

Lecture
Handout (attached separately)
Discussion Questions

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Notes/descriptions are written in Italics/parentheses and sometimes appear as endnotes.

Free and Fun (Mostly) Web-Based Tools for Your School Library

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Welcome! My name is Heather Braum and I am the Technology Support Specialist here at the Northeast Kansas Library System. My normal job is to travel around to NEKLS public libraries and assist them with technology needs, but today I wanted to take some time to share with you, several free, web-based and software tools that will greatly help you reach your students and teachers at your schools. I had the opportunity to take a class this spring through Emporia State that was all about technology in the school library, and I learned about most of the tools I will be showing you today in that class. If you take a handout (*pass out handout*), you'll be able to see what tools we'll be looking at, with short descriptions, the website, and what registration information (if any), is required.

Today's session mostly will be demoing the software and web-based tools on the screen in front of us, but if you have a laptop, feel free to follow along and try out the applications on your own. Ideally, this would be a day-long workshop just on this subject, and we'd then be able to play around with each tool. Unfortunately, I just have the next two hours with you to demonstrate and then discuss how these tools can be used in your library and school classrooms. For the first hour, we'll go through the tools listed on the handout. Then we'll take a break. In the second hour, we'll break up into groups and discuss ways you can use these tools in your classrooms and libraries. Then, we'll share the ideas you came up with as a group. Finally, we'll wrap it up with an open discussion about other tools you've found on your own, concerns or questions you might have. Throughout our time together, I will be asking for questions, comments, ideas. It's really a discussion between all of us! Many of you may have already used these tools. At the same time, however, many of you may never have heard of any of them. So please, feel free to interrupt me at any moment or insert comments, ideas, or suggestions throughout this entire presentation.

The first tool we're going to be looking at is [280slides](#). This website allows you to create web-based presentations on the fly. How many of you have ever had teachers walk into your library five minutes before a class wanting something presented or demonstrated, and

¹ *The organization I work for and whom I would be giving this presentation under.*

² *The date that this presentation was first given, but I would like to use it at other regional and statewide workshops and want to make it a much more beneficial presentation.*

you don't have time to do? With 280slides, you can sit down at your computer, quickly create a presentation with the needed information, and send it to the teacher or the students to view on their own. Depending on the content you add, you wouldn't even have to be there in class to give the presentation! Students can view the presentation on their own computers in a lab, at home, or on their own laptops, if your school has a one-to-one laptop program. 280slides enables you to not be tied to a software program that may only be on certain computers, or a program your school can't afford to be many licenses of. (***Demo how easy it is to create a presentation using 280slides***). You'll be able to access the presentation from any computer. How cool and helpful is that? (***Ask for questions, comments, ideas***).

Next, we'll quickly look at [SlideShare](#), a place where you can share presentations and see other users' presentations. It's a way to share information and also learn new things. As anyone can register and use SlideShare, anyone can put anything up there, but it's still a great place to stumble upon other presentations, get ideas, etc. You can also upload presentations you've created, using powerpoint or keynote and access those presentations there. You'll need to register (it's free!) to upload presentation. You can choose to make them public or privately shared. Downloadable or not downloadable. It's a great way to share presentations with your students and teachers, especially when you can't be present to teach them something. (***Demo SlideShare; show my presentations***³). (***Ask for questions, comments, ideas***).

Moving on, we're going to quickly look at Google Reader. You'll need to have a Google Account set up to use this -- it's free. How many of you know what RSS is? (***Wait for answers***). Some of you don't? Ok, let's stop and watch this quick video, *What is RSS in Plain English?* (<http://tinyurl.com/25b9qn>).

[Google Reader](#) is an RSS Feed reader. It's the one I use every day, to keep track of many different websites that publish feeds. I keep tabs on LOLcats, Library News, Mac news, technology tips, Kansas libraries, and friends' websites, all through Google Reader. I go in each day, and read the latest changes to the websites I've added to Google Reader. It's kind of like an email program, except it tracks changes to webpages. It's a one-stop place for you to keep track of all the information you're trying to stay on top of. You'll understand it better if we take a look at my Google Reader setup. (***Demo Google Reader***). There are other RSS feed readers, including [Bloglines](#) (another web-based RSS reader). On your handout, I've listed several starting websites to add to your RSS feed reader. You'll find your own favorites, as you enter the world of RSS! (***Ask for questions, comments, ideas***).

Do you ever get tired of forgetting a document at home? Or not having an application on a computer to open a document? What if you were able to create your word processing documents, spreadsheets, and even presentations, all in one place, on the web, oh, and also have the added option to share with others? [Google Docs](#) is your answer! I've listed another possible online office suite on your handout, Zoho. You'll need your Google

³ Am unable to link to them here, as my presentations are not shared publicly

account again, to log in and use Google Docs. (**Demo Google Docs and ask for questions, comments, ideas**)

iTunes University has been around for awhile, but Apple has just added several states' [K-12 specific content](#). Using Apple's iTunes software ([free download](#)), you can listen to/watch/download/print thousands of hours of educational content from university professors and K-12 schools and teachers, all for free! The K-12 section of iTunesU only launched at the beginning of July, so look for this section to continue to increase in size and variety of content (**Demo; Ask for questions, comments, ideas**).

