

[Menu](#)

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## Ten tried and tested internet tools for teachers

Using technology effectively has clear benefits for both teaching and learning and can help to improve motivation by engaging pupils in activities which, perhaps, step out of their ordinary school experience and which show them that it is possible to teach and learn about a subject using tools similar to those they use daily outside school

Posted by José Picardo on April 25, 2009



**Over the past academic year, my students and I have been experimenting with the use of a number of web based applications (often known as [Web 2.0](#) tools). My aim has been to enhance our schemes of work by providing our students with new and exciting learning opportunities.**

In my opinion, using technology effectively has clear benefits for both teaching and learning and can help to improve motivation by engaging pupils in activities which, perhaps, step out of their ordinary school experience and which show them that it is possible to teach and learn about a subject using tools similar to those they use daily outside school. In other words, we have tried to use the types of tools with which they are often already familiar.

I have written about each of these individual tools in separate posts, but I thought it would be useful to list the ten most used internet applications on one post. As ever, I aim to provide, not only a list of the web applications we have used, but also examples of practice which you may wish to follow or, indeed, improve upon.

Therefore, each of the entries below has links leading to lesson plans which have incorporated the tools as well as working examples of students' work where appropriate. Without further ado, and in alphabetical order, my ten tried and tested internet tools for teachers are:

### 1 – Animoto



[Animoto](#) is a web application that allows you and your students to upload pictures and sounds and create professional looking videos which can then be downloaded and shared online. Animoto is free for education.

I have used Animoto with different year groups as a way to exploit the enthusiasm and creativity that students show when using technology and harness it so as to transfer some of this enthusiasm to the relatively less exciting task of extended writing and practising oral pronunciation in the target language. [Follow this link](#) to see how my students and I have used Animoto and [this link to see some examples](#).

### 2 – Diigo

[Diigo](#) is more than a social book-marking service, it enables you to collaborate online by allowing the annotation of web pages, which can then be shared with others, regardless of whether they are Diigo users or not. This means that any annotations you make on any web page are then saved and can be sent to students (or colleagues) as an annotated link.

[Diigo Education](#) is very popular among teachers because it also offers educators the ability to create accounts for a whole class and it protects the students' privacy. [Follow this link](#) to see how my students and I have used Diigo.



### 3 – Edmodo



[Edmodo](#) is a micro-blogging platform based on a similar concept to [Twitter](#): one short message is sent to all those who follow you, in the case of Twitter, or, in the case of Edmodo, to all those in your group. This simple, yet incredibly useful concept has made Twitter a huge success worldwide.

Edmodo describes itself as micro-blogging for education and is, in my view, a much better alternative to Twitter for day-to-day managing of a class (or classes) as it is perfectly safe and private and, as well as communication, it provides extremely useful extra functionality to both teacher and student, such as the ability to embed multimedia, to send alerts to groups or individuals, to set, collect and grade assignments, to keep a calendar of event and assignments and to store files online (files can also be viewed online thanks to [Scribd](#)).

As Edmodo is open only to me and my students, I am unable to offer you a link for you to inspect. However, you can read how my students and I have used it if you [follow this link](#), where you can also listen to a short interview which I recorded with them.

### 4 – Glogster

[Glogster](#) is a web application that allows students to create multimedia online posters or glogs, as Glogster call them, which can then be shared on the internet. Crucially, they can also be embedded into blogs and wikis.



Glogs can be made using images, sounds and video (from [YouTube](#)) making Glogster therefore a wonderful, intuitive and easy to use tool which encourages creativity and which can be used to assess both writing and speaking. [Follow this link](#) to see a sample lesson plan or [this link](#) to see examples of what my Year 10 have been up to using Glogster.

### 5 – Go!Animate



[Go!Animate](#) takes story telling using online cartoon strip makers that little bit further by allowing you to spark life into your characters and create short animations.

Users can choose from a library of images and sounds or they can upload their own images and sound recordings, turning Go!Animate into another fantastic tool to foster creativity, engage students and assess progress. [Follow this link](#) to read about how we have used Go!Animate and [this link](#) to view some examples.

### 6 – Sliderocket

[Sliderocket](#) is a web application that allows you and your students to create stunning-looking PowerPoint-style multimedia presentations which can then be viewed and shared online.

I have used Sliderocket presentations [to introduce topics in the classroom](#), in the knowledge that I was then able to embed the presentation into our subject blog, enabling my students to view the presentation again as many times as they needed, should the topic need reinforcing. [Follow this link](#) to see an example of a slideshow my students use for revision purposes.



Sliderocket can also be used to collaborate online either by buying their premium account or by simply sharing the free account's user name and password, as my students did for their [General Education Programme presentation](#), which they created and delivered as a group.

### 7 – ToonDoo



[ToonDoo](#) is a web application that allows the user to create their own comic strips which can be populated with the characters they create using ToonDoo's *Traitr* widget. Highly motivational, ToonDoo allows students to express themselves in a more creative way.

[Follow this link](#) or this other link to go to [All Saints Languages blog](#) to see some examples of ToonDoo



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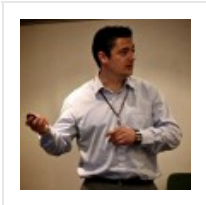
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