

Keeping up with Technology

A Guide to Web 2.0 Guides

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The past several years have witnessed the emergence of new ways to experience the World Wide Web. The term "Web 2.0" has been coined to describe the Web's transition from a collection of static websites containing information to a more dynamic, interactive, social, and content-sharing environment. Web 2.0 tools and services like blogs, wikis, podcasts, photo- and video-sharing sites, social networks, and virtual worlds are now being used daily by millions of people around the globe to connect, communicate, collaborate, create, and share with others.

One of the many challenges art teachers face is keeping abreast of emerging technologies and assessing their potential applicability in their classrooms. Fortunately, there are a number of online guides and websites intended to help teachers

and others learn about Web 2.0 technologies and how to use them.

One-Page Guides

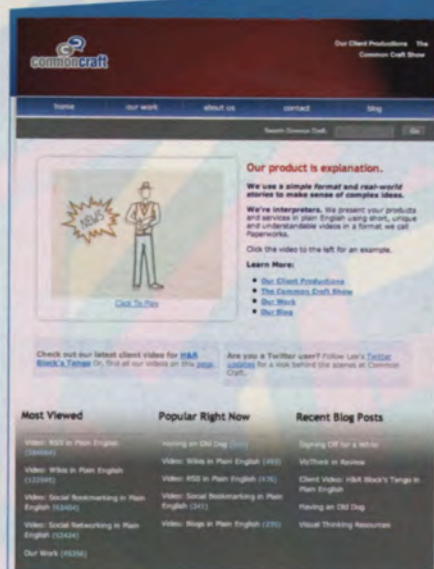
Tim Davies has produced an excellent series of one-page guides on various Web 2.0 applications and websites including photo-sharing with Flickr, social bookmarking with Del.icio.us, online video editing with MotionBox, reading RSS feeds with NetVibes, and collaborative writing with wikis (www.tim-davies.org.uk/tags/onepage). The guides are available as either PDF files for direct printing or as Word documents that you can edit and adapt for your own purposes.

7 Things You Should Know About...

Another great source for information on emerging technologies is the "7 Things You Should Know About..." series of briefs produced by EDUCAUSE, a nonprofit association whose mission is to advance higher education by promoting the intelligent use of information technology. Each brief focuses on a single technology or practice—such as Creative Commons, Digital Storytelling, Skype, Virtual Worlds, Wikipedia, and YouTube—and describes what it is, how it works, where it is going, and why it matters in education (www.educause.edu/ThingsYouShouldKnowAboutSeries/7495).

Web 2.0 Tutorial

Andrew Robitaille created the Web 2.0 Tutorial (web2tutorial.wikispaces.com) for educators. In it, he explains what the Web 2.0 is and focuses on various Web 2.0 tools



including RSS Feeds, social bookmarks, blogs, and wikis. Robitaille also discusses the educational benefits of each tool and provides links to numerous educational examples and additional resources where you can go for more information.

Common Craft Videos

For visual learners, Common Craft (www.commoncraft.com) creates short explanatory videos using simple diagrams and drawn figures to make complex ideas easier to understand. They have produced a very popular series of videos on various Web 2.0 tools and practices with such titles as "Wikis in Plain English," "Blogs in Plain English," and "Social Bookmarking in Plain English." If you're at all intimidated by talk of "Web 2.0," these videos are a great place to start learning about the new technologies that are now an integral part of the online experience of millions of people.

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