web site, a file, or another place in your presentation. If you hyperlink to a file, then click on that link while in your PowerPoint presentation, you’ll leave the presentation and the file will open in whatever it’s default program is (movies usually will open by default in Windows Media Player). Then you can play the movie there, and when done, quit the application. Bingo - you’ll be back in your PowerPoint presentation right where you left it.

OK, so how do you do this? Simple... First you type some words or make a graphic in PowerPoint that will become the link. Here I’ve typed, “Play the Movie.” I then select the text and right-clicked on the selected text (or graphic). From the menu, choose HyperLINK. At that point you’ll see the HyperLINK dialog box.

On the left pane you’ll see a choice to HyperLINK to an existing file or web page. If it’s a webpage you wish to link to, just paste its URL in the dialog and click OK. If it’s a movie or other file, as in our example here, you just browse to the file and then click OK.

Now, when you run the slide show, you’ll notice that you can click on the HyperLINK you created, which will then take you out of PowerPoint, load the file in it’s default application, and play the movie. Once you’re done, you quit the application, and then you’re returned to your PowerPoint slide show where you left off.

HyperLINKing is a very powerful part of PowerPoint that allows you to do many things you couldn’t normally do in a PowerPoint presentation.

For example, we have professors here who teach statistics using SPSS. As they’re presenting to the class and need to demonstrate an example of something the students need to learn in SPSS, they hyperlink out to an SPSS file, which loads the file in that application. They’ll run through the spreadsheet portions and data entry, run the statistical analysis, quit, and return to their PowerPoint presentation where they left off.
I Need to Present Elsewhere and Send My Presentation on CD. How Can I Make Sure My PowerPoint Presentation Will Work?

Unfortunately, there are no guarantees when it comes to playing multimedia on other computers using PowerPoint. However, PowerPoint 2003 has a command in the FILE menu, called PACKAGE FOR CD... When you choose this command, you can burn a CD of your presentation, or you can save all the necessary files to a folder by clicking the COPY TO FOLDER button. PowerPoint will gather all your linked multimedia files together, relink to them, and save them all in the location you selected.

One nice feature is that it saves a copy of the PowerPoint player application, too. That way, if you end up on a computer that doesn’t have PowerPoint installed, it’s still going to work. If you create a CD, the command also saves an autorun.ini file that automatically starts your PowerPoint presentation show when the CD is inserted into the computer.

Well, we’ve covered a lot of territory. You need to take time and practice. Be sure to do the online tutorials. You’ll find them quite helpful and thorough. From the quick reference guides there, you’ll find links to other tutorials such as playing a Macromedia Flash Animation in PowerPoint, and adding a Shockwave Flash control to a slide.

I hope you found these tutorials useful! If you’re like me, these features will add a lot of power and pizazz to your presentations!

One more quick thing. If you’ve purchased Office 2003 Professional, you can download another free application from Microsoft called Producer. Produce is like Windows Movie Maker for PowerPoint. You can start with your PowerPoint slides, add audio and video, and save them out in a special package that you really have to go see a demo of to understand how nice it is. Here’s the link...

**Burn - Burning Application for Mac OS X - Free Download**

Burn is a free, yet very powerful CD and DVD burning application. It features the ability to burn five different types of data disks. It will do audio CD and MP3 disks. You can burn four kinds of video disks: VCD, SVCD, DVD and DivX disks. With Burn you can burn three kind of images: Normal disk images, cue/bin images and toc images. You can copy data disks.

I’ve particularly enjoyed Burn’s DVD creation. I can drag any kind of file QuickTime will play into the playlist for creating a DVD, and Burn will quickly create the Audio_TS and Video_TS folders, the VOB files, and everything else necessary to create a DVD that will play on your TV.


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**$10,000 for strong school district programs**

Grant Title: Magna Awards

Organization: American School Board Journal and Sodexho School Services

Eligibility: School district programs developed or supported by the school board

Value: Prizes of $5,000, $2,500, and media coverage

Deadline: **October 2, 2006**

This award recognizes outstanding school district programs that promote increased student achievement and encourage community involvement. Winning programs are those that receive appropriate school board support in their design and implementation and that can be replicated by other districts.


Source: eSchool News
$3,000 for outstanding science education

Grant Title: VSP “Vision of Science” Award
Organization: National Science Teachers Association
Eligibility: K-8 science teachers
Value: $3,000
Deadline: October 15, 2006

This award recognizes one K-8 classroom science teacher who has developed creative, innovative science lessons that develop an understanding of eye health and vision.

Contact: http://www.nsta.org/main/pdfs/awards/VSP.pdf

Source: eSchool News

LearnStar Announces Fall Grant Initiative

LearnStar Inc., a provider of standards-based education technology and developer of the software program SmartTRAX, has announced its “Get on TRAX” fall grant opportunity for K-12 schools to receive SmartTRAX licenses for their students. Three grants of 100 student licenses (one each for an elementary, middle, and high school) will be awarded to schools based on need, enthusiasm, technology integration, innovation, and methodology. Grant submissions must be received by Dec. 11, 2006, and the winners will be announced on Dec. 15.

For full details and application forms, visit http://newsletters.101com.com/c.asp?id=626033&l=4&c=7a88264ab2fd0476

Source: T.H.E. Journal

Shell Science Teaching Award

Sponsor: Shell Oil Company
Eligibility: K–12 classroom science teachers.

This award recognizes one outstanding classroom science teacher who has had a positive impact on his or her students, school, and community through exemplary science teaching.

Awards: $10,000 and an all-expense paid trip to attend NSTA’s National Conference; two finalists will also receive all-expense-paid trips to the conference.

Deadline: October 15, 2006. Late or faxed applications will not be accepted.

Link: http://www.nsta.org/192

Vernier/NSTA Technology Awards

Budgets are tight, and at Vernier we are committed to education. In 2003, we announced the Vernier/NSTA Technology Awards. You can apply for one of seven $3,000 awards.

Link: http://www.vernier.com/grants/
My Very Educated Mother Just Served Us Nothing...

Well, we now have one less planet in our solar system. Of course, questions are raised as well as eyebrows. This would be a great time to discuss the scientific process of categorizing with your classroom. How do scientists categorize things? Do these categories change over time? What other categories may change soon, besides the definition of a planet?

Pluto, once known as the smallest, coldest, and most distant planet from the Sun, Pluto has a dual identity, not to mention being enshrouded in controversy since its discovery in 1930. On August 24, 2006, the International Astronomical Union (IAU) formally downgraded Pluto from an official planet to a dwarf planet. According to the new rules a planet meets three criteria: it must orbit the Sun, it must be big enough for gravity to squash it into a round ball, and it must have cleared other things out of the way in its orbital neighborhood. The latter measure knocks out Pluto and 2003UB313 (Xena), which orbit among the icy wrecks of the Kuiper Belt, and Ceres, which is in the asteroid belt.

(1) A “planet” is a celestial body that (a) is in orbit around the Sun, (b) has sufficient mass for its self-gravity to overcome rigid body forces so that it assumes a hydrostatic equilibrium (nearly round) shape, and (c) has cleared the neighborhood around its orbit.

(2) A “dwarf planet” is a celestial body that (a) is in orbit around the Sun, (b) has sufficient mass for its self-gravity to
overcome rigid body forces so that it assumes a hydrostatic equilibrium (nearly round) shape, (c) has not cleared the neighborhood around its orbit, and (d) is not a satellite.

(3) All other objects except satellites orbiting the Sun shall be referred to collectively as “Small Solar-System Bodies”.

Discovered by American astronomer Clyde Tombaugh in 1930, Pluto takes 248 years to orbit the Sun. Pluto’s most recent close approach to the Sun was in 1989. Between 1979 and 1999, Pluto’s highly elliptical orbit brought it closer to the Sun than Neptune, providing rare opportunities to study this small, cold, distant world and its companion moon, Charon.

Most of what we know about Pluto we have learned since the late 1970s from Earth-based observations, the Infrared Astronomical Satellite (IRAS), and the Hubble Space Telescope. Many of the key questions about Pluto, Charon, and the outer fringes of our solar system await close-up observations by a robotic space flight mission.

Pluto has three known moons, Hydra and Nix, as well as its companion moon, Charon. At about 1,186 km (737 miles), Charon’s diameter is a little more than half of Pluto’s.

The duo’s gravity has locked them into a mutually synchronous orbit, which keeps each one facing the other with the same side. Many moons - including our own - keep the same hemisphere facing their planet. But this is the only case in which the planet always presents the same hemisphere to its moon. If you stood on one and watched the other, it would appear to hover in place, never moving across the sky.

Charon was discovered in 1978, while two additional moons Hydra and Nix, were discovered in 2005. In Greek mythology, Charon was the boatman who carried the souls of the dead to the underworld - a kingdom that in Roman mythology was ruled by the god, Pluto. The U.S. Naval Observatory’s James Christy suggested the name after he found the moon in 1978.

No spacecraft have yet visited Pluto. However, NASA launched a mission called New Horizons that will explore both Pluto and the Kuiper Belt region.

