

# Open Book

a K-12 Tech Playbook for Teachers

[Dell.com/ConnectedClassroom](http://Dell.com/ConnectedClassroom)



# Welcome to the **social** revolution

Imagine a building filled with every person you have ever met, will meet or would want to meet. They are waiting patiently to hear about your latest teaching method that's engaging your students, see the latest photos of you and your family or of your recent class project, or discuss an interest that you have in common. Social media allows us to create such a place on the web to interact, collaborate and share information. This guide will provide you with tips, tricks and hints to help you effectively use social



media to interact with students, connect with colleagues and partake in professional development from anywhere at any time – whether it's the comfort of your couch at home or your desk at school. Get ready because your own personal social media revolution begins... **now!**

## What is social media?

Let's get started by putting a fine point on the term "social media." Social media is the combination of social interaction with online technology, allowing people to share thoughts, ideas, experiences and issues via certain websites and applications. These sites include Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Ning, wikis, blogs, and others. If you don't know what any of these things are, don't worry. We will cover that in the following sections.

## Who is involved in social media?

The short answer is: everyone. Nielson Online reports that two thirds of the world's internet population is using

social media to connect with other people. Today's students are social media natives in the same way that prior generations think of the telephone as an essential means of communication.

## Where do I begin?

First we will go over the most popular social media sites so that you can pick which ones will best fit your needs. If you have quite a bit to say, want to post your class notes online or give students a supplemental resource, you might be interested in a blog. If you want to interact with friends and colleagues regularly, you may want to join Facebook. If you don't have much time, Twitter would be a good option for you. Or for bonus points, join all of them! Here we will take a look at the different areas of social media and review the advantages and disadvantages of each site.

## Getting Started

Let's look at the best ways to leverage some of the most popular social media sites on the web for teaching students, professional growth or connecting with other teachers and resources quickly and efficiently.

- **Facebook**

Facebook is a wildly popular site for people to connect and share information. Think of it as the new water cooler, or the lobby to the world. Once you join you can set up a profile and begin connecting with people and groups. You can share information about yourself, post your thoughts, photos, interests, articles, and videos, and connect with groups and even brands. The biggest advantage to Facebook is that it is a great way to keep up with people, groups and companies and share information.

With over 500 million users, most people you know are already on Facebook, which can be a disadvantage. You may have had a great weekend but that's probably not really something your students need to know. Luckily, this is easily fixable. Create a separate profile only for professional connections, or you can set your privacy settings to limit what certain people can see about you.



## resources for facebook

Search these terms to connect with some of the most popular Facebook sites for teachers.

- The Celebration of Teaching and Learning
- Two Writing Teachers
- Education
- Education World
- 1,000,000 People Who Think Art Education is Necessary in our Schools
- Chronicle of Higher Education
- Nature Education

Facebook is becoming as essential as email, and if you don't have an account it's time to set up a basic one. It connects you with key people and gives you the scoop on things you care about in a way you can't get anywhere else. As a teacher, it gives you insight into the lives of your students and allows you to collaborate and share with other teachers in a new and easy way. It's a fantastic, free resource and a great place to start your social media journey.

- **Ning**

Want to create a place online where you can connect with other teachers in your district privately? If Facebook is a lobby, Ning would be a conference room, a place where you can create a social network where only your chosen group will have access. Like Facebook, members can create a profile page and share photos and video, have discussions, chat with others and access blogs.

- **Twitter**

The timeliest way to send and receive information online is by using Twitter. Twitter users communicate through "tweets," which are very brief messages that may contain links to interesting content on the web, such as discussions, videos, music and real-time news as it happens. It is an excellent way to stay up-to-the-minute on news and information on a global scale; however, it can be limiting because the messages (or tweets) can only be 140 characters or less -- about the size of a compound sentence.

Teachers find Twitter useful for promoting upcoming events and assignments and

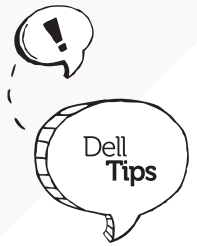
sharing new ideas and interesting information with other teachers. It can be used as a resource for students who have been absent or feel out of the loop to keep track of classroom news. Some teachers even use Twitter to introduce new units with fun activities such as digital scavenger hunts and supplemental reading materials.

