

THE SUN IS SHINING!

Spring is just around the corner! The best part of spring and the time change is it seems as if there is more time. Not that we all need to cram more into the time we have. But getting dark later helps!

Tuesdays have been a great success this year. I think the move away from the PD days has opened up time for more of you to join us.

This past month we have worked on teaching folks how to take videos off You Tube to use in their classrooms, creating websites for their classrooms, and turning PowerPoint presentations into Flash movies. Needless to say we are busy.

But, there is always room for one more person. Please join us on any Tuesday. Just send us an email and let us know you are

coming. We have Tech Committee every now and then so we want to make sure we are there! Hope to see you soon!



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GREAT WORLD HISTORY SITE

This month I was going to do a hot list of world history sites and then stumbled on one that had already done just that. My mantra is do not reinvent the

wheel! The Center for World History and New Media (George Mason University) has a site that is a portal to more sites than you can imagine. So, if you

are looking for great sites on just about anything related to world history this is the place to look!

<http://worldhistorymatters.org/>

7 Things You Should Know Flip Cams

<http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI7043.pdf>

New technologies (and even some not so new ones) always leave a steep learning curve and teachers wondering how could I use this. Well I found a great series called EDUcause.

The EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative's (ELI's) 7 Things You Should Know About... series provides concise information on emerging learning technologies and related practices. Each brief focuses on a single technology or practice and describes:

- What it is
- How it works
- Where it is going
- Why it matters to teaching and learning

So, for the next few months we will be highlighting a few of these. If there is something you are curious about send an email and we would be happy to add it to the list of things we highlight in the newsletter.

This month we are going to highlight Flip Cams. The series focuses on the college environment but these work so well in the K-12 arena they are hard to not take a look at. I recently

purchased two. They are only about \$129 apiece. They have a USB connection that flips out and it literally plugs into your computer. The ease of use is incredible. There is no software to install and it can be used anywhere.

Flip video devices are small, inexpensive, digital camcorders. For about the price of a low-end digital camera, the Flip offers up to an hour of video from an easy-to-use, self-contained device. Because of its simplicity and affordability, the Flip allows virtually anyone to be a producer of video content. For educators, these small camcorders facilitate visual learning, which is frequently more engaging than other kinds of instruction and can transcend language barriers. A video artifact can be a highly effective tool for assessment, and the Flip camcorders offer easy access to this medium.

Educators who employ a learning-by-doing approach have found the Flip to be simple and inexpensive enough for K-12 students to record interviews and capture video footage for community history projects and documentaries.

Those struggling to provide classroom technology on limited budgets may find an inexpensive digital camcorder offers more edu-

cational impact per dollar than a new laptop.

The Flip functions well in low light, and students recording field trips, campus life, and peer interviews find the Flip's low profile doesn't act as a barrier between interviewer and interviewee. The Flip allows users to create video stories and essays, document procedures, interview experts, and record other activities, even as the technology itself becomes invisible.

The ease of use makes it perfect for almost unlimited uses. Digital storytelling, interviews, performances by students, how-to videos. The list goes on and on. However, the one caveat, this is no different than any other tool. Be cognizant of what you want the students to know and be able to do and have a well developed rubric to assess that. However, the ability to engage students with this tool is incredible. I would suggest checking it out and working with your PTA to get one if possible.

<http://www.theflip.com/en-us/>



In One Ear: iTunes U puts iPods to good use.

<http://www.edutopia.org/itunes-u-professional-development>

by [Maya Payne Smart](#)

This month's feature article is on podcasts and iTunes U. Please remember podcasts can be downloaded and used on your regular computer you don't have to use them just on an MP3 player. The resources created by teachers all over the country is mind boggling. If you would like to learn more head over to support group on Tuesdays!

Eerie music creeps into listeners' earbuds as an episode of *SciFi Friday* begins. A male voice introduces "the podcast where science fiction film meets real science" before the show's host and her expert guest, Cameron Hastie (an ape keeper at Salt Lake City's Hogle Zoo), take the mic. "A lot of people still think that apes are fairly violent," Hastie says, and she recounts how she often overhears zoo visitors describing a male gorilla's expression as mean and angry. "But it's just his normal face," she explains.

