

Design touches every aspect of our lives, including the automobiles we drive, the books we read, the clothing we wear, the products we buy, the structures in which we live and work, and the websites we visit.



DESIGN RESOURCES on the WEB

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Engaging in the design process provides students with opportunities to look more critically at the world around them and to apply their creative problem-solving skills in tackling authentic problems and issues. These resources offer ideas and materials for planning design lessons and projects for your students.

Cooper-Hewitt's Educator Resource Center

The Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum maintains an Educator Resource Center at www.educatorresourcecenter.org. The site includes a wealth of materials related to the design process and how to teach it in the classroom. There are design-focused lesson plans, lists of curriculum guides and books, videos, an educator forum, and more. If you have questions about teaching design in your classroom or are looking for design-related ideas and methods for your students, check this site out.

IDESiGN:

Seven Ways of Design Thinking

Created by Dr. Charles Burnette, iDESiGN is an educational model for teaching children and young adults how to apply design thinking to any subject or situation. The term iDESiGN is an acronym that represents seven ways of thinking involved in designing: intending,

defining, exploring, suggesting, innovation, goal-getting, and knowing. The iDESiGN website, located at www.idesignthinking.com, provides a rationale for teaching design thinking, methods of interpreting, teaching, and applying the iDESiGN model in a variety of contexts, and assessment strategies. There are downloadable handouts and worksheets for classroom use.

People's Design Award

The 2006 People's Design Award was sponsored by the Cooper-Hewitt National Design Museum as a part of their annual National Design Awards, and was voted on by the public. You can view the 2006 winner along with many of the 500 designs nominated for the award at www.peoplesdesignaward.org. This is an excellent site for students to learn about "good design." Before they do so, you might have them bring to class an example of "good design" and one of "bad design." They could bring in actual items or pictures of the items. Next, have the students place the items they brought into two piles labeled "good design" and "bad design," and list the characteristics of each group. Follow up the group activity with a class discussion around the question of "What makes good design?" Students can visit the People's Design Award website and compare their choices and lists with the items featured on the site.

Electrolux Design Lab '06

Electrolux Design Lab is an annual design competition that invites undergraduate design students from around the globe to use their creativity to develop innovative ideas for household appliances of the future. You can view the finalists at www.electrolux.com/designlab. This year's competition focused on creating eco-friendly sustainable household appliances and solutions for 2020. This site could be used to inspire your students to create eco-friendly designs and to inform them of the importance of sustainability in design.

What in the World Is Graphic Design?

The American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) sponsors this site at whatintheworld.aiga.org, which I've featured in a previous column. It consists of three major sections that cover various roles of a graphic designer, advice on becoming a graphic designer, and different types of work environments for graphic designers. This is an excellent resource for high school students interested in pursuing a career in graphic design. ☺

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