Source: NASA JPL Laboratory

Link: http://solarsystem.jpl.nasa.gov/planets/profile.cfm?Object=Pluto
Link: http://solarsystem.jpl.nasa.gov/planets/profile.cfm?Object=Plu_Charon
Link: http://solarsystem.jpl.nasa.gov/planets/index.cfm
Link: http://seds.lpl.arizona.edu/nineplanets/nineplanets/pluto.html
Link: http://stardate.org/resources/ssguide/pluto.html
Link: http://www.plutoportal.net/
Link: http://seds.lpl.arizona.edu/nineplanets/nineplanets/
Welcome to the October Newsletter!

Time is flying by! It seems like school began just a week or two ago, and yet October has arrived already! Autumn has peaked in many areas of Utah. The photograph below was taken October 1 in a canyon near Cove, Utah. It’s a gorgeous time of year. The corn mazes are in operation here in Cache valley. There is a frosting of snow on the mountains. That must mean that Halloween is just around the corner!

In this issue of the newsletter, we’ll provide you with more wonderful teacher resources, grant opportunities, and technology news that’s important at the moment. We hope you enjoy these resources, and find the newsletter something that you’ll want to keep on file for future reference.

We also encourage you to visit the UCET website - [http://www.ucet.org](http://www.ucet.org) - often, as new information, opportunities, and news are uploaded weekly. We’ve created a new newsletter archive page with links to each of the prior newsletters, as well as their tables of contents. This will allow you to easily search for that resource we connected you with earlier, but you now need.

As always, your feedback is welcome!

Register for UCET 2007 Conference

Just a reminder to mark your calendars for the UCET 2007 conference, March 2 & 3, 2007. The place will be Murray High School. The keynote speaker is Mr. David Warlick, author and a dynamic presenter.

Conference registration links are up on the UCET website for those who wish to register early and save. Pre-register online by February 23rd and pay only $45.00 as a participant or $20.00 as a student. The price of registration after February 23, 2007 will be $10.00 more. Registration fees include UCET membership for the year.

UCET is also looking for some great presentations, and we invite you to consider presenting at the conference. Presentations strands focus around curriculum areas, such as language, math, science, social studies, fine arts, health and physical education. As well, there are strands for special education, ESL and ELL, assessment, and technical (server administration, networking, wireless, firewalls, security, etc.). Again, links to register as a presenter are on the UCET website: [http://www.ucet.org](http://www.ucet.org)
Free Halloween Fonts

Here’s a fun site if you want to develop your own Halloween handouts and need that special spooky font. You can choose from several hundred spooky fonts here, all in TrueType. The font on the top of this page came from this website.

Link: http://www.halloweenfonts.com/

Make Your Own Halloween Craft Projects

From Jacci Howard Bear at About.com: “Find free fonts, clip art, and templates for Halloween crafts! Halloween is a big event on the Web. You can find animated bats, black and orange backgrounds, eerie sound clips, and electronic Halloween greeting cards at every turn. But I’ve tried to assemble for you here some useful materials for celebrating the holiday off the Web — especially fonts, clip art, and templates to create printable Halloween craft projects such as cards and invitations, party decorations, costumes, trick or treat bags, and even coloring pages for kids. This page and the templates pages contain design tips and ideas for Halloween party invitations.”

Link: http://desktoppub.about.com/cs/holidaysfallwinter/a/halloween_all.htm

Learn the History of Halloween from the History Channel!

Each year, on the last night of October, millions of children across the U.S dress-up in costume and take to the streets for a spooky dose of Trick or Treat fun.

But how much do you really know about this haunted holiday? Explore this site to find out the true history! Find out more about the origins of Halloween, check out our spooky recipes, and watch some creepy video clips!

Link: http://www.history.com/
Hackers Target Vulnerable Software

If you thought you could be safe using Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, or Excel? How about the free alternative - OpenOffice? Think again. Hackers have found ways to compromise your computer when using these software packages if you’re also connected to the internet or other network. New vulnerabilities are popping up more frequently as hackers become more sophisticated at finding them. Affected are web browsers, media players, and now, your standard applications.

So, here’s a reminder to check each software application you use and update them if newer versions are available. Make sure you’re updating to the latest operating system patches and security fixes. Installing the updates will help you avoid having your computer compromised, hacked, or rendered unusable. If you’re unsure what to do, be sure to ask your tech help in your school or office.

PC World Tests Popular AntiSpyware Applications

In the October 2006 PC World magazine (pages 54-56), Narasu Rebbapragada reports on how five popular antisyware apps performed when subjected to a battery of twenty adware and spyware applications, nine rootkits, the application’s ability to provide real-time defense against such threats, and how often the misidentified harmless files as being a threat. The results were interesting.

One freeware application that educators have relied on is Spybot Search and Destroy. In this testing, Spybot came in dead last, only identifying two percent of the 837 samples. PC World reports, “The popular Spybot did the worst. One of the first antispyware programs, it was built in the proverbial home basement. It has deep, detailed settings, but these days it is just not competitive with the other options here.”

PC World’s best buy award went to Webroot Spy Sweeper 5.0 Beta, followed by Spyware Doctor 3.8, CounterSpy 2.0 Beta, Lavasoft’s Ad-Aware SE Personal 1.06 (free), and then Spybot.

For more information, please visit the PC World review at...

Link: http://www.pcworld.com/article/id,126890/article.html

Annoyed by e-mail attachment file size limitations? Free: Pando may solve your problem.

ZDNet’s download pick of the week this week: Pando is free software that lets you send and receive files and folders of any size with your existing email address. The Pando software website claims the following...

- Bypasses email attachment limits
- Opens .pando attachments emailed to you
- Accelerates downloads of huge files and folders
- Uses your existing email address
- Drag, drop and send entire folders
- Sends small .pando attachments, never clogs inboxes
- Easy: No web uploads or compression, just send via email!
- 100% Clean. No spyware, no adware.

Link: http://www.pando.com/beta/
Social Atlas Sites - a new way to share information about places

We’re all familiar with Google Maps and other similar tools that allow you to see a street map (and often a bird’s eye photo view) of a place you are looking for. As well, you can get point-by-point driving directions. With the advent of social networking sites such as MySpace.com, mapping has taken a new twist.

Built on conventional mapping services such as Google Maps, social mapping sites have sprung up that allow a person to add digital push-pins that link to personal descriptions of a location. Anyone can peruse this information online, but typically you need to be a registered user to add any content. These sites are free at present.

Can you think of some interesting uses a tool like this could have in the classroom?

To learn more, explore, and get ideas, please visit the sites below...

Link: http://www.wayfaring.com
Link: http://www.platial.com
Link: http://www.43places.com
Link: http://www.plazes.com
Link: http://www.flagr.com

As with all social networking places, you must be careful about content you may run into. You’ll need to evaluate whether these sites may be useful in your particular educational setting. Certainly, the potential is there to be a great educational resource.

MemoryMiner - Digital Storytelling (MAC)

I was introduced to an interesting product the other day that has some great application in education. It’s called MemoryMiner. Basically, it allows you to tie information about your photo collection together in some unique ways. Here’s a more complete description from their website...

“A fantastic complement to the iLife suite, and winner of a Macworld 2006 Best of Show award, MemoryMiner is a digital storytelling application that lets you zero in on the stories depicted in your photos by linking them to each other based on people, places and time.

Using simple drag and drop actions, you specify who is in the picture, where the picture was taken and when. You can then browse through your photo collections using a visual search filter which lets you filter by specific periods in a persons life, where people overlapp, by places, or by time.

MemoryMiner helps you get the most out of every effort you put into creating your libraries. For example, using portions or a full address or city/country, the application downloads maps from the web, and plots the location of a person’s photos on a world map. It uses the intersection of a photo’s date and the birth date of a person to create icons representing people at different stages of their life. It uses the selection markers you make to display your photos as slideshows using the famous “Ken Burns” pan and zoom effect.

Drag and drop audio, video, documents, or URLs from the Media Browser onto your photos and add text annotations to add depth and context to each photo. In this way, you get the very most out of your photos, particularly those rare photos from a generation or two ago.

You can then automatically publish your stories to the web (via .Mac or FTP): MemoryMiner creates a great interactive presentation using HTML and Flash.”

For a demo, visit their website:

Link: http://www.memoryminer.com/
Utah’s NASA Educator Resource Centers just received some new materials that you can use in the classroom! To obtain your copy for classroom use, please contact Nathan Smith, Director of the Utah State University NASA Educator Resource Center - or Dr. Sharon Ohlhorst, Director of the Weber State University NASA Educator Resource Center. Or visit NASA CORE (Central Operation of Resources for Educators). CORE is a worldwide distribution center for NASA’s educational multimedia materials. Educators may purchase existing materials for a minimal charge. Below are some of the new offerings:

**Breaking Barriers: Solving Linear Equations**: In this episode of NASA CONNECT, students learn about supersonic aircraft while investigating the nature of science. They look at how NASA researchers continue to modify their work as powerful machines are built that push hypersonic records to Mach 10 and beyond. NASA engineers and scientists use algebraic equations to help them build models that will fly faster, longer, and higher. By conducting inquiry-based and web activities, students connect NASA research with the mathematics, science, and technology they learn in the classrooms. 30 minutes: grades 6-8.

**The Case of the Deafening Sound**: When the tree house detectives try to help solve a noisy aircraft problem, they find that NASA is an expert in the sound business. Come join the detectives as they learn how sound travels, how human beings hear, and what NASA is doing to quiet the skies. 60 minutes: grades 3-5.

