

VSTE

EDGE



A Publication of the Virginia Society for Technology in Education

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Dear VSTE Member:

What is true of all educators, at all levels, at this time of year? One might say that, as the winter season approaches, all educators expect the time available for personal professional development to diminish. Demands on our time increase as we get to know our students better, get deeply into our subject matter, and face the extra effort of holiday events. For teachers and administrators, time to read and study seems to slip away.

What can we do to keep professional growth alive despite the pressures we feel? One answer is to rely upon a few, trusted sources to deliver a palette of new ideas, each of which takes just a moment to scan for its value and interest. The VSTE Edge hopes to serve as one of those trusted sources, emphasizing ideas and resources about technology in education. This is focused, personally meaningful professional development that you control, a few minutes at a time, that arrives via your email. We invite you to use the Edge as part of your professional palette, and to contribute to others' development by sharing what you have learned.

If you would like to contribute a link (or many links) that your colleagues might be able to use in their classrooms, please send them to us at:

edge_submissions@vste.org

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Early Elementary (K-2) [[top](#)]

First-School.ws

Focus: crafts, lesson plans, activities for ages 2-6

This collection of materials and ideas is clustered by theme, with a special emphasis for each month.

<http://www.first-school.ws/>

Bookhive: Listen to a Story

Focus: listen to storytellers on the web and then get help choosing a book

Students can read along or just listen! November 14-20 is Children's Book Week.

<http://www.bookhive.org/zingertales/>

Elementary (3-5) [[top](#)]

Weather Wiz Kids

Focus: from weather folklore to meteorological science

Student-friendly interface they can use for researching weather topics

<http://www.weatherwizkids.com/index.htm>

Proofreading Tales and Power Proofreading

Focus: games for practicing writing mechanics

Fun tasks that provide practice in several writing skills

<http://www.eduplace.com/edugames.html>

Middle (6-8) [[top](#)]

Bone Biology for Kids

Focus: information about bones, the skeleton, bone health and other aspects of bone biology

An engaging site especially for middle schoolers and their science teachers.

<http://depts.washington.edu/bonebio/>

EdHeads

Focus: Humor and Flash animation provide relevant and enjoyable virtual experiences

Free online experiences such as knee replacement surgery.

<http://www.edheads.org/>

High School (9-12) [top]

MegaConverter

Focus: conversion of units of measurement

A truly useful, and fascinating tool to convert measurements of all types.

<http://www.megaconverter.com/mega2/>

Xpeditions Atlas

Focus: viewable and printable maps from National Geographic

Also find national geography standards, lesson plans, and activities here

<http://www.nationalgeographic.com/expeditions/atlas/index.html>

All Grades [top]

MarcoPolo: Internet Content for the Classroom

Focus: topic-related electronic source material for students and teachers

An extremely easy-to-use and free source for excellent content

<http://www.marcopolo-education.org/home.aspx>

Rubistar

Focus: free customizable rubric generators

Among the best sources of rubric scoring templates for all subjects and levels, customizable by the user. Get better work from students, more buy-in from parents, and clarity in your own lesson design by creating rubrics.

<http://rubistar.4teachers.org/index.php>

Administrators [top]

National Staff Development Council

Focus: supporting professionals in their efforts to remain learners

The Council's Standards for Staff Development are a touchstone for administrators who are working to extend leadership capacity in their school or district.

<http://www.nsd.org>

Hurricane Relief Links [[top](#)]

How will you spend your winter break? While monetary donations are important, your time and labor is also needed. Maybe you can encourage teachers in your school to get together to visit a Gulf state for a few days to help colleagues there – either with personal or classroom projects. If you work at a high school, maybe you could encourage seniors to forego an expensive class trip and instead use their youthful energy in hurricane-affected areas. Here are some links to national organizations that are involved in physical rebuilding of communities or whose funds go directly toward helping children:

Habitat for Humanity

<http://www.habitat.org/>

Rebuilding Together

<http://www.rebuildingtogether.org/>

TimeDollar USA

<http://www.timedollar.org/>

First Book: Book Relief

<http://www.bookrelief.org/>

Great Kids, Inc.

<http://www.greatkidsinc.org/americans-rebuilding.htm>

American Public School Endowments

<http://www.EducationAEE.org/>

Links above were found at: <http://www.networkforgood.org/>. The Network for Good is a charitable resource on the Internet. From its "About Us" page, NTG is described as "An e-philanthropy site where individuals can donate, volunteer and get involved with the issues they care about."

VSTE Membership Records can be updated online at:
<http://www.vste.org/community/membership.html>

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