Like Facebook, there are millions of people on Twitter, tweeting about millions of different subjects. "Hashtags" were created to help sort this information. A hashtag is the "#" sign, followed by a word or phrase. For example, if you want to share a teaching idea, you would simply type "#teachingidea" at the end of the message, and the text or tweet would be tagged for others to find by searching "#teachingidea." Or if you were looking for new lesson plans, you might search "#lessonplans." Hashtags are a quick way to sift through a tremendous amount of continually generated information to find subjects that interest you.

You may want to visit Mashable for more tips to get started on your Twitter account: <http://mashable.com/guidebook/twitter/>

- **Blogs**

On the opposite end of the brevity spectrum from Twitter is the blog. Blogs are online journals that are written by individuals on a particular topic. There is no limit to how long a blog entry can be, and they are totally controlled by the author. Though they do provide news and information, they are usually informed by the author's opinions. To put it



Try searching these hashtags for useful information as well as conversations:

- #teachertuesday
- #education
- #cny21
- #web20chat
- #edchat
- #edtech
- #teachers
- #prek
- #reading
- #specialneeds
- #literacy
- #preschool
- #socialstudies
- #historyteacher
- #sschat
- #Webster
- #Educators
- #speialed
- #teach
- #scichat
- #ntcamp
- #edvice
- #ff
- #ptchat
- #elearning
- #temt
- #bookaday
- #elemchat



## Building your twittersphere

Do you want to start following other teachers but don't know where to start? **We can help!** Follow us on Twitter and ask us to introduce you to other peers.

All we ask in exchange is a smile. 😊

Dell Education on Twitter:  
<http://www.twitter.com/DellEDU>



another way, if a blog were in the newspaper, it would certainly be the "editorial" section.

The term "blog" comes from the earliest days of social media, when people began keeping public web journals or "web logs." Since then, blogs have evolved to become a soap box for individuals to share their thoughts, opinions and information on a particular subject at length.

Blogs can be used for personal use, such as chronicling a hobby or family adventures, but they are also used as a professional tool to delve into areas of interest to educators. If you have an area of expertise that you would like to share with others, a blog is a great place for you.

Each blog entry or post may read like a mix of a journal and a news article. Blogs usually combine text, pictures and links to other blogs, articles or sites. Readers can leave visible comments and participate in ongoing discussions about a certain post.

- **Wikis**  
Think of a wiki as an encyclopedia that is

written collaboratively by anyone who feels they have something to contribute. Wikis have no one "author" but millions of contributors and editors that constantly add and revise information as needed. They are a great place for students to post ideas and questions on a given topic. It is important to note that because anyone can post anything on a wiki and it is not immediately checked for accuracy before being published, the information may not always be 100% accurate.

- **Video Sharing (YouTube)**

Sites like YouTube and Vimeo allow you to upload, share and watch videos. It is a great place to share your thoughts in a visual and interesting way. Videos are searchable, and you can probably find a video on just about any topic. Teachers are finding that these sites are very useful for connecting with students, as they provide a place where you can upload your lectures and provide supplemental material to bring a lesson to life. They are also a great resource for idea sharing, enabling educators to show how they run their classroom, share a great lesson and give feedback in the comments section.



## hot blogs for teachers

Take a peek at these blogs to get you started. Feel free to reach out to us on Twitter if you're interested in finding more blogs to follow.

- <http://digitaltoolsforteachers.blogspot.com/>
- <http://www.edtechworkshop.org/>
- <http://brainybunch.weebly.com/index.html>
- <http://livefromthecreek.blogspot.com/>
- <http://web20classroom.blogspot.com/>
- <http://chadlehman.com/>
- <http://www.timchilders.com/>
- <http://plnaugle.blogspot.com/>
- <http://cffblogger.blogspot.com/>
- <http://www.freotech4teachers.com/>
- <http://askatechteacher.wordpress.com/>



## Bringing It All Together

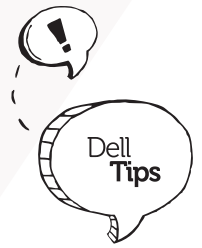
Now that you have selected which social media venues you want to incorporate into your life, it's time to start using them to make your life easier. The best way to do this is to create a **PLN**, or a **Personal Learning Network**. A PLN is a group of people you select and communicate with who can provide support, ideas and solutions to your teaching dilemmas. You probably already have the foundation of a PLN with teachers in your school, friends who share information and tips. Thanks to social media, you can connect with teachers all over the world who teach the same subject, share the same interests or experience the same struggles. As you explore Twitter and Facebook, you will begin to notice people who stand out as helpful or supportive. These people will add a new element to your PLN.

