



Learning Technologies Connecting A Community of Learners

Writing in a Digital Age

Here we go - another exciting ride through the intricacies of Writers Workshop. And you knew this was coming - with a twist. As we navigate the environment of web2, we come to understand just how complex the writing process has become. I like to think of this as opportunities to offer more "choice and voice" to our students (eg. personalized, dynamic and supportive).

Consider questions like:

- Is writing different now that it involves the ability to include images, hyperlinks, audio, and video?
- What is our definition of what constitutes as writing using web tools?
- How do we respond to writing in alternative forms?

The tool we're using to invite our students to the writing environment? Google Docs, part of our **Google Apps for Education** platform provides an environ-



ment much like MSWord. Even more, it allows us a venue to explore and frame our thinking about how our students engage in the process especially when it comes to immediate

feedback. Real-time commenting targets the specific areas in need. Students gain quicker

examples of how their writing can be improved. More coming as we integrate both strategies and platform.

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Professional Learning:

- Nov 1, 5, 6** - Report Card (Pri)
 - Nov 7, 8** -Report Cards (Interm)
 - Nov 15, 20** - Fast ForWord—Progress Tracker & Interventions
 - Nov 13 & 20** - Jumpstart Blog Series II
 - Nov 19, 22** - Report Card (Elementary) Open Sessions
 - Nov 27**- Blogs –Teacher/ Librarians
 - Nov 29**- Blogs Tips, Tricks
 - Dec 5** - Blogging - Advanced
 - Jan 22** - Raz-Kids Intro Series 2
 - Jan 22** -Tech Snack-Google Forms
 - Jan 31**-Jumpstart Blog Series 3
- *Check SD Calendar as sessions

Apps, Apps, Apps

Apps come and apps go. For more go to **iDevices Blog** and click *Apps Collection list*. (blogs.sd41.bc.ca/idevices)

Music Teachers— a huge array of well organized apps.

(<http://bit.ly/TEB4xj>) Use a VGA adaptor to your projector as a way



to mirror your iPad. What apps would you use to capture a learning process and use it as a reflection for students, for teachers?

Text-to-Speech?

Reading text online is as challenging as reading a book if you struggle with reading. Try



Voice Dream.

This handy app reads webpages, documents, pdf, powerpoint, ebooks, Instapaper.

Paperport Notes—an

all in one writing, drawing, mark up integrated with the best speech-to-text synthesizer and exportable.



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TumbleBooks and TumbleBookCloud

Sometimes locating a “*just right*” book to share or use as a piece of mentor text appears impossible to find. We now have access to [Tumble-](#)

[Books and TumbleBookCloud.](#)

These online resources provide a fabulous array of e-texts for all readers (read-along, picture books, puzzles, activities). [Tum-](#)
[bleBookCloud](#) aimed at older

readers (intermediate, secondary) offer full ebooks, graphic novels, videos, and audiobooks. Both sections include fiction and non-fiction. These resources can be accessed anytime, anywhere.

How Would I Use It?

- Consider showing it as a whole class read with a “stop and think” strategy

- Small group activity at a center
- At home practice for fluency
- Use to support fluency modeling



A Place to Park Your Brainstorming

Have you ever wanted an interactive online place to have students brainstorm?

We’ve used [Wallwisher.com](#) (an online board) very successfully with classes as well as with our writers workshop series group of teachers. The platform allows for both public, private and moderated spaces. Once created, the wall is a simple, interactive site which can be embedded onto

your blog or wiki or posted as a link on a school webpage.

How to Use:

Pose a question and have students brainstorm ideas. In class, use a projector to show the board and categorize the ideas. Then develop connected ideas. How about an introduction to research topics with posted videos



and hyperlinks for students to explore. Have them further search and post links or books that they’ve found useful to grow the learning. Use the ideas in a Venn diagram to compare and contrast to develop an argument. Ask students to share their favourite books along with a teaser. More ideas can be found on our site. Or contact us to get you started.

iDevice Management How To’s

[Join.me](#) is a free screen sharing meeting site that is simple to facilitate. This can be used to enhance a lesson by sharing the teacher’s computer screen with student iPads [imagine the possibility of a student with visual challenges, now able to be connected to the



lesson]. To share the screen, go to the site (join.me) and download the exe file to launch a session. Give the 9-digit number to students to link the iPads, which must have the join.me app installed.

Exporting Student Work is an organizational challenge. Using a class **Dropbox** may



be the answer. Create a generic Dropbox (you sign up using email and a general shared password to give to the class). When ready, students can send their work (please do not send images of students) to the Dropbox via a browser. Make sure students log off from the dropbox when finished.