This particular episode of the radio-style talk show, available for free download from iTunes, originally followed a Utah public television broadcast of *The Ape Man*, a classic 1943 fright film. In her twelve-minute spiel, Hastie critiques the movie and talks about the real excitement -- and the drudgery -- that make up her typical workday.

SciFi Friday is the brainchild of Laura Hunter, director of instructional services for the [Utah Education Network](#). "I read some studies published by the director of our natural history museum that said pop culture is a good way to get young people interested in science," says Hunter. This led her to podcasting. In other installments of the series, a physicist uses the 1953 film *Atomic Blonde (Run for the Hills)* to discuss Cold War fears and fission bombs, and a research entomologist from a bee-biology and bee-systematics lab debunks the so-called science in *Wasp Woman*, from 1959.

Dozens of episodes later, it's clear that Hunter has stumbled on a winning formula. Children of

all ages, who are more accustomed to the fantastical voyages of new media such as video games and DVDs than to old-school flicks, rave about the program. [The National Telecommunications Educational Association](#), a consortium of public television licensees, honored the show in January 2008. And now educators and students worldwide can listen in.

SciFi Friday is among the many programs available free from [iTunes U](#), a new section of Apple's iTunes Store, which offers downloads for MP3 players. The online repository, launched in July, contains everything from course curricula and professional-development tips to student-journalism podcasts and school announcements. [The State Educational Technology Directors Association](#), a national organization that promotes leadership in technology to support lifelong learning, and several state education agencies have provided Apple with the K-12 content. So far, contributors in Arizona, California, Florida, Maine, Michigan, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Utah have uploaded materials to the site. ([Edutopia video](#) is also available.)

"We believe high-quality content is available everywhere on the net, and iTunes U collects all of that in one interface," says Kathleen Webb, principal of [Utah's Electronic High School](#) and educational-technology coordinator for the state's Department of Education. Webb, who contributes to the site and uses its resources, adds, "The thing that's exciting for us is that as others put high-quality content out there, it will be easier to integrate into our learning environment for our own students."

Brendan Murphy, the Advanced Placement calculus and statistics teacher at [John Bapst Memorial High School](#), in Bangor, Maine, makes up to five videos a week in which he solves math problems or answers student questions.

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CITY SCHOOL DISTRICT OF ALBANY

VIRTUAL PE

<http://thejournal.com/articles/2010/01/08/virtual-pe-no-sweat.aspx>



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Getting students to participate in physical education can be difficult at they get older and more and more body conscious. It is an issue that has plagued teachers for years. However, the role of physical education is more and more important given the rising rate of childhood obesity. So, what is a teacher to do? This article provides an excellent alternative. Here is an excerpt.

Tammy Cowan still chokes up every time she tells the story of how one student's life was forever changed by enrolling in her online gym class.

"I had a young lady in my class who was a heavyset girl, and she was frightened to death of doing the fitness test, of having to run the mile—she didn't want anybody to see her running," recalls Cowan, a physical education teacher for Minneapolis Public Schools (MPS). So she arranged for the girl to take the fitness test separately, when no other students would be around. "No one in her family had ever exercised. She was afraid of gym. It was sad, actually."

It was this fear that prompted the student to enroll in the district's online physical education class, offered through its online learning program, Minneapolis Public Schools Online. This would allow her to complete physical activity and written assignments on her own time. Little did she know the dramatic transformation she was about to undergo. As the course progressed, through the student's journal entries, Cowan says she could detect her rising confidence.

Murphy created the video podcasts as a part of Maine's [AP4All](#) [initiative, which brings AP courses via distance learning to students who otherwise wouldn't have access to them. But students in his regular classes started asking to see the podcasts, too. "This year, I'm going to do podcasts for the students I see every day," Murphy says. "What a great way to review for the test, and I never would have thought of that. It took the kids to ask, 'Why can't you do it for us as well?'"

(This is an excerpt from the article. Click on the link to read the entire article)

<http://www.edutopia.org/itunes-u-professional-development>

To access iTunes U just open up your iTunes which is on your classroom computer or can be downloaded for free at home.

[\(http://www.apple.com/itunes/\)](http://www.apple.com/itunes/)

Once iTunes is open iTunes U is at the top in black bar on the right.

