



Teacher Tip of the Week

Take a Virtual Trip: The Ten Best Science Museums

No time for a class field trip? Is your nearest science museum too far away? Are you looking for a simple way to integrate technology into your science curriculum? If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, then consider sending students to a virtual science museum that they can explore individually or in small groups. Here, in alphabetical order, here are the top ten picks:

1. Exploratorium: The Museum of Science, Art, and Human Perception

www.exploratorium.edu

This famous San Francisco museum hosts a variety of online exhibits on topics ranging from biodiversity and frogs, to weather, sports, and basic scientific curiosity. They also offer online activities; step-by-step instructions for hands-on activities; webcasts; and an online magazine. From the home page, click on the "Explore" tab at the top left.

2. Marian Koshland Science Museum of the National Academy of Sciences

www.koshland-science-museum.org

This museum, opened just four years ago in Washington, D.C., shares many of its exhibits online. Here, students can explore how DNA analysis can catch criminals and stop epidemics, witness the potential effects of global warming, and glimpse the frontiers of scientific research. To browse their topics, click on the black "ALL EXHIBITS" button at the top left of the home page.



3. Ology

<http://ology.amnh.org>

The American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) hosts this award-winning site for students to study and explore "ologies" of interest. Sectors currently include archae-

ology, astronomy, biodiversity, Earth, Einstein, genetics, marine biology, paleontology, and water. Site navigation is intuitive and kid-friendly.

4. Oregon Museum of Science and Industry

www.oms.edu

From their home page, click on "Science Online" at the top right portion of the menu bar. There you'll find

links to online activities, exhibits, podcasts, and other online resources. This section also includes "Science Whatzit"—a place for students to conduct their own inquiry-based research and find answers to their questions.

5. Resources for Learning

www.amnh.org/education/resources

Another site from AMNH, this one offers over 1,000 online resources for students from Grade 6 and up. These resources contain activities, articles, evidence and analysis, and more in anthropology, astronomy, biology, Earth science, and paleontology. Their collection is highly searchable and can also be browsed by topic, subtopic, and/or grade level.



Ideas to Share

PENCIL DUTY



To help cut down on wasted time in the morning, assign pencil duty to two students who sharpen the pencils at the end of the day and put on the student's desks. This way every student will have a sharpened pencil right when they come into the classroom.

Helpful Website for Teachers

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



Great website for teachers with lesson plans, tips, resources, etc.

The New Teacher Support Program

Take a Virtual Trip/Best Science Museums

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6. Science Museum of Minnesota

www.smm.org



A little digging is all that's needed to find a wealth of interactive enrichment activities. Many of their online exhibits, such as Wild Music and Tissues for Life, include hands-on activities for home or school. From the home page, click on "Learn" at the top menu bar. Then click on "Learn more" in the Online Activities section.

7. Smithsonian Institution

www.si.edu

The world's largest museum complex hosts an equally impressive Web site. At the left-hand menu of their home page, click on "Smithsonian for Kids." From there, students can explore, discover, and learn about science through activity sheets, idea labs, and more. Have students click on the "Science & Nature" topic for a suite of links to Smithsonian exhibits and activities on anatomy, squids, flight, light, Earth history, and other topics.



"TEACHERS, I BELIEVE, ARE THE MOST RESPONSIBLE AND IMPORTANT MEMBERS OF SOCIETY BECAUSE THEIR PROFESSIONAL EFFORT AFFECTS THE FATE OF THE EARTH."

—HELEN CALDICOTT

8. Tech Museum of Innovation

www.thetech.org

The Tech Museum currently has two online exhibits: one on genetics and the human genome; the other on robotics. Both exhibits are packed with interesting facts and features, including interactive questions. To find them, look for "Online Fun" at the bottom right of the museum's home page.



9. The Franklin Institute Science Museum

www2.fi.edu

Click on the green "Resources for Science Learning" tab at the top left of the home page. In the new window that opens, click the "For Learners" tab at the top. From there, the Franklin Institute's resources are easily navigated. Students can explore The Case Files, a unique repository of the history of science; the human heart; the brain; and links to pre-reviewed outside sites.

10. TryScience

www.tryscience.com

Last but by no means least, this partnership effort between the New York Hall of Science, the Association of Science-Technology Centers, and IBM Corporation is an innovative way for students to investigate, discover, and try science for themselves. Here, students can conduct online experiments, take online field trips, and participate in virtual scientific adventures. Fun graphics and high quality multimedia make this a stimulating, user-friendly site.



***Note:** Online exhibits may change from time to time, so we've listed home pages with navigational instructions. Many of these sites include highly interactive multimedia features, so make sure to have headphones available for students to work silently.

