Multimedia for the classroom

For those of you wishing to incorporate fun informative video into your curriculum, you have many places to start. Doing a Google search, a NetTrekker search, or looking at videos on TeacherTube are a few that we have covered in the past. There is another site that hopes to remove some of the search hurdles that are often in your way though, number one amongst those being time. WatchKnow.org is a website with links to prescreened videos by subject and content. You can perform a search in a multitude of ways. A great aspect of the site is that much of the content is actually housed on other servers and it basically gives you a review by users and a link to the actual content. You may find some interesting informative videos on the site that you can't find easily searching the other sites mentioned above. While the site can be used as a search engine for videos, you can also sign-up for a classroom account to gain the ability to create your own categories and save videos from all across the web to one central location (you can even choose to upload your own videos...but they should be educational and not infringe on copyright). The site gives you a subdomain (for example "mberg.watchknow.org" or "EasternEnglish.watchknow.org" for easy access to your listings from any internet connected computer. You can also create accounts that can edit the video folders you set up, so a grade level could start a collection and keep it as a team, adding videos they find at later times and even uploading educational videos they may create. A generic student account can be created as well, so that students can access the videos from home with their parents if they would like. Watchknow screens content to make sure it is kidsafe, but as always....preview before you use a resource in class, just as you would a video from the library or any other source. Check out the service at www.watchknow.org.

Tech Tuesday Final Sessions

May 24th and May 31st—These will be the last two Tech Tuesday sessions for the year. Tech Tuesday will end the way it began, reviewing the proficiencies. Tech Tuesday for May 17th will be held at the elementary and will review the Level One Proficiencies for any that have yet to be signed off. Remember, this was a learning year and next year we will be testing out all staff on this area. May 24th will take place at the high school and will review the Level Two Proficiencies which apply to teaching staff. If you would like to test out of either level of skills you can email tech for an appointment and someone will reply with available dates and times.

Windows 7 Tech Tip of the Week

With Windows 7 you gain access to a new tool called the "snipping tool." The new feature adds the ability to quickly capture any part of your screen with a few simple clicks. There is even a built in highlight and pen tool so you can mark-up the screen capture before pasting it into the file you are working with. I use it exclusively when preparing tutorial documents, however it works in a pinch in the middle of class to add to whiteboard documents and other files. It has become an invaluable tool in my daily life and the best part is it comes standard with the new Windows 7...no install necessary.



The Trainer is in! Need help over the summer...!'m more than happy to set up a summer appointment.

Whiteboard Resources

I wanted to plug another whiteboard resource site that I recently stumbled upon. The site is www.curriculumbits.com and it houses several cool little tools that work on the whiteboard (however most appear geared toward middle school or younger). The site is broken apart by content area and the main menu houses a drop down to select the content area you wish to focus on. The site and resources on it are currently free and hopefully stay that way, as more resources are added in the future. Check it out sometime and see if there any resources that fit with your curriculum.

The Flip Camera is Dead....Long Live the Cell Phone.

You may or may not have heard the news by now, but Cisco, the owner and manufacturer (for the past two years) of the popular Flip camcorder has decided to halt production and kill the product line. What does this mean for you? Well, if you already own a flip cam, or you simply use one at school, the device is still supported. However, after the stock that has built up sells out, your best chance to get one will be on eBay. Other vendors are filling the void already, such as Kodak with a \$189 zi8 model that features expandable memory and smaller file sizes for more video run time. It even lets you plug in an external microphone. The death of the flip comes as smartphones have gained popularity, many of which can shoot hi-def. video. If you want one for personal use, buy it in the near future before it's gone.