

Tech Tuesday Upcoming Sessions

March 22—The focus of this March session will be basic photo editing with Picasa. Picasa is a free program available from Google. Throughout the hour you will learn how to touch-up pictures you have taken in class and finish them for printing and display. This tutorial will also give you the knowledge to apply the program to your personal photos. A sample of photos will be provided and you will actually work hands-on with the program to edit some of those samples. When you leave you will have a copy of the software on CD along with handouts on how to recreate the effects we explore in class. The session is March 22nd at the high school from 3:30-4:30.

Looking for a New Way to Look at Searches?

There is a Google tool available to everyone called the Google Wonder Wheel. I know...the name makes you wonder doesn't it? Ok...a bad joke aside, the tool is another way you can search for topics on the internet. The Wonder Wheel is akin to a "web" for those of you that use the brainstorming idea. You enter a topic that you would like to search for, and as a result you are presented with your central search and then a wheel which points out sub-searches on the topic. If you click upon one of the sub-search results you will receive another Wonder Wheel which breaks the sub-category down further. Basically the tool is a way for people to do a "drill down" search, starting very generic and then finding very specific information. To access a the Wonder Wheel, type in a search entry on Google and click on the "Wonder Wheel" view which is present on the left hand side of the search page toward the bottom.

Physics Simulations? Yeah, You Can Find Those Somewhere.....

I'm sure many teachers already know about the interactive physics simulations from the University of Colorado, but for those of you that don't you might want to check out the tools that they make available on the internet. Whether it is balloon buoyancy, how a ladybug walks, or "John Travoltage" they have a simulation for you. These high end simulations can run from the web and you can even download a version to use offline. If you wish to use any of the many simulations please make sure your Java is up-to-date as many of these "applets" run off of that platform. Whatever physics idea you are looking for, whether you teach high school or elementary, you can probably find some ideas on this site. Check out the fun and see if you can pull yourself away, let alone use a tool from the site for a lesson. <http://phet.colorado.edu/en/>

Need Help With Implementing Technology in Your Classroom?

If any of the tools I have included in the Tech Trainer over the past couple of issues have caught your interest, but you're hesitant to try them out, let me know. I would love to work with you to plan and implement a lesson using one.

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Teachers Teaching with Technology

I wanted to spotlight a teacher again this week. I happened to be putting some laptops back in a cart at the high school in Mr. Cox's room. When I walked in the students were fully engaged and he was running a pendulum simulation on the board. He invited a student to the board to place two swinging pendulums in some sort of harmony (way above my head). As the student worked the problem Mr. Cox questioned his other students as to how it could actually be done. It was an excellent example of interactivity in the classroom and the way you can direct a class when you can't have everyone at the board. The level of engagement of the students was exciting.