

Hans-On Technology

Website

www.aviary.com is a powerful set of creation tools online. Edit images, create music, edit audio, create effects, and much more for free. A must-see for music, art, and student-created projects.

Tip

Take screenshots by holding command, shift, and pressing 3. Take an area snapshot by pressing 4 instead. You will see a small crosshair that you can click and drag over the area you'd like to capture. Screenshots appear on the desktop.

FYI

Ever have a web page with pictures load very slowly? Google is working on a new image format that may, someday, change all that. It's called WebP.

[Read more about it here.](#)

Tech Rage

Just like driving, using technology can be frustrating. But, we can't give up using it any more than most of us can give up driving.

A recent blog on Edutopia's website by Andrew Marcinek discusses these frustrations, and how to overcome them. Here's an excerpt from the article:

"We must realize that

not trying technology is doing our students a major disservice. Again, using technology will be frustrating at first, but give yourself some time to get used to it and set up some time with your Instructional Technology Specialist. Technology is not something you have to use everyday, but sprinkle it in when you feel it is applicable and will enhance your teaching and students' learning."

Although it sounds as if I paid Mr. Marcinek to plug my services, he speaks from experience. Research shows that any technology initiative is more successful when ongoing, sustained staff development is available to support teachers in their efforts. Give me a call, and we'll figure it out together. ☺

[Read the entire article here.](#)

Automation vs. Innovation

Teachers beginning to use technology in their classrooms often begin with a misconception that automating things is good integration. Things like websites that drill basic skills may be useful to increase test scores, but using available tools to create, analyze, solve problems, and innovate are what help students think at a higher level and more deeply learn content-and that is the kind of learning that keeps students from being "tricked" on tests when the context changes.

PUG Update

The Promethean User Groups will start this month. Look for emails inviting you to join us at various locations. If you would like to volunteer your room as a meeting location, let me know.

We're going to have a topic in mind, but will always allow for time after each session for questions, tips, and suggestions from the group.

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.