**The Case of the Physical Fitness Challenge**: The tree house detectives are eager to win the Presidential Physical Fitness Award, but one of the detectives is not quite up to the challenge. They decide that it is time for a little research to learn more about being fit. They visit NASA to learn more about muscles, bones, and physical activity and why fitness is the key to space exploration. 60 minutes: grades 3-5.

**The Case of the Mysterious Material**: The tree house detectives are baffled when they find an unusual object right beneath their feet. They initiate the NASA SCI Files™ Crime Scene Investigation Team and enlist the help of NASA to help determine the origins of this foreign object. As they get to the heart of the “matter,” they learn that all materials are different and that technology can be a very useful tool. 60 minutes: grades 3-5.

**The Case of the Energy Crunch**: When the tree house detectives experience an electrical brownout, they energize into action to learn about Earth’s energy budget. The detectives learn that all resources are not created equally and that conservation of nonrenewable and renewable energy is very important. 60 minutes: grades 3-5

All the videos above have been digitized and put online for preview. When asked for a username and password, the username is nasamovies, and the password is aesp.


Also, NASA has released new DVD-Video versions of some of their most popular titles. The DVD-Videos are closed captioned and have descriptive menu structures for those with disabilities. Titles with an * also have a digitized version of the movie available on CD-ROM for replay on a computer. Newly released in this format for classroom use:

- Liftoff to Learning: Microgravity*
- Liftoff to Learning: Mathematics of Space-Rendezvous*
- Liftoff to Learning: Go for EVA*
- Liftoff to Learning: Geography from Space*
- Liftoff to Learning: Tethered Satellite: A Videotape for Physics and Physical Science*
NASA released the 10th Anniversary Edition of Imagine the Universe - a 2 CD-ROM set that contains four astronomy education web sites captured in January of 2006. The set provides information, beautiful images, and learning adventures for all ages and grade levels. Included are:

- **Starchild** - general astronomy for grades K-8
- **Imagine the Universe!** - exotic objects and topics in our universe for grades 7 and up
- **Astronomy Picture of the Day** - beautiful images along with explanations - for all ages
- **Groovie Movie** - multimedia presentation of black holes, pulsars, and more.

Another new CD-ROM NASA has released to educators is **CloudSat - Revealing the Inner Secrets of Clouds**. NASA’s CloudSat is an Earth System Science Pathfinder mission. The CloudSat satellite uses a special cloud-profiling radar to study clouds and precipitation to gain valuable data on global climate variation. The NASA CloudSat Mission CD-ROM provides a detailed overview of the satellite, its mission, personnel, other satellites in the “A-Train,” science and technology behind the mission, launch information, and program partners. The CD-ROM also contains educational activities, artwork, references and a glossary, as well as links to further information. Included are video clips of CloudSat scientists and other mission personnel. Participants describe their careers and answer questions about climate, weather, radar and the mission.

These are some great classroom resources. Please take advantage of these free or inexpensive classroom materials.
$100K for service-oriented students

Grant Title: Prudential Spirit of Community Awards
Eligibility: Students in grades 5-12
Value: 60 awards of $1,000-$6,000
Deadline: October 31, 2006

The Prudential Spirit of Community Awards program recognizes students who have demonstrated exemplary community service. The program was created in 1995 and is sponsored by Prudential Financial in partnership with the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). Over the past 12 years, the program has honored more than 70,000 young volunteers at the local, state, and national levels. Each State Honoree will receive $1,000 and an all-expenses-paid trip to Washington, DC, (May 5-8, 2007) with one parent or guardian. While in Washington DC, 10 National Honorees will be chosen. Each of the 10 National Honorees receives an additional $5,000, a gold medallion, and a crystal trophy for his or her school. Source: eSchool News

Contact: http://www.principals.org/s_nassp/sec.asp?CID=539&DID=48173

$6,000 for citizenship and history education

Grant Title: VFW’s National Citizenship Education Teachers’ Award
Organization: Veterans of Foreign Wars of the United States
Eligibility: Grades K-6, 8, and 9-12 teachers
Value: Three awards of $2,000 each
Deadline: November 1, 2006

The VFW’s National Citizenship Education Teachers’ Award recognizes the nation’s top elementary, junior high and high school teachers who teach citizenship education topics regularly and promote America’s history and traditions. Nearly 1,000 teachers are from every state, the District of Columbia and overseas. Fellow teachers, supervisors or other interested individuals can submit nominations by November 1 to their local Post. Interested applicants can contact their state VFW headquarters to find their local Post. Source: eSchool News

Contact: http://www.vfw.org/index.cfm?fa=cmtly.leveld&did=1832

The Polar Science Station

Polar scientists make observations and collect data to answer questions about the Arctic (the north polar region) and the Antarctic (the south polar region). These regions are unique and isolated. However, the Earth is a global system, so all regions are related. We can learn a lot about physical science, life science, and Earth/space science when we study the polar regions.

This website is a teacher resource that provides online science and numeracy resources and curricular materials for teachers, tutors, learners, and others who are interested in adult literacy and numeracy programs.

Link: http://literacynet.org/polar/

Also visit the Literacy Works site for other adult education resources: http://literacyworks.org/
**EduHound - Indexed Links of Online Teacher Resources**

EduHound Weekly is a work of T.H.E. Journal (Technological Horizons in Education). EduHound Weekly is a FREE educational newsletter and is sent to your inbox each week that links to a companion website. The brief newsletter spotlights a new educational each week, and provides links to excellent educational internet resources pertaining to that topic. You can sign up for the weekly newsletter (as well as other T.H.E. offerings) at...

Link: [http://www.thejournal.com/the/newsletters/thenewsletter/](http://www.thejournal.com/the/newsletters/thenewsletter/)

The companion website with its archives of links is a wonderful resource that you’ll want to bookmark.

Link: [http://www.eduhound.com/](http://www.eduhound.com/)

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**The Scout Project - Another Resource for Educators and Librarians**

Since 1994, the Scout Project has focused on developing better tools and services for finding, filtering, and presenting online information and metadata.

Located on the University of Wisconsin-Madison’s campus, and part of the University’s College of Letters and Sciences, Scout has access to highly educated content specialists and a world-class array of computer science and library resources. Their eclectic staff blends academics and professionals from Library Science and Computer Science, along with graduate and undergraduate students studying the sciences, social sciences and humanities.

Here you’ll find a vast array of searchable “Scout Reports” on almost any topic you wish to find. The reports include a title, link to the reported site, and a brief one paragraph description of the resources you’ll find there.

Link: [http://scout.wisc.edu/](http://scout.wisc.edu/)
eduTopia Goes Digital

A number of educational and technology magazines are now being delivered in electronic format. Edutopia, from the George Lucas Educational Foundation, is one of them. The magazine has been produced in an on-screen, flip-the-page format which can be viewed anytime and anywhere on the Web. This format is easy to read. Clicking on the turn page icon in the corner (see illustration) flips to the next 2-page spread as if you were personally holding the magazine in your hands. This gives you an overview of the articles on the page. Just click anywhere in the spread to zoom in closer so you can read the text. Clicking once more zooms you back out again. Buttons along the top of the window allow you to access tools, search, print, save, and more. You can try it out at the link below.

Link:  http://www.edutopia.org/digital

Teach - a free video documentary from Teachnow.org

In the next ten years, America will need over two million new teachers. Who will they be? TEACH, a free documentary available in streaming and download format, chronicles the determination and commitment of four young teachers as they fight the real fight: educating our children.

Davis Guggenheim’s award-winning documentary reveals the human side of the story: showing what it takes to survive the first year teaching in America’s toughest schools. (35 min.)

The 35 minute film TEACH is a powerful tool for teacher recruitment. It is intended to give high school and college students a realistic look at the teaching profession as they make decisions toward a career. It is also directed at mid-career professionals, ready to make a change and looking for a satisfying, meaningful new position. And TEACH serves as an important reminder to all teachers - why they matter and why they chose to devote their life to teaching.

Link:  http://www.teachnow.org

Architect Studio 3D with Frank Lloyd Wright

The great American architect Frank Lloyd Wright designed hundreds of houses throughout his long and distinguished career. Each home was uniquely fashioned to meet the needs of its owners and the particular qualities of its location. Wright inspired a generation of architects. Are you one of them? On this Web site, you can design a house, walk through it in 3D, and then share it with the world. You can also learn more about architecture, past and present, and explore Frank Lloyd Wright’s life and work.

For grades 7-12

Link:  http://www.architectstudio3d.org
Invitation to submit articles for the UCET Newsletters

UCET is a marvelous community of educators, administrators and technologists who, between them, share such a wealth of information! As the UCET Newsletter and website member of the board, I cordially invite you to share information, tutorials, tech skills, etc. (the kinds of things we share in UCET conferences) with the UCET community.

This October 2006 newsletter marks the beginning of the second year of publication. Since we began the newsletter last year, the website and newsletter have been largely a one-man effort - and I’m afraid I’m going to bore you or not meet your needs. I always have more things to share with you than I have time to publish, but I fear it’s a pretty narrow vision. I’m always impressed at the scope and depth of UCET conference presentations and the wide variety of interests UCET members have. That diversity and range of interests, I feel, makes the UCET conferences successful because it meets the needs of many. I wish to accomplish that with the monthly newsletters and weekly website information updates.

