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Free Internet Tools for Teaching English

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ABSTRACT

The internet has become very necessary part of our life. The percentage of internet users has tremendously been increasing now-a-days. Almost all use internet on a daily basis at home, work and schools or colleges. This paper mainly focuses on internet tools used for teaching English. The use and advantage of them are explained with reference to the selected tools.

Unclear black board, a cane, chalk, and gloomy class room atmosphere are almost past now, all over the world. English is globally changing. Teaching English is no exceptional. Technology has simplified the process of teaching and learning. A mouse click lesson, Liquid Crystal Display, Digital sound system, programmed software, virtual class room and online degree are enticing today’s students. Call them e-generation or computer generation, they are fast and smart. Lap top, i-pod, i-phone, mobile, pen drive, tablet pc and pocket internet are the properties of Today’s student. Are the teachers of English technically competent? It is the right time to think the technological competence of English teachers because technology is indispensable in today’s life. The world has shrunk by internet. Let us not restrict our students by four walls since their experience is universal. If we are not aware of these internet tools and applications, our world will not be as big as others. Computer and internet have brought many changes in the field of education. One who teaches cannot ignore them.

Voice Thread (http://voicethread.com/)

Voice Thread is a totally web-based application that allows you to place collections of media like images, videos, documents, and presentations at the center of an asynchronous conversation. A Voice Thread allows people to have conversations and to make comments using any mix of text, a microphone, a web cam, a telephone, or uploaded audio file. Voice Thread runs inside your web browser, so there is no software to download, install, or update.

The advantages of Voice thread:

- Easy to capture voices
- Encourages collaborative work
- Build fluency, precision and voice in second language
- Allows teachers to integrate digital collaboration into the curriculum
- It can be used as assessment tool

The other activities on Voice thread:

(i) Get started with low risk ice-breaker, it is a great way to invite students to tools. For example, ask them to leave comment on a movie clip. Ensure they know how to leave comment
(ii) Encourage your students with i-phone or i-pads to download the free voice thread mobile application to increase their access to voice thread.
(iii) Start with a required voice/video commenting activity to maximize human presence. If you give
Spider Scribe is a good online mind mapping and brainstorming tool. It allows you to organize your ideas by connecting notes, files, calendar events, etc. in free-form maps. You can collaborate and share those maps online with others.

The advantage of spider scribe:

- Pool resource on a single topic by inviting others to contribute
- Give freedom to explore new area on a topic
- Encourage students to collaborate
- Accepting others view
- Increase ability to use internet tools

Other activities on Spider scribe

(i) Ask students to create mind map on tense and ask them to share with someone who is very close to them.
(ii) Ask each student to write their name below the file they upload so that your evaluation towards students’ contribution will be easier. Later student can collect all data from spider scribe and create their own blog on Tense.

Voki (http://www.voki.com/)

Voki is an educational tool that allows users to create their very own talking character. Voki characters can be customized to look like historical figures, cartoons, animals, and even yourself! Give your Voki a voice by recording with a microphone, or uploading an audio file. Voki characters can be emailed, shared on social media, and embedded on websites!

The advantage of Voki:

- An opt internet tool for practicing speaking skills
- Helpful to students who are afraid of speaking in front of others
- Hidden identity gives the confidence to speak
- Feedback can be given without any pre notion about the students

Other activities on Voki:

- Ask students to introduce themselves in voki. First, they need to register in voki and record their introduction without name. The recording can be shared with your friends and ask them to find you (name).
- Ask students to watch particular movie and ask them to give feedback in voki and share it for comments.

Glogster (http://www.glogster.com/)

Glogster debuted in 2007 as a unique social network based on the creation and sharing of Glogs - interactive posters loaded with text, graphics, music, videos, and more. Glogster’s goal was to provide an outlet for unlimited creative expression online. It didn’t take long for users to get hooked! In 2009 Glogster launched Glogster EDU, a secure learning platform for teachers and students. Today, Glogster empowers millions of people all over the world with a space to express their emotions, ideas, and knowledge online. Glogster is yours.

The advantages of Glogster:

- Use technology and other information tools to analyze and organize information
- Demonstrate mastery of technology tools
- Collaborate with others to broaden and deepen understanding

The other activities on Glogster:

(i) User may find difficult to navigate glogster, familiarize them with the navigation options
(ii) Ask students to create class poster or class announcement
(iii) Ask students to create a poster on particular topic

Give students a product and ask them to create ad for it.

English is globally being changed and the English teachers need to think on what are the ways to meet out theses changes in teaching. Internet is going to be the major tool in the field of education since I-phone, i-pod, tablet pc, face book, e-mail etc have got predominant place in students life. Let us just take steps to learn these powerful internet tools for tomorrow. Staying connected to students out of class room has become simple by internet technology. While travelling to UK from India a teacher may response to student’s question which is posted in one of his blogs. How wonderful the technology is today!
3. Free Internet Tools For Teaching English --- byAnanthan - Journal of Technology for ELT

- Give 10 questions to students and ask them to answer in voki.

Reference

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