## In Summary

Social media is a combination of technology and social interaction that gives us a platform to communicate and share our thoughts, opinions, interests and news.

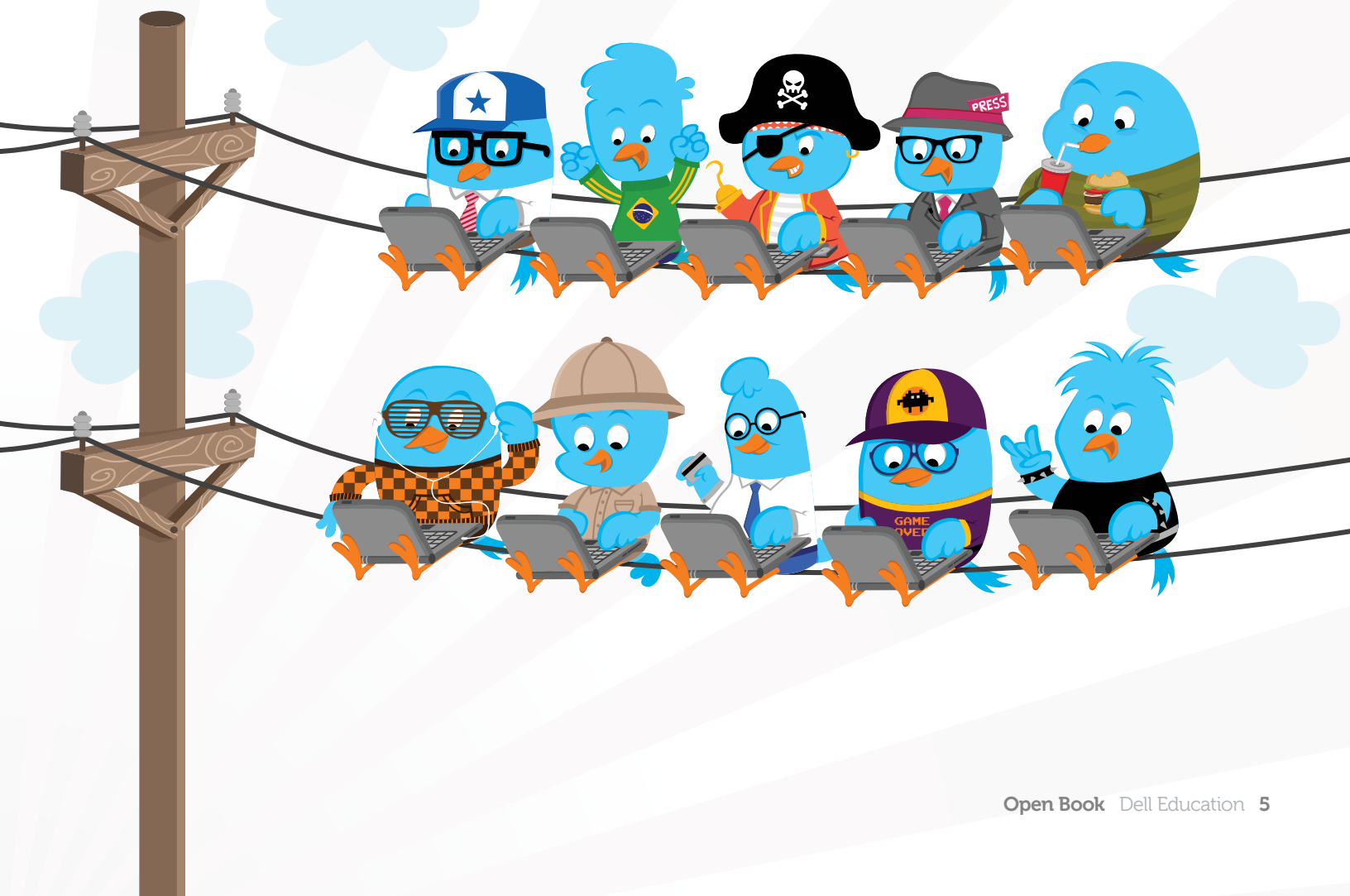
If we think of social media as a building, Facebook would be the lobby, a place to interact and share with lots of friends, family and work colleagues. Twitter would be the hallway, where you could quickly tell people your message and show them a door to take them where you want them to go. Ning would be the conference room where you could bring a set group of people together to work collaboratively. Blogs would be lecture halls where you can speak at length on a given topic, wikis would be a library where all of the books are being constantly written and revised by lots of different people, and YouTube would be a media room where you could watch and share videos to bring your experiences to life.