New Teacher Support Group Participants



APRIL WALZ
GLADEVILLE
ELEMENTARY
2ND GRADE

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I want to make a difference. I want to inspire my students the way my previous teachers have inspired me. I love the thought of every day being a new day and different. I hop to touch each of my students in some way throughout their time with me."—April Walz



AUTUMN
MAYNARD
RUTLAND
ELEMENTARY
2ND GRADE

WHY DID YOU BECOME A TEACHER?

"I became a teacher to share the love of learning with children. I am confident that my compassion for the students will enable them to have a compassion for learning. I hope that my time teaching will impact the loves of children and may play a part in changing the world."—Autumn Maynard



TEACHER FACTS

1.2 million students drop out of high school every year

A student drops out of high school every 26 seconds. That's 1.2 million per year – or 6,000 a day.

1/4 high school students don't graduate on time

More than a quarter of high school freshmen fail to graduate from high school on time.

2/3 jobs require college education

Over two thirds of new jobs being created require college education or advanced training.

What Do I Do When....? Common Questions

A lesson just stinks?

This happens to everyone. You think you've planned something great and part way through it is just going nowhere. Scrap the lesson and try something different. Just be conscience of the kids and if they understand what you're teaching. Not everything you plan will work, and some things that just pop up in teachable moments will work great! Be flexible.

A student persists on sleeping in class?

First of all, ask the student is he/she getting enough rest at home. Call the parents and consult with them on their child's inattention in class. Consult with guidance counselors to investigate home and health issues."



Why Gender Matters by Leonard Sax

In the feminist conception of gender flexibility, no set rules apply: girls can play with trucks; boys can play with dolls. But pediatrician and psychologist Sax argues that our theories about gender's fluidity may be wrong and to apply them to children in their formative years is quite dangerous. Sax believes the brains of boys and girls are hardwired differently: boys are more aggressive; girls are more shy. And deliberately changing a child's gender-in cases of intersex (hermaphroditism) or accident (as in the case of David Reimer, who was raised as a girl after a hideous circumcision mishap)-can ruin a child's life.

Sax also believes modern gender philosophy has resulted in more boys being given behavior-modifying drugs and more girls being given antidepressants. Much of his argument makes sense: we may have gone to the other extreme and tried too hard to feminize boys and masculinize girls. Sax makes a compelling argument for parents and teachers to tread lightly when it comes to gender and raises important questions regarding single-sex education, which he supports. His readable prose, which he juxtaposes with numerous interviews with school administrators, principals, scientists and others, makes this book accessible to a range of readers.



WILSON COUNTY SCHOOLS



THE TOP TEN THINGS NEW TEACHERS WOULD LIKE TO HEAR FROM THEIR FELLOW TEACHERS:

8) Invite community.

It's the rare school that can unanimously achieve the ideal in relationship harmony. But most of us want more collegiality. If you share a sense of excitement about your teaching and scholarship, it will bring colleagues to you who can contribute to your work. Invite us to attend one of your classes or to read a lesson plan.

Almost everything you encounter, someone else has too. Track down our successful scholars and teachers and consult with them. And don't hide your own teaching and scholarship away. Tell us what you're doing. Reach outside of the department as well—for example, once again, to our teaching and learning centers. Of course, don't forget your own students. Be sure to invite their feedback—they just might be your best teachers.

Time Management Tips for Teachers

COMMUNICATING EFFICIENTLY

1. If you write newsletters and other home/school communications, you probably spend a lot of time trying to find just the right words. Be sure to keep a file of your newsletters and other material you write so you can reuse artful phrases.



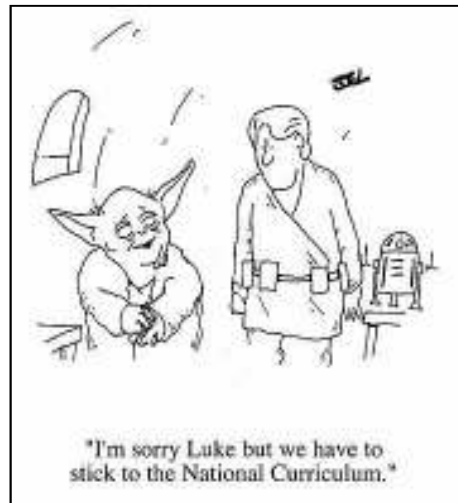
check off attendance, lunch, conferences, groups, and other class activities.

3. It can be time consuming to think of innovative ways to accurately describe children's progress at report card time. Before starting on report cards, brainstorm a list of adjectives and describers. Then, when you are ready to write, the right words will be at hand.

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2. Create multiple list of your student roster so that they are at your fingertips whenever you need one to

Need a Laugh?



It is the policy of the Wilson County School System not to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability in its educational programs or employment policies as required by Titles VI and VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Equal Pay Act of 1973, and the Americans with Disabilities Act.