

Maintaining a Netvibes Page

I absolutely loved creating and maintaining my Netvibes page! This is an incredible tool for me to continue to use to grow as an educator. Netvibes is a great resource for my professional development because it allows me to stay updated on news in education, communicate with other teachers, enhance my teaching by learning about new technologies and teaching strategies, and it makes it easy and convenient for me to learn! I found some exceptional feeds to subscribe to, including: Free Technology for Teachers, Elearnspace, BlogBoard, NPR Education, Tech & Learning, The Teacher's Podcast, Education Week, and Tammy's Tech Tip of the Week. All of these feeds have a variety to offer and I really enjoyed reading about topics that were particularly interesting to me.

I found that tracking changes to these pages on a routine basis was something that I looked forward to doing. I was curious to see what new articles or topics were being discussed as well as what new skills or strategies I might learn about for my classroom. I found that certain feeds, such as Free Technology for Teachers, Tech & Learning, and Education Week had new feeds every few hours where as other feeds such as BlogBoard, Elearnspace, and NPR Topics did not have new feeds as often and tended to post new articles every couple of days or so. I liked that each blog listed the title of the new article, so that I could easily search for topics that I was interested in.

One blog that I commented on was: *Class Size Debate Out of Focus?* The article was debating the issue of class size versus teacher effectiveness. The BlogBoard commented: *“It’s actually a frustrating story because (a) there really isn’t much of a debate about whether class size matters more than teacher effectiveness, the research is clear it doesn’t, effectiveness matters more and (b) most districts pay little attention to effectiveness when they lay off teachers. Or much at all.”* I commented: *“I also disagree and think class size definitely matters. The more students you have the less time you have to spend with each individual. Students benefit from individual attention and individualized instruction. Teacher effectiveness is definitely an important element but not the only one to consider.”* I enjoyed reading other teachers’ comments and hearing different points of view. I also commented on the blog *“Food for Thought”* through the Free Technology for Teachers Feed. The blog displayed a picture of a projector and posed this question: *“If displaying notes using one of these counts as technology integration, have your teaching methods changed?”* This brought up a very interesting discussion about teachers not changing their teaching strategies but instead just trying to incorporate a little technology in with the old mold of teaching.

I learned a great deal from my Netvibes page. I was able to increase my repertoire of technology resources, communicate with other educators on relevant educational issues, and acquire new teaching techniques and strategies. I read about budget, testing, and technology issues among schools, districts and states. I learned about a multitude of free technology tips, such as panoramic views Google maps feature, grammar eBooks, grammar interactive websites,

whiteboard resources, and so much more. I also learned about certain tendencies I have as a learner. I found myself drawn to technology sites and interactive media and found that I was not that interested in Education News related to more of the political/business aspects of teaching. I would like to challenge myself to take more of an active role in learning about the new happenings related to education at the state and national level.

I am definitely planning on using the content from my Netvibes page as a resource to improve my teaching this year. I want to continue to check my Netvibes page on a daily basis so that I can incorporate new strategies into the classroom. I want to introduce Netvibes to the rest of the teaching staff at my school so that we can all take advantage of this excellent resource. I also want to make myself stay more organized with all the new information that I am learning. I found that I would read up on new articles that interest me and then forget to jot notes and make lists of websites/activities related to the article so that I could find and use them in the future. From now on, I would like to keep different folders related to the topics in my Netvibes page so that I can have the resources organized so that it makes it easy for me to implement them into my classroom.

These are the websites of the news feeds I subscribed to on my Netvibes page:

<http://www.freetech4teachers.com/>

<http://www.elearnspace.org/blog/>

<http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/blogboard/>

<http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=1013&ft=1&f=1013>

<http://www.techlearning.com/>

<http://www.teacherspodcast.org/>

<http://www.edweek.org/ew/index.html>

<http://www.tammyworchester.com/TipOfWeek/TammyWTechTipOfWeek/TammyWTechTipOfWeek.html>

