



THUTONG

SOUTH AFRICAN EDUCATION PORTAL



www.thutong.org.za

TOOLS, TIPS, INFORMATION AND CONVERSATIONS ONLINE

Teachers who share

Beyond providing access to current information and a platform for quick and easy communications the Internet also offers an amazing range of tools for teachers. There are templates for reports, mark books and lesson plans, timetable and rubric creation tools and even citation (recording resources) applications. A simple search will source a vast number of resources and thus it really helps to access what other people have found and generously shared. A few examples of this are the following:



Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators: this site, hosted by Discovery Education <<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schrockguide/>>, is a treasure chest of educational tools and resources. "Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators is a categorised list of sites useful for enhancing curriculum and professional growth. It is updated often to include the best sites for teaching and learning". This particular site deserves quite a lot of time spent on it as Kathy has included much that can be easily used in the South African context. Website evaluation, critical evaluation tools, Webquest information as well as tools like Puzzlemaker can all be found.



Another person who has shared of her expertise is Dr Sheila Gersh well known for her site Teaching with the Internet <<http://www.schoollink.org/twin/>>. Although nearly ten years old, the site is a valuable resource especially as it links to rubric makers and citation 'machines' such as the one on Landmark Project <<http://citationmachine.net/>>. Sheila is

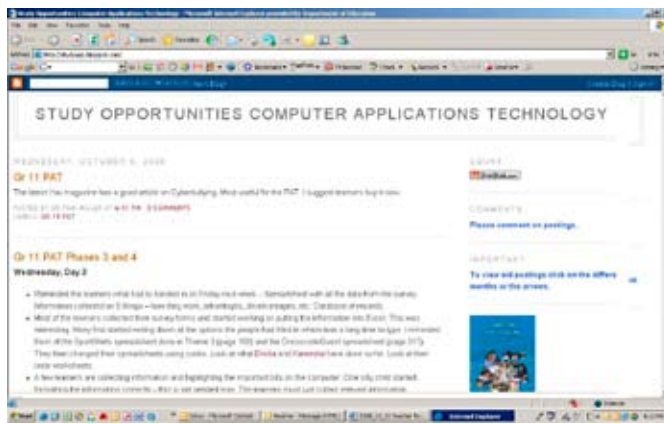
also very involved in online projects such as Culture Quest and this link also takes you to her "A Field Guide to Cross-Cultural Projects" which includes many other international projects <<http://www.schoollink.org/twin/CQArticle.htm>>. Another of her interests is e-Pals Global Community <<http://www.epals.com/about/tour/index.tpl>> - a wonderful way of connecting classrooms through projects, within a protected environment.



Other international luminaries in the field of education are Pam Berger <<http://www.infosearcher.com/>>, Linda Langford <<http://csusap.csu.edu.au/~llangfor/>> who recently spoke at the ISASA conference and who is a specialist in information literacy and also Joyce Valenza <<http://teacherlibrarian.ning.com/>> who runs a very popular Ning – a social networking platform for teacher librarians. Ning is an online platform for users to create their own social websites and social networks, launched in October <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/2005>>. Ning was co-founded by <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marc_Andreessen> and <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gina_Bianchini>. Ning means "peace" in Chinese, as explained by Gina Bianchini on the company blog and it is also a surname in Chinese. [Accessed from Wikipedia on 10 October 2008] <<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ning>>



Jamie McKenzie <<http://fno.org/>> is another specialist in the field of technology, information literacy and education. He was also a keynote speaker at a South African conference – IASL 2003 – and is well known for his balanced view regarding computers and books. One can subscribe to his website called From Now On and receive his very educational and thought provoking articles. There are also many other teachers who have shared of their knowledge including South African ones.



Dr Pam Miller has her tip sheets available online <<http://www.compmat.wcape.school.za/PHS/tips.htm>> and also her Blog <<http://studyopp.blogspot.com/>>.



Maggie Verster has created a Wiki called SA Schools support Wiki <<http://saschools.wetpaint.com/>> and this is another opportunity to become involved. Both of these teachers have shared their knowledge on the Thutong Education Portal <<http://www.thutong.org.za>> in the ICT space. In conclusion, the challenge is now for us to encourage more teachers to share locally. Schools very often have an Intranet which is password protected but imagine if we were to federate useful resources within these Intranets and make them available to teachers elsewhere, possibly using the Thutong portal, what a service that would be to South African education.