I’d be grateful to have you submit an article for considered inclusion in the newsletter or on the website. Articles should be no more than a page or two, and can be as short as a paragraph (as in the case of shared web resources).

As we begin our second year of newsletters, as always, I’m open to feedback and content! Have a great October!

Sincerely, Nathan Smith (newsletter@ucet.org)

PS. Isn’t this autumn beautiful? I took the photo below last week near Mendon, Utah, in the Wellsville range.
The UCET November Newsletter!

Welcome! This month’s newsletter features a number of interesting articles and opportunities. Clay Glad, from the Granite School District wrote an article on networking basics that will help simplify a complicated technology - and put it in layman’s terms. As well, we’ll link you out to some other tutorials on how networks work, including one from the HowStuffWorks site on building your own home network. You’ll learn about the recently announced John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur grant offering 50 million dollars over the next five years to fund research and innovative projects focused on understanding the impact of the widespread use of digital media on our youth and how they learn. After listening to last year’s UCET keynote speaker, you’ll be interested to learn that the Federation of American Scientists (FAS) issued a report calling on government, educators, and businesses to use video game technology to strengthen U.S. education and workforce training. And there’s more! Read on...

Please be aware that the UCET presidency and board are gearing up now for next year’s conference on March 2-3, 2007. Links are on the website for conference registration, applications to teach a conference session, and for vendors and sponsors. Please register early for any of these options you desire to participate in! Be sure to join us for a great conference!

Link:  http://www.ucet.org
Mac OS X Mail & Safari Tip:

If you run across a web page you want to share with a friend, don’t send her a link to it — send her the page itself. In Safari, just press Command-I and a Mail dialog will appear, asking for the email address of the person you want to send this web page to. Just enter her email address, along with your text message, and click send, and it will send the contents of that page (complete with graphics, formatting, links, etc.) to your friend. She will be able to see that page right within her email application.

You can learn many other OS X tips and secrets at the PRO: OS X Tips archive...

Link: http://www.apple.com/pro/tips/

Super - a Free Video Conversion Program for Windows

From the website: “SUPER ©
Simplified Universal Player Encoder & Renderer. A GUI to ffmpeg, mencoder, mplayer, x264, ffmpeg2theora & the theora/vorbis RealProducer plugin. If you need a simple, yet very efficient tool to convert (encode) or play any Multimedia file, without reading manuals or spending long hours training, then SUPER © is all you need. It is a Multimedia Encoder and a Multimedia Player, easy-to-use with 1 simple click.

SUPER © is totally FREE to download and to use. It plays & converts very fast full length movies to any other format with NO time limitation.

SUPER © does NOT require any additional external codec to be installed, absolutely nothing. Necessary codecs are built in! SUPER can also play and save Internet Media Streams with different protocols ( mms:// rtsp:// http://) SUPER © does for FREE what other encoders CAN’T do for money.

Link: http://www.erightsoft.com/SUPER.html
Networking/Ethernet Basics (Simplified and Demystified!)

By Clay Glad - Granite School District - Network Engineer, Title I

Internet access is now considered universal. My PDA, cell phone, and computers can all access the internet. Heck, they even sell refrigerators with built in screens and internet access. (see http://www.lginternetfamily.co.uk/fridge.asp)

The most common WIRED internet connection used to be the lowly modem. It’s quickly getting replaced with broadband and LAN. Most classrooms now have internet connections. These magic “blue wires” are usually Ethernet, a technology that is far from new. I’m going to give you a simple explanation of how this wiring and communication standard works, which should give you the knowledge you need to do basic fixes, and perhaps clean up and speed up your networks. (Disclaimer: Please check with the appropriate people in your school/district before making any changes to your network equipment. You may “break” it instead of speed it up if you don’t understand fully what you are doing. And in the interest of simplicity there are some oversimplifications in this article, otherwise it would be way too long and deep unless you are a networking geek like me…)

Networking Basics

Networking really means simply “to communicate”. In the business world we are used to hearing about someone finding a better job or information about another company by “networking”. They do this by communicating with friends in the industry. In the computer world when we say “networking” we simply mean “to communicate”. (Gee, I wish it was all this simple.)

There are three parts to a computer network: the host, the card and the wire. Here’s what each part does:

The Host:

The host is the computer/printer/PDA/phone/fridge/device etc. that’s connected to the network. It has to be smart enough to know how send and receive information via it’s card.

The Card:

The card takes data to be sent and breaks it into consistently sized chunks of data called packets (1415 bytes in size is common), puts a “header” in the front of each packet. The header contains the address of the host the data is going to

Other Network Basics Tutorials on the Internet…

Networking Basics - Key Concepts in Computer Networking: “Begin your study of computer networking basics by exploring these key concepts and essential technologies…”

Link: http://compnetworking.about.com/od/basicnetworkingconcepts/

How Home Networking Works - “Until recently, home networks were primarily the realm of technophiles - most families either didn’t need or couldn’t afford more than one computer. But now, one computer is no longer enough to go around for many families. In a household with multiple computers, a home network often becomes a necessity rather than a technical toy.”

Link: http://www.howstuffworks.com/home-network.htm

How Ethernet Works - “In this article, we will take a very close look at networking, and in particular the Ethernet networking standard, so you can understand the actual mechanics of how all of these computers connect to one another.”

Link: http://computer.howstuffworks.com/ethernet.htm

Networks: Tying It All Together - “Many businesses became aware of networks when they bought an expensive laser printer and wanted all the PCs to print to it, or when more than one person needed to work in an accounting program at the same time. More recently have come modem sharing, Internet access gateways, email, fax from the desktop and many other networks applications. Soon even voice will be carried on data networks. So essential have networks become, even garage operations with two computers have found them necessary.”

Link: http://www.aaxnet.com/design/nets.html
and the host it’s from, just like the address on an envelope that goes through the US Postal Service (only it’s a lot faster). It also puts a “footer” or “end” marker on the packet. Then it and puts the packet on the wire. The card does most of the network work.

The Wire:

The wire is all the stuff between cards, it can be simply a piece of wire in the simplest networks, or if two hosts are on separate sides of the world “the wire” could be the entire internet. Most of this discussion will be about “the wire”.

The biggest problem in networking we have to overcome is that one wire can only carry one signal at a time, so to connect more than two computers adds a lot of complexity to the system to ensure that the information gets on the wire by itself so that it could be read at the other end. Many expensive and complex methods were developed where computers “took turns” talking (Token Ring, FIDI etc.) Just keeping track of whose turn it was to use the wire was a lot of work, and it got more complex and expensive. But there was a simpler way.

Ethernet Basics

When networking was new, and I was just out of High School. (Yes, I’m a child of the mid ‘60’s) A small Utah company, Novell, worked up a new and highly successful networking standard. It was less expensive and simpler than what others were doing. The cost savings, and the fact it worked well with the industry leading Novell servers, sold it to the world. Most networking today is based on it. Even our common wireless networking is based on it. The idea was surprisingly simple. One of the biggest issues with networking is controlling the data “on the wire”, if two computers talk at the same time on the same wire, nobody can understand it. Instead of having a complex system to keep track of whose turn it was to talk, they designed a system called CSMA/CD (Carrier Sense Multiple Access with Collision Detection.) It works like this: when a device on a network needs to talk, it listens first to see if anyone else is talking, if nobody is - it begins to send data. If someone else talks at the same time it then stops, waits a random amount of time (hoping the other guy waits a different random amount of time) and starts the process again, listening then re-sending the same data, and hoping not to run into someone else’s data again. When two talk at the same time we call it a “collision,” and the hosts simply discard this “collided” info and wait for the data to be resent. Thus ethernet was born.
Infant Ethernet

The original Ethernet setups used co-ax cable between hosts. The part of the co-ax cable that is really used is the wire in the center, the rest of the cable is there to protect the signal on that middle wire. Because there is really only one wire, only one computer can “talk” at a time on a co-ax network. But with CSMA/CD networks worked fine with up to 50-70 hosts on the wire.

Once you got more round 50-70 computers on a network collisions abound. As much as 50% of the packets on the network are collisions and need to be re-transmitted. And putting over 100 computers on a network would drag ‘ol Ethernet to it’s knees.

Toddler aged Ethernet

This co-ax model was limited in several ways; the total length of the co-ax cable that went past all the hosts could only be around 600 feet, and re-configuring the stuff to add a computer was a pain. Imagine re-running the wire between two computers to add a third in a different room… It had to be one continuous wire from end to end, one break in the wire and the whole network was down.

A more flexible, but slightly more expensive way was devised; UTP Ethernet (Unshielded Twisted Pair.) Using a

Fanton also announced –

- Beginning in 2007, MacArthur will dedicate $2 million annually for competitive research, writing and demonstration projects.
- [www.digitallearning.macfound.org](http://www.digitallearning.macfound.org), a new hub for information on digital media and learning, where people can learn more about the field and this initiative, share opinions and interact with guest bloggers.
- In 2007, MacArthur will publish six books, online and in print, representing leading research and thinking on a range of digital media and learning topics. Topics will include credibility, innovative uses and unexpected outcomes, civic engagement, the ecology of games, race and ethnicity, and identity and digital media. Online public conversations, which have already begun, will help shape the content of these books.
- The first in an occasional series of papers on digital learning topics, authored by MIT Professor Henry Jenkins, describes a participatory culture for young people and addresses the potential benefits and educational implications.

