

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON'S

School Home NEWSLETTER

Communication

Theme of the Month

January's **technology theme**, which can be integrated throughout all content areas, is Communication.

Communication encompasses many different aspects of teaching. It can mean communication with students, parents, colleagues, and other groups of people you work with. The technology curriculum focus is on helping students and even parents better understand the unspoken rules of conduct on the web, better known as netiquette, and provide them with resources to improve their communication with you and each other. This month, each student will setup an email account, learn how to compose an email using proper email etiquette, use Google Docs, Open Office Writer, and the keyboard more efficiently.

Email Etiquette 101: use proper grammar and spelling, clearly articulate feelings because emotion is hard to read, never use ALL CAPITALS because it implies you are yelling or mad, and only open email from people you know.

Goals of the Month

- Use proper email Netiquette
- Post Homework assignments online



Tech Tip

Creating **Distribution Lists (DL)** will make your life so much easier when communicating with parents, students, and other groups you frequently email. To create a DL, login into your [MyMail](#) account, click on (1) *Email*, (2) *Contacts*, (3) click on  to create new contacts, (4) Under *My Contacts* click on the checkbox next to all the people you wish to add to this group, (5) Click on , (6) Under *Add to...* select the group you want these contacts to be added to or click *New Group* (7) Give the group a name [i.e. 1st Period 2010-11]. To send an email to this group, Click *Compose Mail* & type the Group name in the *To:* field.

One-to-One Computing and Classroom Management

1. Management by Walking Around (MWA): In the 1890s, when Theodore Roosevelt was the Police Commissioner of New York City, citizens didn't trust the police. Roosevelt wanted to address the problem so he took midnight walks and punished every police officer he saw not doing his job. Word got around, and the force shaped up. It works in the classroom as well. If you see a kid off-task because of his or her computer, deal with it appropriately. Make sure you circulate in a way that allows you to see the most in one view. Watch for certain telltale signs that kids are off task, such as when kids eyes are more fixated on the screen, or they are typing faster than normal, or their heads remain in a downward position longer than necessary.

2. Pick your battles: Sometimes it's just not worth telling a kid to put take off their hood or to raise their hand to go to the pencil sharpener. It's the same with laptops. If you try to put out every forest fire in the classroom, you won't get anything done. If you see a little goofing off, see students on the wrong website but otherwise are doing their work, let them be their choices.

3. Consistency: Be consistent with rules and how laptops are used. One way to reinforce this is to have **VIP (Visual Instruction Plans)** in your classroom. These are simply posters with instructions for laptop-use: how to get to your teacher homepage; how to submit assignments; how to print. Posters should address the most-asked questions - [Mike Hasley](#)

Curricular Resources

Math

[Calculation Nation](#) uses the power of the Web to let students challenge opponents from anywhere in the world while investigating significant mathematical content and skills.

Science

- [Science NetLinks](#) offer students a variety of opportunities to learn more about earthquakes.

- [Natural Hazards in the US](#) lesson allows students to examine specific locations of high risk for various natural hazards.

History

[Mapping the past](#) lesson provides students with experience in working with historical maps as cultural artifacts that reflect the views of particular times and places.

Art

The [Book Report Alternative](#) lesson, asks students to select a book to read based only on its cover art. They then analyze why the art attracted them and anticipate what the book may be about before examining the rest of the info found on the book cover.

English Language Arts

In the [Expository Escapade](#) lesson, students create a Detective's Handbook based on a mystery they read. PPT and reading materials included.



Physical Education

The [Food Pyramid](#) lesson helps students investigate the food pyramid to understand the importance of eating healthy foods and exercising regularly.

Music

[Beethoven Rocks](#) is an interactive media player that gives an intro to the life and work of this Classical music composer.

ESL

[Nature Study Outdoor Treasure Hunts](#) (with Spanish language option) is a great activity to take students and learning outside. After playing a treasure hunt game outside, students create their own treasure hunts with clues for their classmates to find.

Parent Engagement

Part of being a good digital citizen is being conscious of individuals on the receiving end of your electronic correspondences. This month, when communicating with parents either electronically or in a note home, be conscious of the parent's native language. [Google Translate](#) is a great tool to use to quickly create a rough translation of your messages before sending them home. You can include a brief statement that you have used this tool to help you translate the message, so they understand that you attempted the communication in good faith.

This month is also a great time for you to **collect parent Email addresses**. During School2Home Parent Workshops, all parents either created a Gmail or AOL account. Inform your parents, through their students and by phone, that you will be communicating with parents by email and look forward to their ideas and support.

Just For Fun

As they say, a picture is worth a thousand words... Well it can be worth even more with the help of [BigHugeLabs.com](#). This awesome site allows you to transform a digital photo using over 40 different tools. In addition to having fun with this website using family photos, you can create tools for your classroom and even use it with your students. You can share your creations on Facebook or via Email.

Some of the coolest tools include: **Cubes**, which will display 6 pictures in a pattern that can be cutout to create a cube; **Captioner**, use to add comic style bubbles on a picture; **Magazine Cover** can be used by students to demonstrate understanding of a concept; **Movie Poster**, you and students can use for many purposes; **Motivator** can be used to create one of those black framed motivational posters with a large font word and a short motivational line; **Map Maker** has several neat functions and could be great to use with students; **Calendar**; and **LOLCat Generator**, my personal favorite – click [here](#) to view the site it's referencing.