



Next Vista for Learning - Resource Suggestions

The Favorite:

Next Vista for Learning

<http://nextvista.org>

- The free, online and content-screened library being built by and for teachers and students around the globe. (You knew we'd plug this one first!) Current collections are Light Bulbs (explanations of academic topics), Seeing Service (profiles of those who help others), and Global Views (videos of communities around the world).

Very Cool Tools:

Creative Commons' Search

<http://search.creativecommons.org>

- This is probably the easiest way to filter a Flickr search to make sure the ones that come up are ones you and your students can use in projects to place on the web. Do make sure the Flickr tab is clicked, and, as always, include in your piece the name of the artist and the link to what you use.

Morguefile

<http://morguefile.com>

- Sounds macabre, but is actually a journalism term for the where the pictures go after the newspaper runs the story. The quality of the images is very high, and they are all under Creative Commons licensing.

PodSafe Audio

<http://podsafeaudio.com/>

- This site contains a wide variety of audio files arranged by genre, popularity, etc. The pieces are under the same non-commercial, attribution license that protects the videos on Next Vista's site. By attributing the artist and PodSafe Audio in the video, you will be able to use their material in video pieces you submit to Next Vista.

Jamendo

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

- "On jamendo, artists allow everyone to download and share their music. It's free, legal and unlimited."

Audacity

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net>

- This is a free audio recording and editing program. Combine audio files, record your voice over songs, and export to a single audio file in order to upload to Movie Maker or other programs with only a single audio track.

Irfan View

<http://irfanview.com>

- A free graphics program for viewing and conversion program for all kinds of media files.

PicLens

<http://piclens.com>

- This turns a Flickr search into an iPhone-like desktop experience. Very, very cool. This download is a plug-in for the Firefox browser.

Media-Convert

<http://media-convert.com>

- From this site, you identify a file on your computer, tell it what format you want it in, and it does the rest.

Zamzar

<http://zamzar.com>

- Another online converter like Media-Convert, but with this one, it is possible to give it a URL from YouTube, tell it what format you want, and it will e-mail you a half-hour or so later to let you know it's ready for download.

TinyURL

<http://tinyurl.com>

- As it sounds, the site is for taking a long address and making it into a small one. Very useful.

Digital Video Education and Communities:

Adobe Video Production Curriculum

<http://tinyurl.com/2zxn55>

- This "project-based curriculum develops career and communication skills in video production, using Adobe tools. You can use the Digital Video curriculum in career and technical education courses as well as courses involving video use in academic courses."

Nortel LearnIT

<http://nortellearnit.org>

- Many videos on multiple topics in several subjects, including video production, digital ethics, and online safety.

Curriki

<http://curriki.org>

- Curriculum-focused wiki to allow teachers to share ideas and resources. The scope is impressive, but it's still quite new, so keep checking back in.

AFI Screen Education Center

<http://www.afi.edu/>

- A site built to give educators resources and guidance for a "world dominated by screens."

KQED San Francisco - Media Literacy

<http://kqed.org/topics/education/medialiteracy/index.jsp>

- The San Francisco PBS station's website includes material and lesson plans on teaching media literacy.

21st Century Learning - Digital Video

<http://homepage.mac.com/worley/iMovie/index.html>

- This is part of Gordon Worley's (Florida) excellent resources for those incorporating multi-media in their teaching. This includes storyboard advice, rubrics, and powerpoint material.

VidSnacks

<http://vidsnacks.ning.com/>

- Tim Holt's video group for educators, with groups focused on great websites, video podcasting, Garage Band, Photo Story 3, Final Cut, iPhoto, and more.

Windows Movie Makers

<http://windowsmoviemakers.net>

- Community with forums and resources related to using Windows Movie Maker

Videography for Educators

<http://tinyurl.com/34uz3p>

Apple Discussions: iMovie

<http://tinyurl.com/34qtot>

- Apple's Learning Interchange and Discussions run these sites.

iMovie mailing list

<http://tech.groups.yahoo.com/group/iMovie-List/>

- This Yahoo Group has over 1400 members and has been around since July of 2000.

Storyboards

<http://www2.hawaii.edu/~ricky/etec/storybrd.pdf>

<http://tinyurl.com/2r3v2u>

- Two PDF documents you can download and copy. With good video, it's all about the planning.

Google for Educators

<http://www.google.com/educators>

- Loads of great programs (Google Earth, SketchUp, Picasa, etc.) one can download for free, as well as links to groups discussing how to make the world and our classrooms better places.

Free Software You'll Want:

QlipBoard

<http://qlipmedia.com>

- This free download allows you to do screen capture, highlighting, and voice recording VERY easily.

Microsoft Photo Story

<http://tinyurl.com/3ygxmw>

- This program is a free download from Microsoft which makes arranging photos (with titles, voice-over, and more) into a slideshow very, very easy. You'll need to be running (a legal copy of) XP as your OS.