By harnessing the power of social media, teachers have a fun, free way to enhance their connections with students, create a support network and find professional development opportunities.

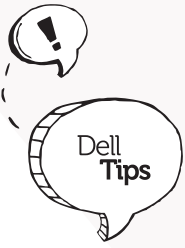


Two Sites for Starting Your PLN:

<http://bit.ly/59Q0l8>  
<http://edupln.ning.com>



# the **tools** of the revolution



## Bookmark it!

Do you bookmark? As you find sites that you love, use the "bookmark" tab on your internet browser to save them for quick reference. To bookmark with a social aspect try [Delicious.com](http://Delicious.com)

Think about your desk at school. You probably have lots of tools to make your day run smoothly, from a stapler to projector to a pencil sharpener. One way the internet is making teachers' lives easier is by giving them access to free online tools to help them in all aspects of their job. Let's make a digital tool box filled with resources to help you teach, learn, organize, find, create and share.

## Learning and Teaching

Did you know that you can cultivate professional development scenarios from the comfort of your home? What about attend a lecture at Yale while wearing your pajamas? Here we have three great ways to grow and learn as a teacher, as well as links with interactive teaching tools, freebies and supplemental materials to help bring your lessons to life.

### Learning

Step up your professional development and general knowledge with these sites.

- LearnCentral.org provides free and interesting professional development webinars for teachers.  
<http://www.learncentral.org/>
- FreeVideoLectures.com offers videos of lectures from more than 700 courses offered by the world's top colleges and universities.  
<http://freevidelectures.com/>
- Looking for information about literacy? Take a peek at this weekly e-publication that combines literacy outreach with creativity to incorporate new reading solutions into your classroom.  
<http://www.literacyhead.com/>

### Teaching

Try these easy resources to add interest and information to your lessons, or find free print-

able pages from credible folks in the education industry.

- Smart Kit offers a selection of games and puzzles that can be printed for offline use. The printable collection makes Smart Kit a good resource for teachers who have limited access to the computers in their classrooms.  
<http://www.smart-kit.com/>
- Have students that need some supplemental spelling help? Help them master spelling with this helpful site.  
<http://www.spellingcity.com/>
- SparkleBox has thousands of free, printable resources for early learning.  
<http://www.sparklebox.co.uk/>
- Students that need extra help with typing will find TypingWeb helpful.  
<http://www.typingweb.com/>
- SnagFilms gives you access to dozens of educational NOVA and National Geographic films that otherwise would need to be bought or rented.  
<http://www.snagfilms.com/>
- Lexipedia is like a beefed up dictionary, giving the definitions of words and then providing diagrams of related words and their definitions.  
<http://www.lexipedia.com/>
- Check out these great online educational resources and study tools for K-8 students.  
<http://sosclassroom.org>
- Music teachers can create your own scores, choose to share them with others, or publish them to Noteflight's searchable online library of music.  
<http://www.noteflight.com/login>



# easy teaching tool

## The Survey

Looking for a way to add interest to a lesson? Take a lesson from Family Feud and try a survey. These survey tools make it quick and easy to create your own surveys and polls.

- <http://yarp.com/>
- <http://polldaddy.com/>
- <http://vorbeo.com/>
- <http://www.surveygizmo.com/>
- <http://urtak.com/>
- <http://www.buzzdash.com/>

- Physics teachers can access some neat project ideas at Phunland.  
<http://www.phunland.com/wiki/Home>

## Finding and Organizing

Do you ever feel like there are not enough hours in the day? Use these online tools to find quick solutions and free up some extra time!

Instead of spending hours plowing through Google to try to find pertinent, accurate information, search smart with these helpful tools. Then free up some more time with these easy tools for staying organized.

### Finding

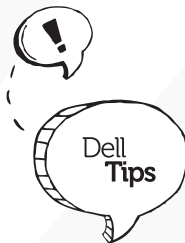
Navigate the dicey world of search engines with these reliable sites.