MacArthur has already funded some exploratory grants in the field of digital media and learning:

- Researchers at the University of California-Berkeley and the University of Southern California are engaged in a large-scale ethnography of young people that will provide a broad portrait of the digital generation: technology’s influence on their social networks and peer groups, their family life, how they play, and how they look for information. It will be one of the most significant attempts yet made to explore the influence of digital media on youth.
- The Academic Advanced Distributed Learning Co-Laboratory at The University of Wisconsin-Madison is developing “Game Designer,” a software application for young people. As students use it to create games, they learn about ethical judgment, aesthetic design, systemic thinking, and collaborative problem solving.
- Professor Jenkins is engaged in further research on media literacy, exploring ways to teach it in the classroom and through after-school activities. The aim of the MIT project is to help young people learn how to filter, judge, synthesize, and use information
different kind of cable, which has matched pairs of wires twisted around each other inside the cable could work. One pair of wires to transmit, and one to receive data.

And instead of having it go from computer to computer like co-ax, we use a device called a “hub” to connect it all. The hub was the key to this improvement. It simply took any packets coming in on any wire and simultaneously sent the packet out on all ports. No intelligence there in a hub, keep it simple, keep it cheap. Make it work.

With hubs and UTP cable you could go 300’ between devices, a Host could have 300’ of cable between it and the hub, and the host it’s talking to could be 300’ away from the hub at the other end. And you could connect hub to hub with 300’ between hubs. However for technical reasons, packets going through more than three hubs got corrupted so we have to be careful in hooking hub to hub so that the network always works.

CSMA/CD kept costs down, but the number of collisions were about the same on an ethernet network using UTP. Even though there were separate physical wires to send and receive, it still acted like one wire and collisions continued. But now you could see them, good hubs have a collision light, telling you when there is a collision on the network. And at 50-70 computers ½ of the packets were collisions waiting to be re-sent.

UTP and hubs allowed us to more easily add a computer to the network, just get the wire from the added computer to the hub. Design the network with a central hub that all others connect to, and don’t allow any daisy chaining of hubs beyond that, keep the number of computers below 70 on the network and it works well.

**Adolescent Ethernet**

The limitations of only having packets pass through 3 hubs between hosts, and keeping less than 70 hosts on a network became very limiting. And Ethernet at 10 Mb/sec of data was no longer fast enough. Because of it’s simplicity and low cost, Ethernet was now everywhere. So computer available on the Internet and from other sources. An additional grant to Professor Howard Gardner at Harvard’s Graduate School of Education supports research on young people’s ethical use of digital media.

- MacArthur is also funding efforts to engage young people directly in this initiative. Global Kids, a nonprofit youth development organization, has organized online discussions and run a written essay competition for kids in which they describe their everyday use of digital media. And the University of Chicago is working to expand after-school media literacy programs in Chicago.

- The Illinois Institute of Technology is examining how digital media and learning may change social institutions and developing new designs for schools and libraries.

Watch the webcast: [http://www.visualwebcaster.com/event.asp?id=35992](http://www.visualwebcaster.com/event.asp?id=35992)

engineering buffs went to work to try and improve it.

The first move: make it faster.

The thought that if you make it faster, it’ll work better hit, and 100 Mb Ethernet was born. You’d think that 10 X faster would mean 10 times less collisions, nope… With 100 Mb hubs and 100 Mb cards 5-7 computers could make it so ½ of the packets are collisions. But 50% of 100 Mb/sec is 50 Mb/sec, 5x faster than 10 Mb Ethernet with only 2 computers, and at 20-30 computers there are a lot of collisions. But the “left over” data rate is still 20-30 MB/sec. after you subtract the collisions out, so 100 Mb Ethernet went into use. (I had labs running 100 Mb Ethernet over hubs... icky, but working.) Still with hubs it’s like one wire, everything had to be 100 Mb or it wouldn’t work.

The other way to improve Ethernet, make it smarter…

A way to cut down on collisions was needed to have Ethernet meet the needs of growing networks. 30-50 computer networks that before were considered a big network were now considered small. And this thing called “the internet” began to include “the World Wide Web” and more people wanted their computers connected. So controlling or eliminating collisions was a needed key technology improvement.

The first thought is, “Lets divide the network into sections, keeping the collisions from going from section to section.” A device called an Ethernet Bridge was born. A bridge has two sides and enough intelligence to “learn” the addresses of all the hosts on each side. It only passed packets across it that needed to go to the other side, and did not pass collisions across it. So you could put a bridge in the middle of a collision filled network of 100 hosts and have two “collision” domains of 50 hosts with faster communication with less collisions.

In our Host, Card, Wire model a bridge is part of the wire, so the network cards don’t need to know that they exist. Faster networks with little changes. But they were pricy, because they were “intelligent.” It was cheaper for us to put multiple cards in our servers and keep the count of computers per network card in the server below 70 to keep our networks working and growing. (You should’ve seen some servers with 5-6 network cards in them... messy and overly complicated… but working.)

Ethernet Matures

The concept of a bridge with more than two sides took hold, and bridges with 5, 12, 24, 48 and more ports… no

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Scientists, Developers Tout Video Games in Education

The venerable Federation of American Scientists (FAS), formed by alumni of the Manhattan Project atomic bomb team, issued a report calling on government, educators, and businesses to use video game technology to strengthen U.S. education and workforce training...

Learn more: [http://fas.org/gamesummit/](http://fas.org/gamesummit/)

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Read the 53 page report (PDF format):


View the PowerPoint Presentation (PDF Format):

collisions going through it. We call this a switch, it has a CPU, and enough memory to keep track of a lot of hosts addresses. And it originally cost a LOT more than a hub.

A switch is a “store and forward” device. A host sends a packet “on the wire” the packet arrives at the switch, the switch stores the packet, looks at the address in the header, and if it knows which port the destination host is on, it sends the packet out that port only. If it does not know where the host is it sends it out on all ports, and watches for the reply to know where that host is next time.

Switches vastly cut down on collisions, since each port on a switch is like the side of a bridge, no collisions get from one side or port to another. And since the packet is “re-generated” by the switch the “three hub” rule is gone, in theory you can daisy chain switches to your hearts content. And it was even better if a host was plugged directly to a switch. Because the switch has some intelligence, the host could actually talk and listen at the same time. Full Duplex was born. (Half duplex is like talking on a CB raido, you canø’t talk and listen at the same time, Full Duplex is like talking on the telephone, you can listen and talk at the same time.)

And since each port is a separate wire, multiple speeds can come out of the same switch, Port 1 can be a 100 Mb device, and Port 2 can be a 10 MB device, and they can still talk to each other.

As switches have become more common, they now cost very close to the price of hubs. If you replace all your hubs with switches you completely eliminate collisions, 100 Mb switched Ethernet, with no hubs means that every device can talk 100 Mb and listen at 100 Mb with no collisions. It’s much, much faster.

So what does a switch look like? The same as a hub, but is says “switch” on it, and it works much better.

**Mature Ethernet**

So if you put into “the wire” enough logic to eliminate the possibility of collisions (switches), you can dump CSMA/CD. The card no longer needs to worry about collisions, they no longer exist. This is what was needed for the next speed bump. Gigabit Ethernet, first over fiber optic cable, then over copper cable. But changes had to happen to go this fast on UTP copper cable; where 10 and 100 Mb Ethernet on copper UTP cable uses only two pairs of cable, (one to transmit, and one to receive) 1000 Mb/sec Ethernet uses every wire individually in that cable to send and receive data, but because of switches, on quality cable it can work just as well as 100 Mb Ethernet.
And to make things really fly, we now have 10,000 Mb/sec Ethernet over fiber optic cable. They are working on 1,000,000 Mb/sec Ethernet over fiber and 10,000 Mb/sec over copper. At these speeds the entire contents of the Library of Congress could be sent across the network in under a minute… You’d need a very high end server to push out data at these speeds, and few hard drives can even read and write at over 200 Mb/sec. So for all intents and purposes Gigabit Ethernet is all you will most likely need.

**Lessons learned/What you can do**

OK, did you understand all of that? Here’s what you can do with this knowledge:

Eliminate collisions by replacing hubs with switches. Even at a pokey 10 Mb/sec, this can increase your network speed.

First be sure the “inside” of your network is not running on hubs, (by the “middle” I mean those big devices that everything plugs into. They’re usually kept in closets.) These switches are expensive, but well worth replacing if you still have hubs there.

Next, even if you have little or no control over what is “inside the wall” get those little hubs out of your rooms, put little switches in their place. $20 or less can buy a little 8-12 port switch to put in a room in place of that old hub and make your classroom network noticeably faster, even if there is a hub inside the wall.

Clay Glad is a Novell Certified Network Engineer with over 10 years experience working with educational technology in Granite School District. UCET thanks Clay for this informative article and looks forward to others submitted by him, and by you - UCET member! Please submit articles to the UCET Newsletter Editor - Nathan Smith - newsletter@ucet.org
How Stuff Works...

HowStuffWorks is a leading source of credible, unbiased, and easy-to-understand explanations of how the world actually works. Founded by North Carolina State University Professor Marshall Brain in 1998, the site has since grown to be an award-winning online resource for millions of people of all ages.

