

Editor's Comments: Who Has Time?

Time. Now there's a word that we often hear in the teacher's lounge. I don't have time at school to learn this new program they want us to implement. When do I have the time to attend training sessions? Sure wish I could be trained at a time that is convenient to me!

Interest and relevant. Yes, those are two other words often mentioned in the teacher's lounge. Educators are generally interested in learning and trying out new ideas, however only if they feel they are relevant to what they are doing in the classroom. But are staff development sessions always relevant to the individual needs and interests of educators? Sometimes they are, and sometimes they are not.

Fortunately today's educators have many different opportunities to individualize their own training based on personal interest and relevance to what they teach. Best of all, these opportunities can be at times convenient to a teacher's schedule. For example, Harley Miles' article, "A Quick Guide to Virginia's Community of Learning: Its Use and Support," explains how a teacher can access the VCOL Web site at any time to gain access to four general neighborhoods: Classrooms, Technologies, Professional Development, and Resources. These four neighborhoods provide a variety of resources to preservice, inservice, postservice educators, as well as to the general public.

My favorite part of the VCOL site is Spotlight on Classrooms. It is an up-to-date resource of links covering teaching tips and teaching tools, lesson plan ideas and resources for specific subject areas. The other strength of this Web site is the opportunity for teachers to contribute their favorite lesson plans. However, in order for the VCOL Web site to stay current and relevant, volunteers are needed to monitor and gather contributions. What a wonderful way for VSTE members to share their expertise and ideas!

In another article by Debra Sprague entitled, "Using Webcasts to Model Technology Integration," K-12 educators from Northern Virginia are described as mentors to the GMU faculty as they provide models for effect use of technology, demonstrate educational software and web-based programs, and assist university faculty in redesigning teacher preparation courses. Webcasting is a major component of this mentorship program and involves teacher and student demonstrations of how technology is used in the classroom. Broadcasted as live streaming video sent over the Internet, these events are also available for download from the project's Web site. I especially like the fact that I can download and view what I want to learn at a time most convenient to me!

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Editor's Comments, continued

Want to learn how to effectively engage in digital video production and filmmaking projects in the classroom? Nikos Thoedosakis discusses how problem-solving, logic, planning, and analytical skills are used in the process of making films in his article, "How Digital Filmmaking Develops Higher-Order Thinking Skills." He even offers to us the opportunity to "pick his brain" via e-mail if we want to learn more than what is offered on the Tech4Learning Web site. Go ahead, send that e-mail any time, day or night!

Best of all, the VSTE Journal is one of the best ways to learn what is new and emerging in the use of technology in education. How has the use of technology benefited the students in your classroom? What exciting technology innovations are being developed in school systems and higher-education institutions? What research discoveries are being made in how technology effects learning?

We would love it if you would take the time to submit an interesting, technology-relevant article for the next issue of the VSTE Journal. Visit <http://www.vste.org/communication/journal.html> to view the guidelines and then submit the article to the Editorial Board via editors@vste.org.

Diane DeMott Painter, Ph.D.
Managing Editor, VSTE Journal
dpainter@vste.org

