TECH BYTES

BLOGGING IN THE CLASSROOM

http://ditchthattextbook.com/2017/02/13/my-blogging-voyage-and-how-i-do-it-step-by-step/

This guest post is written by Rayna Freedman, a fifth grade teacher at Jordan/Jackson Elementary School in Mansfield, Mass. I asked her to write this post after seeing her share links to her students' blog posts. She shares her entire process here. Enjoy it! — Matt

Here are some of our first steps we used:
- We began with a discussion of our school responsible use policy that was written in a student friendly format.
- We then viewed and discussed existing student blogs from the previous year and read over Scholastic's Blogging Rules.
- Students were given a direction packet to bring home, should they choose the blogging alternative. This was also emailed home to parents, who are an integral part of the process.
- After running a student blog for a year I came up with a list of common themes for blog posts. This helped students who might be stuck choosing a topic get started.
- Links for each step is located on the website.

Here's a general step-by-step process:
- Students access Google Docs to create their blogs, as it affords an opportunity for online conversations and feedback between students and me. Microsoft Word could be used as well!
- We work together during the week on their post until it is ready to be published, which is something I do later.
- Students must include hyperlinks to resources they used.
- They also were taught to utilize Creative Commons for images that have permission to be shared.
- I simply copy and paste the student blog post from the Google Doc to our student blog page. Using Blogger, I created a safe place for students to share their work. This offers a real world experience of what a writer goes through with his or her editor.

- The students' work is emailed to both the student and their parents, creating a bridge to home. A link is also shared on my professional Facebook page and Twitter feed. Often, when we tweet the link out, there are hashtags and specific people we share the blogs with.

VISIT WEBSITE FOR RESOURES AND LINKS

Women's History Month is a celebration of women's contributions to history, culture, and society. The United States has observed it annually throughout the month of March since 1987. Women's History Month 2017 theme is "Honoring Trailblazing Women in Labor and Business". The National Women's History Month theme for 2017 honors women who have successfully challenged the role of women in both business and the paid labor force. Women have always worked, but often their work has been undervalued and unpaid.

National Women's History Project
http://www.nwhp.org/
Times for Kids
http://www.timeforkids.com/minisite/womens-history-month
Library of Congress
http://womenshistorymonth.gov/
Teaching History
http://teachinghistory.org/spotlight/womens-history
Scholastic
http://tinyurl.com/zy4jhuu
New York Times
http://tinyurl.com/z6vtq9x
The Teacher's Guide
http://www.theteachersguide.com/womenshistorymonth.htm
Lesson Plan Page
http://lessonplanspage.com/womenshistorymonth-htm/
PBS News Hour Lessons
http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/tag/womens-history-month/
Center for Civic Education
http://www.civiced.org/resources/curriculum/womens-history-month
Smithsonian Education
http://www.smithsonianeducation.org/educators/resource_library/women_resources.html
A to Z Teacher Stuff
http://themes.atozteacherstuff.com/2301/womens-history-teaching-ideas-lesson-plans-printables-activities/

NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH 2017
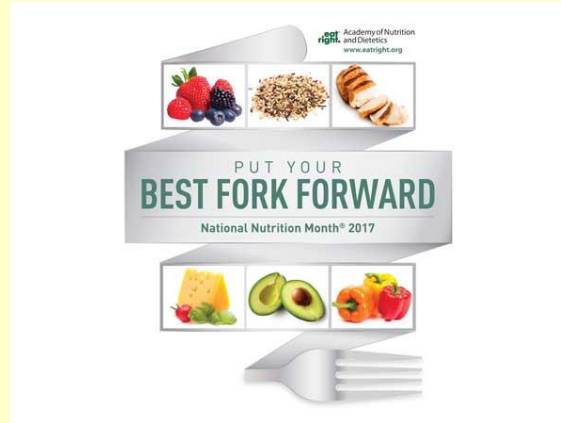
National Nutrition Month® is a nutrition education and information campaign created annually in March by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The campaign focuses attention on the importance of making informed food choices and developing sound eating and physical activity habits.

"Put Your Best Fork Forward" is the theme for NNM 2017 which serves as a reminder that each one of us holds the tool to make healthier food choices. Making small changes during National Nutrition Month® and over time, helps improve health now and into the future. As nutrition experts, Academy members can help guide the public on gradually shifting toward healthier eating styles by promoting NNM activities and messages during March.