Moving on, let's take a look at a social bookmarking tool, [Delicious](#). What's social bookmarking? Let's watch another quick video (<http://tinyurl.com/28qhop>). Have a better grasp on social bookmarking? You can use it to track good website suggestions for your students' research projects, resources for your teachers, websites for your own, professional or personal use, allow your students to create bookmarks and share them. Oh -- and because it's web-based, it follows you from computer to computer! The possibilities are endless. As you saw in the video, the true power of social bookmarking comes through being able tag, or, describe the bookmarks, and also see who added the same bookmark, what else they have bookmarked, and how they've described the bookmark. You'll need to registration for a free account, to use Delicious. (**Demo Delicious**). Here's my [bookmarks](#). All or almost all of the links in this presentation can be found in my delicious account, with the tag, [schlibnekls08](#), to help you quickly locate the related links to this presentation. (**Ask for questions, comments, ideas**).

Several online tools exist for keeping track of bibliographies as your students create bibliographies for projects. Two such tools are listed on your handout. [Easybib](#) is a website, that in a limited, free capacity, allows students to create bibliographies in MLA format. Individual paid accounts and school accounts are available that enable a lot more features. [Zotero](#) is a Firefox extension, that is managed through the Firefox web browser.

I was going to demo these tools, but there's another tool I'm going to demonstrate for you instead. It's called [Citationmachine](#) (and is not found on your handout because I just learned about it, talking to someone right before this presentation); it can be found at <http://citationmachine.net/>. It is a free tool, and will create bibliographies online, in MLA, APA, Turabian, and Chicago formats. Let's take a look at Citationmachine together, as I've never seen it before, either.⁴ (**Demo; ask for questions, comments, ideas**).

Next, we're going to quickly look at [Jing](#). It's a software and web-based screen capture software. Still in beta, this software (which is for both Mac and Windows) allows you to capture screenshots or quick, 5-minute videos of your screen. It's great for when a teacher or student needs a quick demo of something, but you don't necessarily have the time to sit down with them. Download and install Jing to your computer, create your screenshots

⁴ This really happened in the first run-through of this presentation. I thought this made a great addition to the presentation, as it shows that I, too, learn about new tools all the time, and it paves the way for the group to walk through the tool together.

and/or video, save it, upload it to the web or email it to the student/teacher/class who needs the demo. You can label screenshots; capture audio through a microphone. The software is quite powerful -- and free, at this time! It's easy to use, and you don't have to be a graphic designer or have a video-editing program to create your demo. Let's look at how easy it is to use. You'll need to create an account the first time you install the Jing software. (**Demo Jing; ask for questions, comments, ideas**).

Quickly moving on, because it looks like our first hour together is about to end, the next three tools are fairly self-explanatory. [Tadalist](#), an online to-do list manager, is great for keeping track of all your tasks, online, instead of on 20 sticky notes that are on your desk and get left behind or lost, all the time. It requires free registration. (**Demo Tadalist; ask for questions, comments, ideas**)

[Tinyurl](#) is a web site that shortens lengthy websites to short and easy-to-read links. It's great for handouts, articles, or emails, where you can create a tinyurl and send that link, instead of the 200-character link. (**Demo Tinyurl; ask for questions, comments, ideas**).

Finally, my personal favorite out of all these tools, is [Wordle](#). Wordle is a web-based application that takes text and creates a display of the text, based on the most-used words. The image you see on your handout, next to Wordle is a great example of how this works. You copy some text or have your Delicious bookmarks information ready, go the Wordle website, click on the Create link, and then add the Delicious information or paste your text, and then the website generates a word picture for you. I took the text of the handout to create the image. You can save the picture to the public gallery or take a screenshot of it to share with others. The possibilities are endless! (**Demo Wordle some more; ask for questions, comments, ideas**).

At the end of your handout, you'll find links to several articles that discuss many other web-based tools, that are especially useful for students, teachers, and school librarians.

Now, we're going to take a quick 5-minute break and then break up into groups of 4 or 5 for our first discussion.

Break

Now, we're going break up into groups of 4 or 5, and discussion the following for about 15-20 minutes. Choose 3 tools mentioned in the demo and brainstorm ways you can use them to reach your students and teachers, i.e., lessons, online tutorials, resources, etc.. (15-20 minutes) If you have extra time, brainstorm ideas for some of the other tools. Be creative! :) Then, be ready to share your ideas with the group as a whole (15-20 minutes). I'll be walking around, listening in, seeing if any group needs guidance or direction. Feel free to ask questions!

Come back as a large group. (20 minutes)

Who wants to go first? (*etc., write down and keep track of all ideas*). I'll be recording all your ideas, and have a document ready to be shared with you by the end of this presentation, using one of the tools we've discussed. As your colleagues share their ideas, feel free to jump in and add other ideas and suggestions if you've thought of similar uses for these tools.

Wrap-up time together. (5-10 minutes)

Are there any other questions? Final discussion? Well, I hope this session has given you several ideas to try out with your students and teachers this next school year. Feel free to contact me if you ever have questions; my email address is listed on your handout. As I mentioned during our group discussion, I was going to keep track of all of your ideas. Here's the link to that document (**a publicly shared Google Doc; give the link**). Thanks for being such a great audience!