

Tips & tricks for using educational technologies...

Links to sites that may help enhance classroom instruction...

Videos to motivate, teach, or help lighten the mood...

# W.D. Tech NEWS



## A FORMAL APOLOGY FROM AN OLD DOG

*"It's amazing what a seemingly innocent event can teach us."*

I had a wonderful learning experience in December. I wasn't prepared to get a swift kick in the pants but it was needed. Let me explain.

My family was invited to attend a Spanish event in Dyersville. We have become friends with several of our local Spanish-speaking families and thought this would be a great way to share some time together.

As the event began, I quickly realized that I had absolutely no idea what was being said. I was mentally grasping to understand any word that made sense to me. I felt completely lost, confused, and impatient.

After about ten minutes of not being able to understand any words, I had the revelation that this is exactly how our Spanish speaking students feel every day. Also, I developed an appreciation for

what students with learning disabilities must be feeling. A huge revelation for me was that I now know what other teachers feel like when I start talking about how easy a new technology is to use in their classroom.

I, now, formally apologize to all teachers for using the words, "Try this because it's easy to use."

Sometimes we need to slip into someone else's life to find out how much we take for granted. When is the last time you became impatient with a student who was struggling with a new concept? When was the last time you didn't want to take the time to try a new approach when the one you've become comfortable with isn't working?

I'm glad that this old dog can still learn from the seemingly obvious lessons that surround him every day.



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Please submit your ideas and questions to Jim at [james.roberts@wdbqschools.org](mailto:james.roberts@wdbqschools.org).

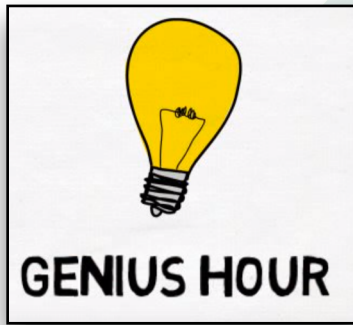
## Site: TEACHER'S GUIDE TO USING PADLET



**Padlet** is a fantastic blogging tool that can be used in any classroom where the students know how to type their thoughts. You can create any type of blog OR have the students share their thoughts about a book they've read. This resource gives you lots of ideas on how **Padlet** can enhance your instruction.

<http://www.educatorstechnology.com/2014/07/teachers-guide-to-using-padlet-in-class.html>

## Video: GENIUS HOUR



It isn't an accident that Google Corporation keeps coming up with new and innovative ideas that have, literally, changed the world. Some of its best ideas are the result of **Genius Hour**. Watch this video and see how you may be able to integrate **Genius Hour** into your classroom curriculum.

<https://youtu.be/NMFQUtHsWhc>

## App: WRITE ABOUT THIS

**Write About This** is a visual writing prompt & creation platform perfect for classrooms and families! With endless ways to respond and the ability to craft custom photo prompts, it will kick-start any writing activity. *(Text from site)*

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/write-about-this/id601375313?mt=8>



## Site: WE ALL TEACH READING AND WRITING



If you teach algebra, you may not think of yourself as a reading teacher. But you do know that comprehension, fluency and good communication are key to success in math as well as other subject areas. And the writers of the Common Core agree—the new standards greatly emphasize reading and writing across the curriculum. Click below to explore ways we can all become better teachers of reading, writing and critical thinking. *(Text from site)*

<http://www.weareteachers.com/hot-topics/topics-in-education/we-all-teach-reading-and-writing>

## Productivity:

### Microsoft Word Tips & Tricks



- \* Ctrl + click will select a sentence. Just click anywhere in a sentence while you are holding the Ctrl key and the sentence will be selected.
- \* You can select an entire paragraph by making three rapid clicks anywhere in a paragraph.
- \* Have you ever wanted to create a horizontal line in your document? Just type 3 hypens and then press Enter.
- \* Subscript and Superscript help your documents look nice and professional. Ctrl+ will make a word subscript. Ctrl Shift + will make a word superscript.
- \* When you hold down the Ctrl key and then press the backspace key, you will delete the preceding word.
- \* Shift + F5 will move the cursor to the location where it was the last time you saved the document.



## Video: EDUCANON

Have you ever wanted to insert content or questions into a YouTube or SchoolTube video? Think of the formative or summative possibilities this could open in your curriculum! This video from EduCanon may make you think, "Wow! That's amazing!"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uoOrjHHIDks>



## Inspirational Video: IT'S POSSIBLE: NEVER GIVE UP

This is one of the most moving and inspiring videos I have ever seen. Whenever you feel down, whenever you feel like you don't make a difference, whenever you want to re-evaluate your life... watch this video. My favorite parts are about what to do if you see someone who doesn't have a friend and about having too many days when you aren't living each day like it's the last of your life.

<https://youtu.be/RDKMfmpo7gc>



## Productivity: Microsoft PowerPoint Tips & Tricks



Here are a few tips to help you create a powerful PowerPoint lesson/presentation:

- \* Don't overdo the images! Less is usually better. Use images that are quality and reflect the message you are wanting your students/audience to remember.
- \* Use only one point or idea per slide. If you put all your points on one slide, the students/audience will be reading everything on the slide and not listening to you.
- \* Stop using lots of animations. They are distracting and not essential.
- \* Put a copy of your PowerPoint presentation on a flash drive or external hard drive. Never trust that you will have a reliable Internet connection.
- \* Graphs and charts are better to use than a spreadsheet graphic. MUCH better!
- \* Only use fonts that are easy to read, not "pretty," and are large enough to easily view.

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