" The fates guide those who go willingly;

Those who do not, they drag."

Footsteps to On-Line Communication

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As a teacher you are no doubt aware of the magnitude of the impact on communication within the field of education.

A July 2002 survey from the PEW Internet and American life Project shows that 78 percent of children between the ages of 12 and 17 go online regularly. Internet savvy students rely on the Internet to help them do homework and draw upon 'up-to-date' sources and 'state-of –the-art knowledge'. The survey found that most students also correspond online with others.

 It is time for educators to become leaders and guides in the online world of communication.

Now that you are willing and ready in to step into the world of online communication, where do you start, and how do you wade through the overwhelming abundance of information on the Internet… and how do you establish a web site that will provide quality

communication with your students, families and community?

Here is a place to begin. Follow along the path of our five basic steps to establishing a quality web site where you can join the world of online communication.
  Where and How to Create a Website
  What to do to Make it Shine
  Providing Top Notch Resources
  Criteria For Quality Web Sites
 Rubrics to Create and Evaluate

(footprint) I. WHERE AND HOW TO CREATE A WEB SITE

THE FOLLOWING ON-LINE WEB EDITORS FOR TEACHERS GIVE YOU A GREAT STARTING POINT FOR YOUR NEW WEB SITE

SchoolNotes.com
www.schoolnotes.com

Schoolnotes.com is a free web page hosting service for teachers. A more versatile version is available for $11.95 per year. The free basic version gives a note page where teachers may post homework, assignments or web resource links.

The interface was easy to navigate and easy to use. There are many features like save and notify which will email parents and students who have signed up of any changes when the teacher makes them. Another feature is an information newsletter. The account management page allows the teacher to look at the *Show Notify List* to see how many parents and students want emailed updates.
        Regular Edition features:
                1-spellcheck
                2-favorite links
                3-email
                4-School Info
                5-Colors of page and text

6-Flashcards
7-Text book links
The Personal Edition at accost of $11.95 per year, offers extra features such as:
1-Text Editor for the manipulation of text
2-The ability to up load files and pictures
3-Amodern banner
4-Targeted Resources a teacher may direct students to
5-A Curriculum Matrix with lessons tied to state standards
See a sample at:
Mr. Branaman
 http://www.schoolnotes.com/95687/branaman.html

TEACHERWEB.com
http://teacherweb.com/
TeacherWeb.com is a subscription based web page hosting service for teachers. The cost for the service is $2.50 per month or $25.00 per year. Discounts are available for school sites and may be paid for with a purchase order.

The interface for teacher input is straight forward- fill in the blanks, enter password and submit changes. The home page comes with page links to pages titled: Announcements, Homework, Teacher, FAQ, Links and Calendar. The contents of the home page can be modified many ways and a resetable visit counter may be added. Graphics and pictures may be added from a library provided or uploaded by the page owner.

TeacherWeb.com has a sister site Worknotes.com. This site offers a similar service for family, student, club business, sport team and other organizations to author a web page. The student web page they call a student organizer. This page may be linked to their teachers web pages from TeacherWeb with hot links to homework and assignments. Links may be included to coaches, clubs and activities pages also.

This site can be used with little or no web site construction experience just basic word processing skills.

See samples at:
Ms. Olson
http://TeacherWeb.com/CA/VacaPenaMiddleSchool/KOlson/
Mr. Branaman
http://TeacherWeb.com/ca/vacapenamiddleschool/mrbranaman

MySchoolOnline.com

http://www.myschoolonline.com/golocal/

Myschoolonline is a subscription based web page hosting service for teachers. The cost is $29.95 per year. The interface is extensive and appears very powerful. Templates are available to create pages for lists, schedules, assignments, links page, newsletters and showcase of images. Connection pages can be made to provide links for students to access information. The entire site is managed thru the use of folders. The entire site can be viewed via an outline map. Site organization can be done in the site map view. Images may be added from a provided library or uploaded from a teachers' computer.
This site seams to be geared for someone with some web page development experience than other services.

See samples at:
Ms. Bertalan
 http://www.myschoolonline.com/site/0,1876,2035-151573-1-45803,00.html
Mr. Branaman
http://www.myschoolonline.com/site/0,1876,1952-207158-1-102236,00.html

(footprint) II.   **WHAT TO DO TO MAKE IT SHINE**

NOW THAT YOU HAVE SELECTED A SOURCE TO PROVIDE YOUR PRESENCE ON THE WEB, HERE ARE RESOURCES YOU MAY WANT TO USE TO MAKE SURE YOUR WEBSITE SHINES

SBC Knowledge Network

SBC Knowledge Network provides an abundance of resources that support meaningful on-line communication. Established in 1995, The Knowledge network remains current and provides information, tools, lessons, and ready-made formats for online projects and activities.
http://www.kn.pacbell.com/

ISTE International Society for Technology and Education

ISTE is an outstanding site for educator resources, professional development, current research and data, and technology standards. ISTE is a nonprofit professional organization with a worldwide membership of leaders in Educational Technology dedicated to "providing leadership and service to improve teaching and learning by advancing the effective use of technology in K–12 education and teacher education. "
http://www.iste.org/

Info People

Info Peopleis a product of the California State Library System. The project is designed to improve the quality of online information access by supporting skills resources and tools. The Infopeople Project is supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services under the provisions of the Library Services and Technology Act. The site is a great resource for training and tutorials on how to establish a Web presence.
http://www.infopeople.org/

OTHER SOURCES FOR TIPS AND TOOLS FOR ONLINE COMMUNICATING
http://internetbrothers.com/
http://www.ozline.com/
http://webhelp.ucs.ed.ac.uk/

(footprint) III, **PROVIDING TOP NOTCH RESOURCES**

YOU HAVE ESTABLISHED A QUALITY WEB SITE, AND MADE IT SHINE, NOW YOU WANT TO ENSURE YOUR STUDENTS ARE ACCESSING VALID, RELIABLE RESOURCES FOR THEIR PROJECTS AND ASSIGNMENTS .