- SearchCredible provides teachers with accurate information from tons of different search engines to give you the most accurate information possible.  
<http://www.searchcredible.com/>
- Wouldn't it be great to have a search engine that searches only sites that have been reviewed and approved by a team of librarians, teachers, and research experts? Now you can. Try the aptly-named Sweet Search.  
<http://www.sweetsearch.com/>
- Search multiple social sites and search engines from one page with Twoogle.  
<http://twoogle.browsys.com/>

## Creating

Use these tools to build a website, start a blog, and create helpful items for your classroom.

- Thinking about starting a blog? Find free blog hosting for teachers here.  
<http://edublogs.org/>
- If you would like to build a website for your classroom, here is a great place to start.  
<http://www.weebly.com/>



Looking for a journal article that you read several years ago? Try [Google Scholar](#), an online searchable database of scholarly works that have been published both in the printed word and online. Search articles, theses, legal opinions, journals, books, and other publications to find what you are looking for.

- Want to make a wiki for your classroom as a class project? Go here.  
<http://www.wikispaces.com/>
- Create diagrams using a combination of clip art, text and free hand drawings – great for incorporating visual aids with your lessons.  
<http://www.simplifiediagrams.com/home>

flip the page for more creating tools

- Try this site for creating small, free websites.  
<http://pageeasy.com>
- Create more elaborate learning sites here.  
<http://moodle.org>

### Sharing

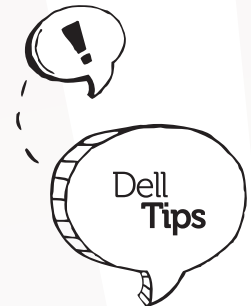
Share ideas for professional development and best practices with other teachers, or find a new way to reach your students.

- SchoolTube enables teachers and students to share videos.  
<http://www.schooltube.com>
- Do you have a document that you would like a group to share and edit as needed? Try Google Docs.  
<http://docs.google.com>
- Want to share links on your Twitter account? Shorten them to save characters here.  
<http://bit.ly>
- Wish you could have more face time with other teachers? Try these sites for video conferencing.  
<http://www.tokbox.com>  
<http://www.skype.com>
- Create and share presentations online.  
<http://show.zoho.com>
- Turn any document into an interactive magazine at this site, and then share it by publishing it anywhere.  
<http://issuu.com>
- If you want to share what you see on your screen, try ScreenJelly.  
<http://www.screenjelly.com>

### In Summary

The internet is full of free, easy tools for teachers. Whether you want to learn, teach, find, organize, create or share, the links above will get you started. Before you know it, you will

have your own collection of resources to share. You may find yourself wondering how you ever lived without them for so long!



**Make Something Fun.** Your students will love making these 10-page flip books, and it won't cost you a dime!

<http://bit.ly/9EsMR8>

# the mobile side of the revolution

## Get in the Know When you are on the Go

With the rise of the smart phone comes a whole new way to access information quickly. Currently there are over 250,000 applications (or apps) that can do everything from counting down the days you have left until summer to helping you find up-to-the-minute, accurate answers to a student's question.

In a world where instant information is expected by your digital natives, a smart phone is less of a luxury and more of a necessity. In this section, we will help you learn how to best use your phone to enhance your lifestyle and address professional needs in and out of the classroom.

## Selecting Your Perfect Smart Phone

There are many smart phone options out there, and finding the right one for your needs can be daunting. All of the phones have the same basic capabilities - features to send and receive calls, text message, email, take photos and capture video.

### The Professionals

Phones like the Blackberry and the Palm Treo are the grandfathers of the smart phone world and they carry a tradition of professionalism. These phones are typically used for business purposes because of their focus on email and messaging. Typing is easy with the built-in keyboard, which is made to mimic an actual computer keyboard.

### The "Lifestyle" Phones

You may have confiscated a few of these types of phones in your classroom. Popular because they enable lots of social interaction and convenient features that are not necessarily business-oriented, they tend to encompass a lifestyle of staying connected. If you want a phone that is great on a personal level as well as a professional one, one of these phones may be right for you.

## The Androids

The name might sound a little scary, but androids are actually one of the best buys on the market today. Equipped with nearly everything the iPhone or Blackberry could offer, these phones are a great way to get what you need from a smart phone without the big price tag. Two great android phones are the Motorola Droid and the Dell Streak (if we do say so ourselves -- we designed it with you in mind!).