Windows Movie Maker

<http://tinyurl.com/53yvx>

- Microsoft's answer to iMovie. As with any video editing program, the more RAM you have, the easier this will be to use. You'll need XP for this one, too. This is probably already on your PC - check All Programs, and if it isn't in there, it may be in Accessories.

VLC Media Player

<http://www.videolan.org>

- This media player has versions for both Mac and PC, as well as many of the Linux distributions. According to the site, "supports a large number of multimedia formats, without the need for additional codecs." (Kevin B)

Copyright:

Creative Commons

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

- This is the organization that creates resources for those wanting their work to be available to the larger community with specific restrictions on such things as attribution and noncommercial use. A good site to help students better understand the differences among "all rights reserved," "some rights reserved," and "public domain".

Hall Davidson

<http://www.halldavidson.net/>

- Hall Davidson is a guru on issues of copyright and educational media, and his site contains a wealth of resources for those seeking to understand how such things as fair use play out for educators and students.

Tutorials:

Windows Movie Maker

<http://www.microsoft.com/windowsxp/using/moviemaker/getstarted/default.msp>

<http://www.atomiclearning.com/moviemaker2>

<http://www.windowsmoviemakers.net/Tutorials/HowToMovieMaker.aspx>

Photo Story

<http://www.jakesonline.org/photostory3.pdf>

Audacity

<http://audacity.sourceforge.net/manual-1.2/tutorials.html>

<http://www.guidesandtutorials.com/audacity-tutorial.html>

Irfan View

<http://www.indeavors.com/resources/tutorials.htm>

Educational Videos:

George Lucas Educational Foundation

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

- GLEF contains interesting and very high quality pieces about innovative schools, programs, and efforts. This is a particularly good site for educational professionals seeking to develop their knowledge of innovative practices.

Digital Clubhouse

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

- This nonprofit based in San José, California, gets students to explore cultural identity and cross-generational projects. There is an especially strong (and remarkably politically balanced) program called "Stories of Service" through which teens help war veterans tell their stories.

TeacherTube

<http://teachertube.com>

- This site is an educational version of YouTube, with similar tools and ratings. The quality spans the spectrum, and the site relies on users to flag anything inappropriate. Beware the onslaught of advertising. Definitely some gems to be found by those who search.

Library of Congress

<http://www.loc.gov/>

- This U.S. government site includes historical and cultural footage in a variety of collections.

Other Resources:

K12 Computers

<http://www.k12computers.com>

- Very well-priced, refurbished computers, with information on how schools can do Linux thin-client networks.

B&H Photo Video

<http://www.bhphoto.com>

- This is the best site I know for getting good equipment and good prices, though not free!

Google Lit Trips

<http://googlelittrips.org>

- Great use of Google Earth to engage literature students. Download Earth (<http://earth.google.com>) first.

Build a Better Browser

<http://buildabetterbrowser.wikispaces.com/>

- Mark Wagner of EdTechLife.com created this wiki so you can move your Firefox experience into high gear.

JakesOnline!

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

- Resources and ideas from one of educational technology's entertaining thinkers.

Speed of Creativity

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

- Resources, interviews, and insights from ed-tech guru Wes Fryer.

Media Snackers

<http://mediasnackers.com/>

- Run by the phenomenally hip and cool DK from the UK, this site includes loads of podcasts and media created by youth here, there, and everywhere.

Infinite Thinking Machine

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

- Great blog for ideas and videos about educational technology.

EdTechLive

<http://edtechlive.wikispaces.com/>

- Workshops, audio interviews, and information about conference get-togethers.

Tapped In

<http://tappedin.org>

- Wonderful group of folks that hold meetings on all sorts of topics. Go in as a guest and check out the calendar for opportunities to learn great things. Their summer festival is especially fun!

Kitzu

<http://www.kitzu.org>

- This collection of free, educational, copyright-friendly media resources includes music, images, and video that students can use to build and/or enhance their projects.

Flip Video

<http://theflip.com>

- Relatively new mini-camera/camcorder that is easy and inexpensive. I don't have one, but those I know who do have been impressed. (I think that last part was in iambic pentameter.)

Spanish and Hyperactive

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ngRq82c8Baw>

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=THQ6tJK01Io>

- A good example of careful editing (the 'beatbox' genre), and passionate and easy Spanish for the lovelorn.

Ask A Ninja

<http://askaninja.com>

- For funky answers to funky questions related to ninjas. Often very funny - has to be seen to be believed.

Know a good site that should be added to this list? See a link that's gone bad?

Let us know at: info@nextvista.org



Next Vista for Learning - The Basics

What is Next Vista for Learning?

Next Vista works to make learning more engaging, with a focus on helping students start strong with any topic they study. Its central project is a free, online library of teacher- and student-made short videos for learners everywhere. Next Vista believes strong, short videos could save students days or weeks of frustration by giving them focused presentations they can watch whenever and as often as they wish.

Why is the online library needed?