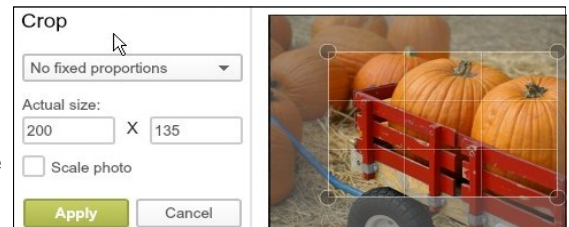
Online Image Editor - PicMonkey

Picmonkey.com is a free, online photo editor that does a multitude of things like Resize, Crop, Colorize, Special Effects, Text, and Frames (<http://picmonkey.com>). Unlike other online sites, this one does not save your images, a definite positive when you are working with student images. When you go to

the site, you will be presented with a navigation bar to select from a range of choices. Each area (eg. Resize...) has a slide bar where you can see the effects immediately to your right.

Imagine being able to quickly resize or add some special effects to your image which you can then use in

your powerpoint presentation or blog. Imagine it being so easy that a primary student can easily grasp the process...



Surveys to Gather Information– Google Forms

One of the simplest ways to create surveys is by using **Google Forms**. Part of Google Drive or Google Docs suite of products, Forms is a handy way to create, gather data and analyze it.

You will need a google account (if you are part of our Google Apps for Education group, you have access with the Create button).

Google Forms has a ‘fill in the blank’ with choices in the answers (text, paragraph, multiple choice...). Several themes are available to present your online form in a visually appealing manner. You can embed the form (if you have a website, blog or wiki) or use the link to send it to your audience. Participants

fill out the form, press Submit and immediately their choices are populated into your spreadsheet. This allows you to manipulate the data, create graphs and charts as well as incorporate your results in a slideshow.



The possibilities are endless for a classroom or staff group.

SD41 Web Resources Launched

We’ve just launched a one-stop, one-page everything resources page. (http://sd41.bc.ca/erac/web_resources.htm) A very clean view with icons and minute detailed popups for your research and reading purposes.

You will find **World Book**

(Advanced, Discovered, Student) as well as the **Gale Databases** (Science, World History, Global...). And who can do without **Ebsco Databases** (novel lists, points-of-view, research center) and **TumbleBooks**. Get your id/pw from your school’s teacher/librarian.

Ask him/her to help develop lessons on how to integrate this in your curriculum.



This incredible set of resources will enhance both your student needs as well as your professional needs.

Learning Technologies

Where's the Info?

- blogs.sd41.bc.ca/learningtech
- blogs.sd41.bc.ca/fastforward
- blogs.sd41.bc.ca/idevices
- digisandbox.wordpress.com



Staff Development Calendar:

<http://blogs.sd41.bc.ca/staffdevelopmentcalendar>

Contact Learning Technologies Team:

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Worth Checking Out:

Writing Tools

- Google Docs
- Google Forms

Tools to Communicate:

- PuppetPals (iPad)
- Paperport Notes (iPad)
- Join.me (screenshare - join.me)
- PicMonkey (image editor- picmonkey.com)
- Vocaroo (online audio - vocaroo.com)
- Symbaloo-Edu (visual bookmark - edu.symbaloo.com)
- Wallwisher (board - wallwisher.com)



Communicating and Connecting To A 21stC Audience

How are you or your students connecting to the world?

It can be as simple as offering some vetted websites for students to research or as complex as having students practice the art of articulating their ideas to a larger audience. The simplest way is to use the school webpages or QuickR, which can easily deliver information as well as serve as containers. If you hope to create a community of learners intent on communication that is back-and-forth, then a blog or wiki is a strong platform.

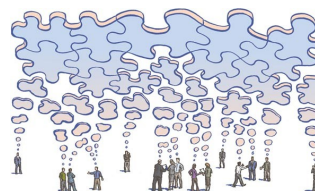
SD41 blogs (wordpress) continue to be the "go-to"



element in having our students engage in deeper conversations and critical thinking. Learning is not confined to the walls of the classroom but open to the world to help gain insights. While there are security levels in place, the teacher is at the heart of the dialogue, guiding and promoting discussion and encouraging new ideas to take flight.

How to Use:

Email Learning Technologies to set up your class with individual IDs. Consider using the blogging platform for students to discuss con-



nections in Literature/ Information Circles, connect with an author or scientist. How about connecting with a class in another country? This removes any issues around timezones. Develop good questioning techniques to gather information or use it to "park your ideas" while critically analyzing and synthesizing content. Or use it to "flip" instruction and build on thinking skills in class.

At present, we have reached over 350 blogs and growing. If you are interested, contact our team or check the SD Calendar.