Online! Is an excellent site for resources and references. This site links to valid, quality sites for research and information. The reference section for online citation is current and provides updated information on MLA Style, APA Style and others. The Online! site also provides information for citation and ethical use of a variety of Internet communications including email, web discussion, listserv, newsgroup, Telnet, FTP, and gopher sites.
http://www.bedfordstmartins.com/online/index.html

 BJ Pincnbeck's Homework Helper has been a reliable source for quality links to educational resources since the onset of the original site back in 1996.
Currently hosted by DiscoverySchool, BJ Pinchbeck's site continues to provide the best of current links supporting educational endeavors for a vast audience.
http://school.discovery.com/homeworkhelp/bjpinchbeck/

Houghton Mifflin Education Place is a good example of a commercial site providing sound educational resources in concrete curriculum areas. Now more than ever students and parents, as well as teachers are feeling the pressure to own the information that their children need to find success within the current standards defined for curriculum throughout the states.
http://www.eduplace.com/

Multnoma County Library
A fine example of public library Internet resource sites established throughout the country with federal and state funds. The site is a

categorical format with links to a special children's section as well as a very complete list of other current resource sites. The site is maintained and updated on a regular basis.
http://www.multcolib.org/homework

(footprint) IV. CRITERIA FOR QUALITY WEB SITES

IF WE WANT OUR WEB SITES TO BE CREDIBLE, IT IS NECESSARY TO KNOW THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A QUALITY SITE. CHECK OUT THESE SITES FOR INFORMATION ON EVALUATING WEB SITES…BOTH YOUR OWN AND THOSE YOUR STUDENTS ACCESS

Evaluating Web Pages: Techniques to Apply and Questions to Ask
http://www.lib.berkeley.edu/TeachingLib/Guides/Internet?evaluate.html
This web site, maintained by the library at the University of California in Berkeley, covers various techniques of locating the information one needs to know when evaluating web pages. Viewers are encouraged to think critically, "even suspiciously" when judging the validity of web pages. A list of questions with corresponding implications covers major issues that affect the quality of the information found on a particular site. A cross-referenced glossary is linked to the page, as well as links to other web evaluation sites. There are also links to directories of web pages. An essay on why evaluation is important and an exercise in evaluating sample web sites also contribute to the usefulness of this site. The site has been updated with new links and updated information added for the Fall of 2003.

But I found it on the Internet!
http://search.csmonitor.com/durable/2000/04/25/p16s1.htm
This article by Alexander Colhoun appeared in the Christian Science Monitor (4/25/00). The author makes a case for the importance of evaluating web sites used by young students. The information would be helpful to use when presenting material on web site evaluation to teachers, administrators, or community members. The article is linked to a short evaluation checklist which is based on the Yahooligan Four A principles (accessibility, accuracy, appropriateness, and appeal). The author concludes that there are

actually few web sites for students under fourteen that meet all of the desirable criteria.

Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators
www.school.discovery.com/schrockguide/eval.html
This site is maintained as a part of Discovery Communications, Inc. Information on this site has been teacher reviewed. The easy-to-follow format includes "Critical Evaluation Surveys" to be used when judging web sites designed for use at the elementary, middle, and secondary school level. There is also survey information in Spanish. Links include those to other publications by the author, a number of other sites on evaluation of web sites from other sources, and links of sites to use for demonstrating the importance of critical evaluation.

(footprint) V, RUBRICS TO CREATE AND EVALUATE

TO COMPLETE YOUR SITE, YOU WILL WANT TO INCLUDE TOOLS FOR AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT. THE FOLLOWING SITES PROVIDE VALUABLE INFORMATION AND RESOURCES FOR EVALUATING WEB SITES FOR TEACHERS AND STUDENTS

Roberta's Rubrics Page
http://www.mckinneyisd.net/sjms/Rubrics/rubric.html
This site was created as a tool for staff developers who wish to introduce rubrics to their staffs. It begins with the basics (what is a rubric and what is authentic assessment) and includes step by step directions for writing your own rubric. Many sample rubrics are included in a wide variety of subject areas. There is a rubric template and an online rubric-creating tool. You will also find interesting articles about rubrics and authentic assessment. Finally, there is a PowerPoint presentation about rubics and why/how they are used.

The Blue Web'N SBC Knowledge Network Page
http://www.kn.pacbell.com/wired/bluewebn/rubric.html
This is the rubric that the well-respected Blue Web'N uses to select the highest quality web resources for inclusion. It guides teachers in evaluating three main areas: format, content, and learning process. A more detailed version of this evaluation guide can be found at http://www.open.k12.or.us/jitt/charact.html. The focus on learning process is particuarly helpful to educators. To make the grade at Blue

Web'N, a site must be engaging, develop higher-order thinking skills (HOTS), and appeal to multiple intelligences.

A Rubric for Evaluating WebQuests, by Bernie Dodge
http://webquest.sdsu.edu/webquestrubric.html
This site will help you discern the really well done webquest from the just so-so. It will also be an aid when you or your students are writing original webquests. It is best used in tandem with the webquest template, found at
http://webquest.sdsu.edu/LessonTemplate.html since each area of this rubric corresponds with a section of the template.
Dodge also includes a fine points checklist:
http://projects.edtech.sandi.net/staffdev/tpss99/finepoints/finepointschecklist.html to help you get it just right.