From car engines to search engines, from cell phones to stem cells, and thousands of subjects in between, HowStuffWorks has it covered. No topic is too big or too small for our expert editorial staff to unmask...or for you to understand. In addition to comprehensive articles, our helpful graphics and informative videos walk you through every topic clearly, simply and objectively.

By offering you consumer opinions and exclusive access to independent expert ratings and reviews from the trusted editors at Consumer Guide® and Mobil Travel Guide®, HowStuffWorks can provide you all of the information you need before you make important buying decisions in just a few clicks.

Link: http://www.howstuffworks.com/
ScienceDaily - Your Source for the Latest Research News

ScienceDaily is one of the Internet’s leading online magazines and Web portals devoted to science, technology, and medicine. The free, advertising-supported service brings you breaking news about the latest discoveries and hottest research projects in everything from astrophysics to zoology. For three years in a row, ScienceDaily has been chosen by the editors of Popular Science magazine as one of the “Top 50 Web Sites.”

ScienceDaily is unique in that the magazine’s articles are selected from news releases submitted by leading universities and other research organizations around the world. Each news release is posted in its original form, with a link to the organization’s home page, to aid journalists and others interested in finding up-to-date and relevant background information for a particular story. In this way, ScienceDaily takes what has been compared to the “C-SPAN” approach – delivering science news in its original, unedited format directly from the source (in this case, the news bureaus and public affairs offices of major universities and research institutions).

In addition, ScienceDaily offers links to major science media and other sources of science news on the Internet, as well as a collection of thousands of interesting science-related sites (courtesy of the open-source Open Directory Project) aimed at helping web surfers in their online explorations. Readers can also browse through our online encyclopedia (courtesy of the open-source Wikipedia project) to find in-depth science, health, environment, and technology articles on various topics. And readers can subscribe to free weekly e-mail bulletins that summarize the top science news stories of the past week.

Link:  http://www.sciencedaily.com/
Thanksgiving Resources...

November brings the Thanksgiving holidays, and a time to express our gratitude and appreciation for the blessings we enjoy. Would you be interested in learning how to say “thank you” in another language? This site will teach you how to say it in 465 different languages!

Link: [http://www.elite.net/~runner/jennifers/thankyou.htm](http://www.elite.net/~runner/jennifers/thankyou.htm)

President Abraham Lincoln gave a Thanksgiving proclamation:

Link: [http://www.wildwestweb.net/thanks/thanks.html](http://www.wildwestweb.net/thanks/thanks.html)

Have you ever wondered what life was like 375 years ago in America? What did the men, women, and children first see and experience when they landed at Plymouth Rock in 1620? Have your students try this webquest to find out...

Link: [http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/activity/plymouth/index.html](http://score.rims.k12.ca.us/activity/plymouth/index.html)

At this site you can join the Library of Congress to learn more about “Thanksgiving in American Memory”

Link: [http://learning.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/features/thanks/thanks.html](http://learning.loc.gov/ammem/ndlpedu/features/thanks/thanks.html)

ABCTeach has a directory of Thanksgiving resources just for teachers...


Here are some children’s games and activities from Billy Bear’s Playground...


Thanksgiving Day at Alphabet Soup’s site...

Link: [http://www.alphabet-soup.net/hol/thanksgiving.html](http://www.alphabet-soup.net/hol/thanksgiving.html)

How about some Thanksgiving story starters to get those kids writing?

Link: [http://abcteach.com/Thanksgiving/storytarters.htm](http://abcteach.com/Thanksgiving/storytarters.htm)

At Plymouth Plantation, students can experience what life was like during the Pilgrim’s time period...

Link: [http://www.plimoth.org/](http://www.plimoth.org/)

Learn about the history of the Mayflower at Caleb Johnson’s Mayflower History site...

Link: [http://www.mayflowerhistory.com/](http://www.mayflowerhistory.com/)

There are Thanksgiving recipes, history, and more at 20/20’s page...


Thanksgiving traditions and history page...

Link: [http://wilstar.com/holidays/thanksgv.htm](http://wilstar.com/holidays/thanksgv.htm)

And last, Wikipedia’s entry on Thanksgiving...


Happy Thanksgiving to you all!
Full Speed Ahead to UCET 2007 Conference!

Plans and preparations are well under way for the 2007 UCET conference, to be held at Murray High School, 5440 South State Street, Murray, UT 84107. The dates are March 2-3, 2007. Mr. David Warlick is the keynote speaker (http://davidwarlick.com). David Warlick, a 30 year educator, has been a classroom teacher, district administrator, and staff consultant with the North Carolina State Department of Public Instruction. For the past ten years, Mr. Warlick has operated The Landmark Project, a consulting, and innovations firm in Raleigh, North Carolina. His web site, Landmarks for Schools, serves more than ten-million visits a month with some of the most popular teacher tools available on the Net. David is also the author of three books on instructional technology and 21st century literacy, and has spoken to audiences throughout the U.S., Europe, Asia, and South America. Please mark your calendars and be sure to register early online at www.ucet.org and save!

Please consider presenting at UCET (see the “UCET Call for Presentations” on the next page)! Registration is easy - just follow the “Presenter Submission/Registration Form” link on the UCET home page, and register online. The presenter (and one co-presenter - if two or more are presenting a session) will receive complimentary registration to the conference if your presentation proposal is accepted.

It’s December! We hope you enjoy this holiday edition of the newsletter, packed with great technology resources, grants, and tips! The UCET Executive Committee and Board wish you a safe and joyous holiday season!
UCET CALL FOR PRESENTATIONS

We invite you to present a session at the next UCET conference. educate*change*empower@ucet.org is our conference theme. We are now accepting presentation proposals for our spring conference. Presenting at UCET is an excellent opportunity for you to share your exceptional work in the classroom and with technology. UCET needs people like you!

In preparation for your proposal, please consider the following:

- Preference will be given to topics that match the conference theme and fit into one of the strands (see below).
- Presentations must be submitted by January 12, 2007.
- No late submissions will be accepted.
- Presentation proposals must be completed online.
- Please contact, presenters@ucet.org, with any questions.
- Free registration for presenter and co-presenter.

UCET 2007 Strands - What follows are the conference strands (in bold) and just a few idea starters to give you an idea of topics that could be presented in that strand - however, you certainly aren’t limited to just these suggestions. These are just ideas - the strands are very broad and educationally all-encompassing.

**Language Arts:** Online resources such as Starfall.com for beginning readers and ESL, online interactive resources such as MarcoPolo’s Read-Write-Think, teaching writing through Podcasting-Movie Making-Blogging-Digital Cameras (multimedia), using Inspiration for graphic organizers and writing preparation, and/or Pioneer Library for Big 6 research skills.

**Mathematics:** Online Virtual Manipulatives and other online resources such as USU’s Matti’s website, spreadsheets or InspireData for analyzing data, SketchUp for Geometry, effective use of calculators, and/or the teaching mathematics through Podcasting-Movie Making-Blogging-Digital Cameras-PowerPoint (multimedia).

**Science:** Using probes/microscopes for science experiments, student use of National Science Digital Library or other online science resources, using online experts, teaching science through Podcasting-Movie Making-Blogging-Digital Cameras-PowerPoint (multimedia), and/or using robotics and student inventions.

**Social Studies:** Google Earth and SketchUp, online resources such as Culture Grams-CIA world fact book-Library of Congress, Expeditions from National Geographic, NationalAtlas.gov, original source documents such as the American Memory Project-National Archives-American Rhetoric, Virtual Museums, teaching social studies through Podcasting-Movie Making-Blogging-Digital Cameras-PowerPoint (multimedia), and GPS/GIS.

**Fine Arts:** Online resources such as ArtsEdge from MarcoPolo for drama, dance, visual arts and music, online virtual museums, music compositions using Finale Notepad or Garageband, digital graphic tools such as Photoshop-Fireworks-Picassa, using online music and video resources, teaching fine arts through Podcasting-Movie Making-Blogging-Digital Cameras-PowerPoint (multimedia).

**Health and PE:** Electronic heart monitoring of student health with PDA’s, pedometers, Nike-nano and calculator, online resources such as PECentral.com, food and nutrition websites, and/or teaching health/PE through Podcasting-Movie Making-Blogging-Digital Cameras-PowerPoint (multimedia).

**Special Education/ESL/ELL:** Adaptive resources, using disability features/universal access features in operating systems, SOLO from Don Johnston, audio enhancements in classrooms, and/or assessments through Podcasting-Movie Making-Blogging-Digital Cameras-PowerPoint (multimedia).

**Assessment:** UTIPS, Dibels, electronic portfolios for students and teachers, and/or assessments through Podcasting-Movie Making-Blogging-Digital Cameras-PowerPoint (multimedia).

**Technical:** Security concerns, networking, wireless, firewalls, lab management software, filtering and/or servers-routers-hubs.

Again, if you have an idea for a conference presentation, please submit a proposal. We sincerely thank you!
Grant Opportunity: Information Technology Experiences for Students and Teachers (ITEST)

**Type:** Federal

**Agency:** National Science Foundation

**CFDA Number:** 47.076

**Eligibility:**

Proposals may only be submitted by the following:

Only U.S. organizations located in the U.S. are eligible to apply; see the Grant Proposal Guide for further information. All organizations with an educational mission are eligible.

