VoiceThreads in the Classroom

'Participation is not optional'

A VoiceThread allows every child in a class to record audio commentary about the ideas and experiences that are important to them. Whether it's an event, a project, or a milestone, children can tell their story in their own voice, and then share it with the world. For teachers, a VoiceThread offers a single vessel to capture and then share all the diverse personalities of an entire class. A VoiceThread can be managed with little effort, creating an heirloom that can be shared by students, parents, and educators alike. You can hear the pride and excitement in their voices as the students "publish" and archive their work.

Behind every photo, drawing, or project, is at least one story, and often many more. VoiceThreads offer a simple way to capture and share them. This act of 'publishing' a creation which can then be seen all the way from Cheyenne to Shanghai, strongly reinforces the message we try to send to our children everyday, that their work is great, and worthy of the world's attention.

VoiceThreads are free for educators! Creating VoiceThreads will always be free for educators and the kids that fill their classrooms. This includes publishing them on the web, and sharing them with the child's friends and family. Voicethread will only charge for extras like prints or downloadable movie versions in the future. It's really important to us that there is no barrier to entry, no cost to fully participate, no software to buy or download, and no contracts to manage.

Step by Step

1. Register and create a new account for each class using a unique e-mail address like mrsMcgillicuttyclass06@voicethread.com - you can get a new e-mail addresses from your current Internet service provider or get a free one from yahoo.com or similar

2. Go to the Create page and make the VoiceThread by importing images.

3. On the Account & Identities page add a new identity for each student (this consists of nothing more than a picture and a first name.)

4. Have your students prepare to comment on the images by at least thinking about 'the story' behind the images, and even better, to write a script for their commentary.

5. Now when you are viewing the VoiceThread and one of the students wants to comment on a particular image, you simply click the word "Switch" in the upper right hand corner, choose that child's 'identity', and now they are all set to comment.

That's it; you're all set to make a classroom VoiceThread. After the VoiceThread is complete, send invitations out to all the parents. You can even choose to add a page at the end of your book for the parents to leave their comments. The VoiceThread is private, and only viewable by people whom you invite. After you've made a couple of VoiceThreads you can experiment and explore other formats, i.e. poetry reading and VoiceThreads made and narrated by individual students. The possibilities are limitless. Also, please give us feedback on your experience through the link on our site (it's on the bottom of almost every page).