

# Hans-On Technology

## Websites

These two websites are great for putting meaning and context to words. Shahi is a dictionary that “combines Wiktionary content with Flickr images” but it also gets them from yahoo and Google. Snappy Words is more of a graphic organizer, complete with parts of speech, synonyms, etc.

Tip: Preview both tools before using them with students; and key in words you’ll use in class.

## Tips

### **Right Click:**

You can choose how your Mac executes a right click in System Preferences. Choose Trackpad from the System Preferences menu, and look for “secondary click” options.

### **Student Laptops:**

Powering off student laptops before putting them away saves energy, but it can also significantly improve their performance.

## Article:

Science Shows Making Lessons Relevant Really Matters

by: Sara Bernard, Edutopia

## Where to Begin?

Often, the roadblock in the way of effective technology integration is knowing where to start. To that end, here are a few pointers:  
**-Use multimedia in your presentations.** Advanced organizers and nonlinguistic representations lend themselves well to the use of multimedia resources. They are also a great place to start, as many teachers already have presentations for

content. Adding audio, video, or other pictures is just a few clicks and can really help set the stage for learning.

**-Allow students to create.** Research shows that multimedia has the greatest effect on learning when the student is the creator.

**-Don’t wait until the end for projects.** Allowing students to choose or even design their own assignments is a powerful way to make content

relevant and activate critical thinking and problem solving.

**-Keep the focus on the content, not the tool.**

Students often begin technology projects by diving in and adding the “cool stuff” before they have thought about the goal. Guide them in planning and have rubrics for completed projects. This helps ensure that students are thinking critically about the content, not transitions or sound effects.

## Custom Google?

One of the most underutilized resources we have is Net Trekker. Never heard of it? It’s not Google, but it’s better in many ways. Net Trekker searches only sites approved by Kansas educators, has a built-in timeline tool, allows searching by readability level, has a tab for English learners, a different look depending on grade levels, and will even read aloud text from websites! What a great tool for student research! Access Net Trekker (and lots of other tools) through learningstation. If you need help or would like a demo, just ask me.

## PUGs

The Promethean User Groups are underway! Anyone can come to any meeting; so don’t feel like missing one or two meetings prevents you from joining now. Each meeting has two parts; a skill that we learn and practice, and a Q&A session from the group. Check the 418 Events calendar for dates and times. Locations change and are announced monthly. Join us!!

## Suggestions

Please email or call with any suggestions you have for this newsletter. The goal of this publication is to keep you informed about technology topics in USD #418, provide simple and quick tips and tricks, and hopefully you get something useful here or there.