Learning is stronger when it starts with an engaging introduction of each topic. If numerous creative student presentations and strong introductions by teachers passionate and knowledgeable about given topics are available, many more students will be able to start their studies with, "Okay, I can learn this," rather than, "I just don't get it." There are also students with limited language and learning disabilities who would benefit from being able to watch a presentation multiple times. In addition to help with their studies, students need opportunities to learn more actively about other parts of the world as well as how people have worked to address problems in communities near and far.

Who started this?

Rushton Hurley began Next Vista in late 2005 in Santa Clara, California. He has taught at the middle school, high school, and college level, been a school principal, and worked with charter, traditional, and online schools. He has lived and worked in Texas, California, Japan and Australia, and his graduate school background at Stanford University includes exploring technology-enhanced learning through multi-media and speech recognition.

How can I learn more?

The website is live at www.nextvista.org. On it one can find videos that can be played by any computer with the Flash Player (adobe.com) installed and updated. If you have difficulty with the streaming video, you can download the piece from the same page as well. Over two thousand teachers and other professionals from around the world have already signed on to receive the newsletter now being sent out monthly, and you are welcome to join as well! Names and contact information are not shared with any other person or organization.

Won't this take up more time for already busy teachers?

Using the online library, teachers may choose to introduce topics by using one or several videos, and can also encourage students to view more if they want to get a better starting command of the material. When the teacher can be the guide for the discussion rather than devoting energy to introducing those topics for which they have less expertise, they can better focus on the learner. Because the system is free to all, learners all over the globe can benefit from the talents and energies of those contributing material. Creating videos is fun and interesting, but is not necessary for being able to access and use material from the collections.

Is this just for finding interesting ways to introduce learners to new topics?

These videos can also be used for developing group discussions, encouraging cross-cultural and international projects, and sharing successful programs and practices. The main collection is Light Bulbs, which includes presentations on academic topics. Global Views is a collection designed to allow young people to learn about the life and communities of their peers near and far, and Seeing Service is a collection to inspire young people to see how one can find joy and meaning from helping others.

Isn't making videos difficult?

Until a few years ago, editing video content required using complex software and expensive equipment. However, in the last few years, easy-to-use video editing programs have become widely available and are either inexpensive or free. Many teachers are already using these resources to enliven their students' experiences; Next Vista will help more people become involved by providing or directing users to information about developing and contributing material.

Why specify that the videos be short?

There are several reasons. First, keeping videos to five minutes or less should simplify downloads. Second, the idea is that these videos would be useful for discussions, and shorter pieces are far more conducive to this end. Third is the issue of teenage attention spans, which needs no explanation. Fourth, the shorter the videos are, the better focused the creator should be on one aspect of a larger topic. Longer presentations can be broken into multiple videos, and the system is designed to allow users to connect related pieces.

If anyone can contribute videos, won't there be bad ones?

Unlike other sites, Next Vista's videos will be screened for inappropriate or weak content, but by helping teachers learn to ask the right questions when working with their students, any video can be educationally useful. As should happen with any resource, the teacher can focus students on the validity of sources, the perspectives of those presenting, and questions for how to explore the topic further.

How does one contribute a video?

E-mail Next Vista at info@nextvista.org for instructions on how to submit videos for consideration.

Aren't there companies already doing this?

There are, for a fee. In a sense, Next Vista is an open source movement for educational content to which students can get excited about contributing. The project is not limited to one approach, but is open to presentations, commentary, responses to commentary, dramatic material, or whatever one dreams up that is not inappropriate for young people to see. Rather than the limited structure of a company focused on profit, Next Vista's goal is for people from many different places and backgrounds to contribute to creative and engaging exploration of topics.

How does Next Vista run this library without commercial income?

A small group of forward-thinking and benevolent people has made starting Next Vista possible. As a federally approved 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Next Vista can accept tax-deductible donations and apply for public grants. Finally, when traffic on the site reaches proper levels, Next Vista will consider allowing limited click-through advertising (not full banner ads) and underwriting to meet the expenses of the organization. Any content in ads would meet Next Vista's standards for what is appropriate for young audiences.

Is this solely for those with an internet connection?

While we believe that over the next few years broadband availability at home or within the community will become nearly universal, people are even now able to download short videos to PDA's or even cell phones. It is also possible for users to choose to download material for presenting later.

I need a better picture; can you give me an example of how this might be used?

Fast forward three to five years. Ms. Smith, a talented world history teacher, has a strong interest in Latin American history. When she introduces her students to Central and South America, she can draw on her own experiences and fascination with the cultures she has explored. Her students enjoy her stories and the passion she brings to her presentations. Students from other parts of the country and world have written to her with questions, comments, and thank-you's for the videos she contributed to Next Vista, because those students, too, find her passion and expertise helpful.

Ms. Smith used to work much harder trying to find ways to better present topics on Asia and Africa, for which she has far less experience. However, using videos from Next Vista, her students have been able to get off to a good start with those topics. In addition to shifting to asking questions and helping students learn to explore topics themselves, she has developed new activities using the ideas from what other teachers and students have posted in their videos. She can focus more time on each student, and she improves her craft at the same time.

She thanks you for having taken the time to help make Next Vista a dynamic reality!