RESOURCES

Eat Right
http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/resources/national-nutrition-month/national-nutrition-month

Choose My Plate
https://www.choosemyplate.gov/national-nutrition-month

Teacher Hub
http://www.teachhub.com/school-activities-national-nutrition-month

Education World
http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/nutrition-month-activities.shtml

The Newseum, headquartered in Washington, D.C., promotes, explains, and defends free expression and the five freedoms of the First Amendment: religion, speech, press, assembly, and petition.

Since opening in 2008, more than six million have visited its modern building located on historic Pennsylvania Avenue between the United States Capitol and the White House. The Newseum's seven levels of interactive exhibits include 15 galleries and 15 theaters. Among the most memorable exhibits are the 9/11 Gallery sponsored by Comcast featuring the broadcast antennae from the top of the World Trade Center, the Berlin Wall Gallery whose eight concrete sections are one of the largest pieces of the original wall outside Germany, and the Pulitzer Prize Photographs Gallery which features photographs from every Pulitzer Prize-winning entry dating back to 1942.

Newseumed, a free online learning platform for teachers and students, demonstrates the Newseum's commitment to reach all who wish to better understand the five freedoms of the First Amendment and its relationship to learning and teaching history, media literacy, and civics. Free quality online resources are provided to cultivate the skills to authenticate, analyze, and evaluate information from a variety of sources and to provide historical context to current events.

FREE WEBINAR

Math Writing supports: Math Type & Google g(Math) Add-on
https://www.specialedtechcenter.org/class-details/?class_id=1646

Date: March 29, 2017
Time: 3:30-4:30

Math Writing supports MathType & Google g(Math) Add-on. Students who struggle with writing have a difficult time writing math calculations and demonstrating their knowledge in math. This webinar will look at two tools that allow students to create written mathematical expressions using alternative methods. MathType allows students to use a word processor to create mathematical expressions with an alternative keyboard or handwriting recognition tools. Google g(math) Add-on is an add on for Google Docs that allows alternative input via keyboard, handwriting recognition, or speech recognition.

https://info.flipgrid.com/

Flipgrid is a website that allows teachers to create "grids" of short discussion-style questions that students respond to through recorded videos. Each grid is effectively a message board where teachers can pose a question and their students can post 90-second video responses

that appear in a tiled "grid" display. Grids can be classes, sections, groups of students, research groups, faculty groups, or any collection of users interested in a common strand of questions. Each grid can hold an unlimited number of questions, and each question can hold an unlimited number of responses. Questions are short, text-based prompts (think Twitter) that can include basic formatting (such as bold, italic) and links to websites or documents.

Do Your Kids Need to Learn to Code? YES! But Not for the Reasons You Think!

https://goo.gl/jaiEW3

For many parents and teachers this new focus on learning to code feels like an overhyped fad that will be replaced any day now by something else deemed important. Do we really need a society full of computer programmers? What about chefs, writers, electricians, plumbers? Why do kids need to learn to code?

We live in an increasingly digital world. Education is no longer about learning facts. Education is now about quickly sourcing reliable information, creative problem solving, logical thinking, self-management, and metal flexibility. The jobs of tomorrow demand this.

Computer science appears to be the perfect gateway to 21st century skills. The logical problem solving and algorithmic thinking at the core of computer science forces kids to think about thinking – a process referred to as meta-cognition that has proven benefits related to self-monitoring and independent learning. No matter what a child's core skills are, an understanding of computer science allows them to leverage those skills beyond what they could achieve on their own.

Computer science skills will give kids a real advantage in a hyper competitive world…and they just might make something really cool along the way!

Link to entire article: https://goo.gl/jaiEW3

TEACHING TIPS

Involve Parents by Creating a Link between Home and School SCHOOLWIRES

It is essential to build a strong connection between what happens at school with what happens at home. Students shouldn't stop learning when they leave your classroom. Keep parents informed so they can be advocates for their children's education at home. There are a few ways to keep parents involved and informed:

Build a simple website to share classroom policies, unit overviews, homework, newsletters, calendars, and links to helpful websites. These websites are as easy as 1-2-3 to create and will keep your parents in the know.
Check out resources for Schoolwires: http://www.orange.k12.nj.us/Page/7025

Sample Pages
http://www.davis.k12.ut.us/Page/79004

http://www.cityofws.org/portals/0/pdf/police/Internet%20Safety.pdf

- The Internet and You

Pin Your Frequently Used Tabs

Pinned tabs

Pin your favorite tabs to save space on your tab bar without losing quick access to your favorite pages. In the above picture, you can see there are eight pinned tabs, which would have normally consumed the tab bar.