## Finding The Right Apps

There are apps for just about any area of your life, and teachers are finding that they are a great way to stay organized, find resources and get help quickly.

### Getting Started

After browsing the different types of phones, you probably have some idea what apps would work for you. Below you will find basic Android education apps that can help you in your classroom.

### Android

To find Android apps, first go to the following site:  
[www.android.com/market](http://www.android.com/market)

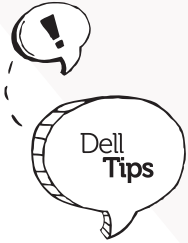
From there, click the "news and weather" tab and then the "brain and puzzle" tab.

- Geography teachers will love these quizzes.  
[Capital Quiz](#)
- Early Education teachers can help students learn shapes with this app.  
[Kids Shapes Lite](#)
- Build memory with these apps.  
[Memory Pro](#)
- Need answers? Try Factbook.  
[FactBook](#)



Android is a software stack for mobile devices that includes an operating system as well as key application for smart phone devices.

The brand is owned by Google, though the applications market is open to all developers. Android's open market allows anyone (including teachers and students) to develop applications tailored made for their specific needs.



Take a peek at this site to find reviews of education apps.  
[www.lear.org](http://www.lear.org)

- Scan documents and turn them into a .PDF file with your phone.  
[Document Scanner](#)
- Teaching a unit on the moon? Get great info here.  
[Deluxe Moon Lite](#)
- Find out when the sunrises anywhere.  
[Rizon](#)
- Turn your pictures into puzzles.  
[PhotoMix](#)
- Find essential math formulas here.  
[Formulas Lite](#)
- Keep a whole library on your phone.  
[Nook for Android](#)
- Take a photo of your class notes and have them converted to a .PDF file.  
[www.qipit.com](http://www.qipit.com)
- Get accurate answers quickly. Use your cell phone to text or call ChaCha, and an actual researcher sends a reply.  
[www.chacha.com](http://www.chacha.com)
- Create free polls for your class.  
[www.poll Everywhere.com](http://www.poll Everywhere.com)

### In Summary

Smart phones harness the best apps from your computer and bring them to you when you are on the go. Select the right phone for you based on how you will use it and what is important to you, then take time to stock it with apps that will make your life easier and that can enhance your lessons.

### Best Free Education Apps For Any Phone

- Transcribe recorded messages to text.  
[www.jott.com](http://www.jott.com)

## Readiness Checklist

### Social Media

- Create a Facebook page
- Create a Twitter page and write a tweet
- Start a blog for your classroom
- Utilize resources like Ning, wikis and video sharing sites
- Pool your resources by creating a PLN

### Valuable Tools

- Bookmark your favorite learning and teaching sites
- Find a website that will best help you get organized
- Select your favorite websites for creating and sharing information

### Mobile Resources

- Find a smart phone that suits your needs
- Pick 5-10 apps that interest you

# Bringing it all together



## Put technology to work in your life.

New technologies like social media, online tools and smart phones enable teachers to connect, share and find information in a way that they never could before. By harnessing the power of these tools, you will now be able to create a technology-based support system that will save you time and effort as well as offer important resources. Let's take a moment to look back and make sure you are on the right path to putting these strategies to work for you.

## Social Media

Social media allows you to easily collaborate with colleagues online and find new ways to engage students in the classroom.

Exploring social media will bring you into a world where networking is done from the couch and answers are only a few key strokes away.

## Valuable Tools

By finding sites that will enrich you both as a teacher and a learner, you are also enabling yourself to become more attuned to your students who are natives in the world of using websites to find and share information.

## Mobile Resources

Today's mobile phones are so much more than just phones –they are your mobile command center. Get organized and stay connected by investing in a smart phone, and then stock it with apps that will improve your life!

## Go get 'em!

You are now ready to start making technology work for you. You know the lay of the land in social media, have a well-stocked digital toolbox and can access it all on the go from your new smart phone. We hope you will share with us how incorporating these easy, essential items have changed the way you teach.



## Dell Education

Don't forget to connect with us to keep up-to-date on the latest trends and developments for teachers like you.



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[twitter.com/DellEDU](https://twitter.com/DellEDU)



[www.dell.com/connectedclassroom](http://www.dell.com/connectedclassroom)