Proposals targeting minorities, persons with disabilities and women are especially encouraged.

**Purpose:**

Information technologies are integral to both the workplace and everyday activities of most Americans. They are part of how people learn, how they interact with each other and information, and how they represent and understand their world. Attaining a basic understanding of these technologies and mastery of essential technical skills is a requirement for anyone to benefit from innovation in the modern world. The technological growth of the nation depends on a technologically literate citizenry. ITEST is designed to increase the opportunities for students and teachers to learn about, experience, and use information technologies within the context of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), including Information Technology (IT) courses. It is in direct response to the concern about shortages of information technology workers in the United States. Supported projects are intended to provide opportunities for middle and high school children and teachers to build the skills and knowledge needed to advance their study, and to function and to contribute in a technologically rich society. Additionally, exposure to engaging applications of IT is a means to stimulate student interest in the field and an important precursor to the academic preparation needed to pursue IT careers. The ITEST program seeks projects that demonstrate innovative and creative applications of IT in school and non-school contexts and is committed to preparing learners to benefit from and contribute to the growing national cyberinfrastructure.

ITEST has four components: (a) youth-based projects with strong emphases on career and educational pathways (b) comprehensive projects for students and teachers (c) renewals of existing projects (d) and an ITEST Resource Center.

This solicitation complements and is not intended to overlap with the Advanced Technological Education (ATE) program (http://www.nsf.gov/funding/pgm_summ.jsp?pims_id=5464&org=E5464&from=home). Information Technology (IT) is within the scope of the ATE program, so proposals for the development of IT classroom materials for students or teachers, or for professional development of IT teachers in support of technical careers, should be submitted to the ATE program.

**Deadline:** January 05, 2007

**Maximum Award:** $300,000-$1,000,000

**Number Of Awards:** varies

**Period:** Up to five years.


If you haven’t received your copy of the Utah Educators Resource Guide for 2006-2007, you’ll want to download a copy in PDF format. Dr. Laura Hunter, Director of Instructional Services at UEN says, “This guide is for you. Our goal is to help you find the tools and support you need to teach well. Very well. Utah students deserve the best learning opportunities, and we’re here to help you make that happen.”

The guide contains instructions for eMedia, a service that brings videos and related media specifically selected and licensed for Utah’s educators to your desktop. Not just previews, mind you, but the entire videos. More than a thousand of them! With eMedia, your computer becomes your media center.

There are sections describing KUED 7 resources for teachers, professional development opportunities, learning with podcasts and blogs, Pioneer Library, and a Utah Core Curriculum video resource index. Get your online copy today!

Link: [http://www.utahitv.org](http://www.utahitv.org)

The links to the PDF guide are on the right bar of their homepage.

Free Video Conversion Programs for PC (Windows)

Videora Converter is a free video conversion application developed by the creators of Videora. It allows you to convert your regular PC video files (avi, mpeg, etc) into the proper video format that your mobile or fixed video device understands. Each version is tailored specifically to the device in question.

Videora Converter is currently available for the following devices:

**Videora iPod Converter** - A free video converter for the 5th generation iPod’s from Apple.

**Videora TiVo Converter** - A free video converter for the Series 2 TiVo.

**Videora Xbox360 Converter** - A free video converter for the Xbox 360.

**PSP Video 9** - A free video converter for the Sony PlayStation Portable (PSP).

**Videora PMP Converter** - A free video converter for the PMP format playable on v1.5 PSPs.

Some Great Christmas Stories...

What do you remember the most about Christmas? Very likely, you’ll have memories of listening to classic Christmas stories. Stories that teach about kindness, care, and the spirit of giving. On this page, we’ll point you to some online stories that you can share with your classroom or your families...

Two classics, “The Happy Prince” and “Why the Chimes Rang” are available as MP3 files from http://www.kiddierecords.com in the 2005 section. “The Happy Prince” is an Oscar Wilde fairy tale. It is adapted and directed by the great Orson Welles. He also narrates this melancholy story, which features Bing Crosby as the prince and Lurene Tuttle as the swallow. The music is composed by one of the giants of film music, Bernard Herrmann, and is directed by Victor Young, another major musical figure from that era. “Why the Chimes Rang” is based on the Raymond M. Alden time-honored Christmas classic, first published in 1909. It is a beautiful tale that conveys the spirit of giving.

Another wonderful Christmas tale focused on giving is “Stubby Pringle” by Jack Schaefer. This is the story about a young cowhand who gets to take an evening off to go to the dance at the school house in the next valley. He takes a couple of gifts with him, for, as the story says, “this is his night to stomp floorboards till schoolhouse shakes and kick heels up to lanterns above and whirl a willing female till she is dizzy enough to see past patched clothes to the man inside them.” However, as he is traveling through the heavy snowfall on his horse, he hears something strange. Here’s an excerpt from the story... “They slow at the bottom. They stop. They look up the rise of the last low ridge ahead. The roan paws frozen ground and snorts twin plumes of frosty vapor. Stubby reaches around to pull down fleece-lined jacket that has worked a bit up back. He pats rightside saddlebag. He pats leftside saddlebag. He lifts reins to soar up and over last low ridge.

Hold it, Stubby.

What is that? Off to the right.

He listens. He has ears that can catch snitch of mouse chewing on chunk of bacon rind beyond the log wall by his bunk. He hears.

Sound of ax striking wood.

What kind of dong-bonging ding-busted dang-blatted fool would be chopping wood on a night like this and on Christmas Eve and with a dance underway at the schoolhouse in the valley? What kind of chopping is this anyway? Uneven in rhythm, feeble in stroke. Trust Stubby Pringle, who has chopped wood enough for cookstove and fireplace to fill a long freight train, to know how an ax should be handled.
There. That does it. That whopping sound can only mean that the blade has hit at an angle and bounced away without biting. Some dong-bonged ding-busted dang-blatted fool is going to be cutting off some of his own toes.

He pulls the roan around to the right. He is Stubby Pringle, born to tune of bawling bulls and blattering calves, branded at birth, cowman raised and cowman to the marrow, and no true cowman rides on without stopping to check anything strange on range. Roan chomps on bit, annoyed at interruption. It remembers who is in saddle. It sighs and obeys. They move quietly in dark of night past boles of trees jet black against dim greyness of crusted snow on ground. Light shows faintly ahead. Lantern light through a small oiled-paper window.”

Well, you’ll have to read the story to find out what happens. :)  

Link:  http://www.dailyspeculations.com/laurel/stubby_pringle.html

Did you know the real story behind “Rudolph, the Red-Nosed Reindeer?” I didn’t either. It’s an interesting story of itself. You can learn more about it from...

Link:  http://www.snopes.com/holidays/christmas/rudolph.asp
Link:  http://www.walkthroughlife.com/Holidays/christmas/stories/Story15.html
Link:  http://www.worldofchristmas.net/christmas-stories/legend-of-rudolph.html  

Other Holiday Resources for you…

Link:  http://www.christmas-carols.net/ - Looking for the lyrics for classic Christmas carols? Simply click on the title that you’re interested in on this page, and you’ll be taken to a page that shows all of the words to the carol in question. They’ve now added MIDI background music to most of the carols - just so that you can sing along, if you feel the urge.

Link:  http://www.kidsdomain.com/holiday/xmas/music.html - This site links to information and music (both midi files, mp3, and other audio formats) that celebrates Christmas.

Link:  http://www.santas.net/aroundtheworld.htm - Christmas traditions around the world. Explore how people celebrate Christmas - from Africa to Yugoslavia.

Link:  http://www.history.com/minisites/christmas - The History Channel’s minisite - The History of Christmas.

Link:  http://www.history.com/media.do?action=clip&id=history_of_christmas - From the History Channel, this is a five minute video about the History of Christmas.

Link:  http://www.theholidayspot.com/christmas/fonts/ - Free Christmas fonts you can download to your computer.

Link:  http://www.bhg.com/partner/pepperidgefarm/story.jhtml?page=2 - Holiday recipes from Pepperidge Farm

Link:  http://www.lessonplanspage.com/Christmas.htm - Christmas Lesson Plans for Teachers

Link:  http://www.teach-nology.com/teachers/lesson_plans/holidays/christmas/ - Christmas Lesson Plans from Teach-nology

Link:  http://www.esiflow.com/Christmaslessonplans.html - Christmas Lesson Plans for ESL/ELT Teachers
$30,000 for outstanding library media programs

Grant Title: National School Library Media Program of the Year

Organization: Follett Library Resources and the American Association of School Librarians

Eligibility: District and school library media centers whose staff are members of AASL

Value: Three awards of $10,000 each

Deadline: January 2, 2007

This award recognizes exemplary library media programs that are fully integrated into the curriculum. Awards are separated into three categories: large districts, small districts, and single schools.