To Pin a tab, right-click on any open tab and click Pin Tab.

Bonus tip: You can also click-and-drag a pinned tab to the position of your choice.

PARENT'S Corner

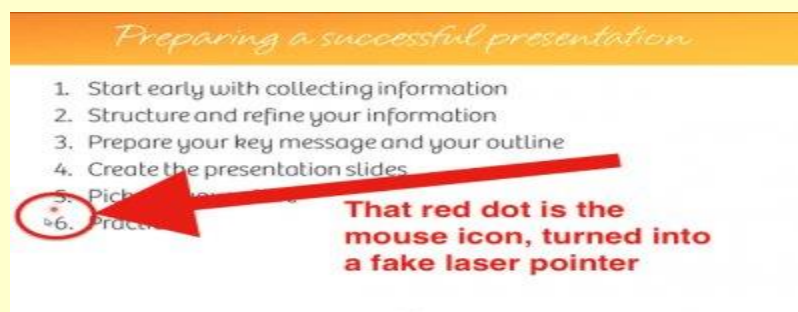**Kids Guide**

Office 365

Turn Your Mouse Icon into a Laser Pointer

If you are giving a presentation the old fashioned way, using PowerPoint, and you don't have a laser pointer, you can use your PC's mouse as a fake one.

You simply tell PowerPoint to change the mouse icon into a little red dot.

This isn't a new feature for Office 365. Older versions do this, too. But Microsoft did include this feature in the version of Office that runs on the iPad released earlier this year.

Even though the iPad doesn't use a mouse, if you hold your finger or stylus down on the iPad, the red button fake laser pointer will appear.

Preparing a successful presentation

1. Start early with collecting information
2. Structure and refine your information
3. Prepare your key message and your outline
4. Create the presentation slides
5. Pick
6. Prac

That red dot is the mouse icon, turned into a fake laser pointer

SPARK 101

Free Video Challenges. Real-World Problem Solving.

Tap into free, 10-minute video challenges that engage students in real-world problem-solving and professional skills. Created by employers, the video challenges include professionals from organizations such as NASA, PepsiCo, and Clark Construction.

Engage students with STEM skills video challenges—directly connected to your curriculum
Select a lesson plan or create your own. Use the three-segment format, which includes pause points for student engagement to put your students to work.

Spark 101 unites educators and students with private- and public-sector employers in the Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) fields. Through the use of "case study" videos, Spark 101 not only makes potentially difficult academic content more understandable for students in middle school and high school classrooms—it helps them envision potential careers.

Using Spark 101 is simple. Watch the videos on the site to learn how you and your students can leverage the most from our videos and resources.
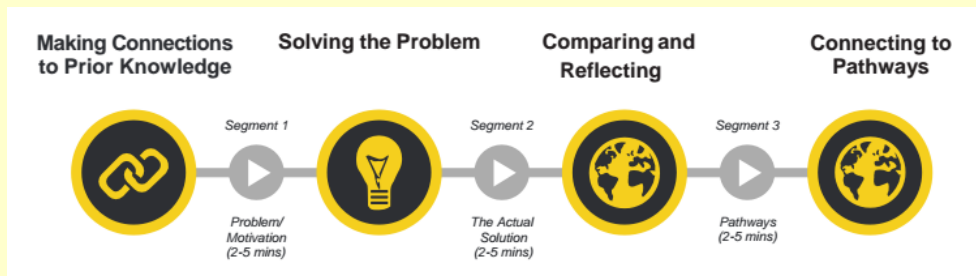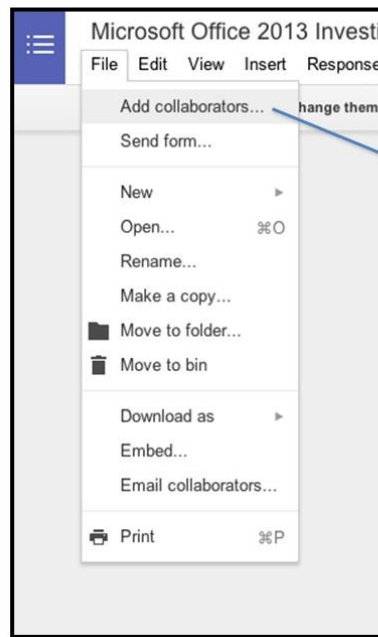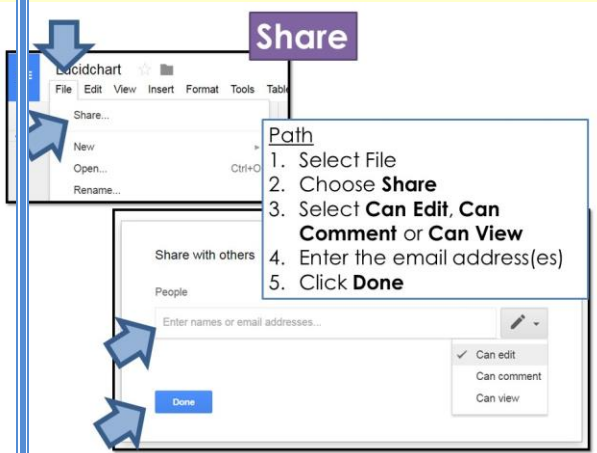