Contact: [http://www.ala.org/aasl/awards.html](http://www.ala.org/aasl/awards.html)

Questions & Answers on Copyright for the Campus Community

The Software & Information Industry Association, Association of American Publishers, Association of American University Presses, National Association of College Stores, and Copyright Clearance Center have published a new edition of a popular copyright guidebook for colleges and universities. The seventh edition of “Questions & Answers on Copyright for the Campus Community” provides answers to 31 common copyright questions, as well as other information, to help colleges understand how copyright law applies to them. The latest edition provides updated information on the use of electronic course materials and software. In recent years, many faculty members have begun posting copyrighted content on web sites and internal course management systems, where this content can be read, downloaded, and printed by students. The guidebook makes clear that the use of such content is governed by the same legal principles that apply to printed materials. “With more content now available in digital form, it is important to clarify copyright responsibilities in the digital age, and that’s what this guidebook is designed to do,” said Tracey Armstrong, chief operating officer of Copyright Clearance Center.

Link: [http://www.nacs.org/public/copyright/](http://www.nacs.org/public/copyright/)

Ook? Video Ook!

Source: tnarik

Date: Nov 2006

Version: 0.6.2

System Requirements: Windows (all), Firefox 1.5 - 2.0

License: Free

FREE Registration is required

Size: 96KB

Overview: Ook? Video Ook! enables you to download embedded videos from many systems and sites. Features include one-click downloading, DownThemAll! integration, file renaming after video title, and a customizable toolbar button.

Dear Educators:

I am pleased to provide you with a scholarship application for the 2007 Honeywell Educators at Space Academy program at the U.S. Space & Rocket Center in Huntsville, AL. Honeywell and its employees are proud to fund 200 scholarships for middle school (grades 6-8 or equivalent classifications in countries outside the United States) science and math teachers to attend the training program from June 18 to June 25, or June 22 to June 29, 2007.

The Honeywell Educators at Space Academy program provides 40 hours of intensive classroom, laboratory and training time, focusing on space science and space exploration. During the program, you’ll participate in astronaut-style training and simulations, along with activities designed to promote life-long learning in a classroom setting. All lessons and activities are correlated to National Science and Math Standards and are ready to use in the classroom.

The Honeywell scholarships cover the following costs:

- Tuition for the 5-day Space Academy program at U.S. Space Camp in Alabama
- Roundtrip airfare
- Meals and double occupancy accommodations
- Workbooks and program materials for participating teachers

To apply for a Honeywell Hometown Solutions scholarship, please fill out the online application (or download the application in PDF format and return it by Wednesday, January 3, 2007 to:

Scholarship Office  
U.S. Space & Rocket Center  
P.O. Box 070015  
Huntsville, AL 35807-7015  
honeywell@spacecamp.com

(Please do not send as certified or registered mail.)

Scholarship recipients will be notified by email or phone no later than March 1, 2007. Additional information on Space Academy can be found at www.spacecamp.com/spacecamp/educators/. You can find more information on Honeywell Hometown Solutions and our commitment to science and math education at www.honeywell.com/hometownsolutions.

Sincerely,
Michael Holland
Director
Honeywell Hometown Solutions
**Free-Belarc Advisor-Windows Utility**

Whether you’re troubleshooting, shopping for an upgrade, or just want to check what’s underneath the hood, it’s helpful to know what your PC has. Belarc Advisor gives you the scoop on what’s installed on your desktop or notebook. It scans your computer and generates a profile of everything installed on it, from your main circuit board to software. Version, manufacturer, and serial numbers are listed, as well as statistics such as available memory slots and hard drive space.

Note: This version of Belarc Advisor is licensed for personal use only.

Link: [http://www.belarc.com/free_download.html](http://www.belarc.com/free_download.html)

*Source: PC World - December 2006*

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**Getting Rid of a Computer? Destroy data on your hard drive, excluding any possibility of future recovery.**

If you delete a program or format your hard disk, there’s always a chance your data can be recovered. If you want to completely erase data, eliminating any possibility of recovery, consider using this free, DOS-based utility. To use the program, you boot in DOS mode from a floppy disk. The utility then erases your drive’s data. Because the utility bypasses your drive’s logical drive structure organization, it does not matter what operating system you’re running: you can use the utility in Windows 9x, Windows NT, Windows 2000, Windows XP, Linux, or Unix for PC. This program conforms to US Department of Defense’s standards (5220.22-M) for clearing and sanitizing standard sensitive information.

Link: [http://www.killdisk.com/](http://www.killdisk.com/)

Note: although these versions are free, there is also a Professional version that supports several other erasing algorithms and is compliant with the U.S. Department of Defense’s 5220.22-M standard. It costs $29.95

*Source: PC World - December 2006*

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**Apple Computer Releases Boot Camp 1.12 Beta**

Boot Camp is a software solution from Apple Computer that lets you dual-boot your Intel-based Macintosh into Windows or OS-X. Boot Camp 1.1.2 beta contains several updates and is intended for all new and previous Boot Camp beta users.

Boot Camp 1.1.2 beta includes:

- Support for the latest Intel-based Macintosh computers
- Easier partitioning using presets for popular sizes
- Ability to install Windows XP on any internal disk
- Support for built-in iSight cameras
- Support for built-in microphones
- Support for the Apple USB Modem
- Trackpad scrolling and right-click support on Apple Laptops
- Improved Apple keyboard support including Delete, PrintScreen, NumLock, and ScrollLock keys
- Improved International Apple keyboard support

Boot Camp is a free download from Apple Computer. To get your copy...

TIP: Short a Microphone???
Use Headphones Instead…

When you sit down and think about it, a speaker in a headphone set and a microphone are constructed similarly. They both consist of a diaphragm connected to a coil of wire suspended around a magnet. A microphone’s diaphragm vibrates the coil when you speak into it, and the magnetic field generates a small current in the coil. This is then picked up by your computer, amplified, and recorded in your audio editing application (such as the free Audacity sound editor). Headphones just work in reverse, basically.

So, if you find you need a microphone, but don’t have one handy - you can substitute a headphone set. Simply plug the headphone set (earbud headphones work well, too!) into where the microphone would be plugged in, and speak into the headphones. Headphones aren’t quite as sensitive as the microphones, but I think you’ll be surprised at the quality of recording you get out of them. You may need to adjust the microphone levels on your computer so that the volume you’re recording at is just right.

Donateware for Macintosh - AlphaBaby 1.51

From the site: “About AlphaBaby - My kids love to play with the computer. Unfortunately, they also have the habit of renaming my hard drive to “axlfka”. So, I wrote AlphaBaby so they could safely use the Mac without inflicting too much damage! AlphaBaby lets even infants and toddlers have fun playing with the computer. Every time a key is pressed or the mouse is clicked, a letter or shape is drawn. Sounds can be played every time something is drawn. Your own sounds and pictures can also be used. AlphaBaby helps kids to learn letters, plus provides a safe environment for kids to have fun “typing” on the keyboard! Both an application and screen saver version of AlphaBaby are provided.

What’s New - Version 1.51 is now a Universal Application. No other changes from 1.5 have been made. The following changes were made in version 1.5. Images can be loaded from iPhoto albums. There is a new drawing mode which allows different images, lines, and shapes to be drawn on the screen. New options to speak colors and match your own sounds to letters allow you to customize how letters are pronounced. Version 1.5 has been tested on Mac OS 10.3 and 10.4. It is not supported on earlier versions of Mac OS X - please use version 1.4 of AlphaBaby if you are running an earlier version of Mac OS X.”

Link: http://www.klidickey.addr.com/alphababy
The Computer History Museum (CHM) in Mountain View, California, a 501(c)3 public benefit organization with a 25-year history as part of the former Boston Computer Museum, preserves and presents for posterity the artifacts and stories of the information age. Dedicated to exploring the social impact of computing technology, CHM is home to the world's largest and most significant collection of historic computer-related objects, software, documents, still and moving images and personal stories.

On the graphic at the right you can see some of the online exhibits that are currently accessible via their website. They include:

Timeline 1939 to 1994 - Learn about the significant milestones in the history of computing from its beginnings in World War II to the development of today’s Internet.

Visible Storage - View highlights from the Computer History Museum’s collection of computing artifacts, the largest in the world.

PDP-1 Restoration Project - Learn about the history and our recent restoration of a PDP-1. Explore almost 200 documents, photos, movies and music related to this amazing machine.

Mastering the Game: A History of Computer Chess - Explore computing history’s five decade long quest to build a computer that could challenge the best human chess players.

Selling the Computer Revolution - 250+ digitized marketing brochures, representing some of the important technologies, companies, and applications in computing from 1948 to 1988.

Microprocessors 1971 to 1996 - Understand the genealogy and evolution of the first 25 years of the microprocessor.

Internet History 1962 to 1992 - Discover the major milestones in the early development of today’s Internet.

Hall of Fellows - Learn about some of computing history’s pioneers recognized by the Computer History Museum for their significant contributions.

This Day in History - Find out what happened in computing history today or any other day.

Link:  [http://www.computerhistory.org](http://www.computerhistory.org)
Keep away from people who try to belittle your ambitions. Small people always do that, but the really great make you feel that you, too, can become great. ~ Mark Twain

One great thing about educating children in Utah is that our teachers take personal interest in our children and help them feel they can become members of society who can and will make a difference for good in our world.

We express our sincere thanks and appreciation for all you’ve done over the years to make a difference for the Utah Coalition for Educational Technology. Your hard work and participation made UCET a premiere forum for utilizing technology in education in the state of Utah.

May you have a joyous holiday, filled with peace, and association with friends and family. May 2007 open doors of opportunity and success both personally and professionally.

Sincerely,
The UCET Board