FREE WEBINAR
Igniting the Spark: Engaging Secondary Students in Real-World Mathematical Problem-Solving

In this webinar, learn how to use Spark 101's free real-world, standards-aligned case study videos to engage your students in problem-based learning—with authentic problems from business, government, nonprofits, and academia.

Sharing within Google Drive

Path
1. Select File
2. Choose **Share**
3. Select **Can Edit, Can Comment** or **Can View**
4. Enter the email address(es)
5. Click **Done**
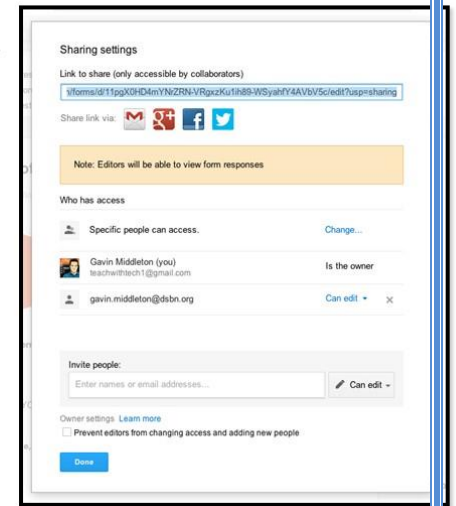
Collaborators within Google Drive
- Have students put together a Google Slide presentation for their group projects
- One person from the group will open a Google Slide presentation
- That person will then invite the other members of the group to collaborate
- All members of the group can work on the same Google Slide from different device
- They will each see changes made by their group members in real time

Protecting your Work
- If you are concerned about someone copying work and submitting it as their own, then share ywork in PDF format
- This is the only secure way to protect work if you do not want people to be able to edit it
- It is very important to know that recipients can always make a copy of "view only" files and just edit as they wish
- Google Docs were designed to allow people to collaborate and edit shared documents. It was not created to "protect" products.

GrantSelect is an online database of funding opportunities such as grants (for programs, projects, planning, start-up, endowments, technical assistance, facilities and equipment, etc.), awards, and fellowships.

Funding opportunities range from pure research grants to arts programs, biomedical and health care research, community services programs, children and youth programs, K-12 education funding, international programs, and operating grants for nonprofit organizations.

http://www.grantselect.com/index.html

Administrator's Resource Center

Are You Weighing or Feeding the Elephant?

Soon most of us in education will be in PARCCing. Yes! Testing, testing, and more testing? Are you getting the results that you are expecting? Well, after reading an article on Edutopia, by Milton Chen, it made me look at the assessing of students in a different light.

 A colleague of his recently visited India, and was asked by an educator, "In America, you test your students a lot, don't you?" She replied, "Well, indeed, the United States has a national policy that requires testing of all students in certain grades." The Indian educator said, "Here, when we want the elephant to grow, we feed the elephant. We don't weigh the elephant" (Chen, 2007).

Yes, we are bound by policy, however, what does it matter if our students are not succeeding at the rate expected. Let's be part of feeding our students with the "very nature of learning, intelligence, and brain development itself" (Chen, 2007).

To read the full article click the link below and post your thoughts to the "Administrator's Corner" Blog at : http://orange.schoolwires.com/Page/16694

Don't Weigh the Elephant -- Feed the Elephant: Feedback Is Key in Assessment
https://www.edutopia.org/dont-weigh-elephant-feed-elephant

TECHNOLOGY HUMOR