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# Using Web 2.0 in your teaching

ideas, applications and affordances for enhanced educational outcomes

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## The 'top 10'

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### **xtimeline**

<http://www.xtimeline.com>

xtimeline enables users to create timelines of events, in a constrained but flexible format, with collaboration features, and public communication options

- See also: <http://www.preceden.com>

### **listphile**

<http://www.listphile.com>

“a powerful tool for organizing and collaborating around structured information. Call it a database tool, if you will (but please don't scare anyone away)”

- See also: <http://weblist.me> and <http://flexlists.com/>

### **slinkset**

<http://slinkset.com>

slinkset creates social news sites, private, shared or public like digg, with extensive yet simple to use design features

### **posterous**

<http://www.posterous.com>

posterous is a powerful yet simple blogging engine with a particular emphasis on ease of posting: do it by email

- See also: <http://tumblr.com> and <http://write4.net/en>

### **mind42**

<http://mind42.com>

Mind mapping is ... about entering ideas, arranging them ... and refining and deepening ideas with colors, links and other attributes”

- See also: <http://bubblu.us> and <http://www.glinkr.net> and <http://www.wisemapping.com>

## quizlet

<http://quizlet.com>

quizlet is a flashcard production and use system, with inbuilt group and collaboration features and innovative ways of testing knowledge

- See also: <http://headmagnet.com>

## reviewbasics

<http://www.reviewbasics.com>

reviewbasics is a web-based service allowing users to work together to *review* documents, websites images with an emphasis on annotation

- See also: <http://www.showdocument.com>

## springnote

<http://www.springnote.com>

“wiki, word processing, and file organization [and] ... sharing, having collaborators... to organize all the information you need at your fingertips”

- See also: <http://www.lumifi.com> and <http://notaland.com>

## knol.google

<http://knol.google.com>

knol is Google’s answer to Wikipedia: editable, classified user-generated content based on the idea of a ‘knol’ (a unit of knowledge)

- See also (sort of): <http://hubpages.com> and <http://openzine.com> and <http://scribd.com>

## wiggio

<http://wiggio.com>

comprehensive group collaboration tool: calendars, to do, sharing, online meeting and polling ... people work as teams, not a group of individuals

- See also: <http://www.teamspinner.com> and <http://www.scribblar.com> and <http://webbr.com>

## The next 10

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*Does not include reference to alternative sites listed above*

### **amap**

<http://www.amap.org.uk>

Argument mapping: shareable, cute, simple, very easy to play with; but restricted in its format and questionable in how it construes an argument. Handy toy for people to use to start thinking about arguments – logical relations not just lines on a mind map.

### **chartle**

<http://chartle.net>

Sophisticated array of data visualisation tools, including mapping, which creates outputs suitable for inclusion in web based publications and sharing. Probably limited by the fact that excel or similar programs can turn out the graphics just as easily and more flexibly; but emphasises sharing of results.

### **debategraph**

<http://debategraph.org>

“Our goal is to make the best arguments on all sides of any public debate freely available to all and continuously open to challenge and improvement by all.” Mindmapping approach, with capability of establishing the kind of relations between information, presents ‘debates’ over key issues: both a tool to originate information, contribute to it and a source of ideas. Software slow, not easy use.

### **metaglossary**

<http://metaglossary.com>

metaglossary provides filtered search to give definitions of words, but does so by also listing related terms, key words and then proffering definitions; users can add definitions, maintain lists of words. Downside is the degree to which it is open to interpretation (lack of filtering) and also variability of quality of definitions (though links are given); upside is that it enables user-generated content.

### **solvr**

<http://a.freshbrain.com/solvr>

Structured, threaded conversation system, currently in alpha, which involves assignment of input to three classes - problem / comment / idea. Best currently available threaded ‘ideas’ application which is not overly complex, nor purely a time-based threading system. Currently usable only in a limited way, real time; lack of sophistication and protection of input.

## **survs**

<http://survs.com>

“Survs is a collaborative tool that enables you to create online surveys with simplicity and elegance..” Several survey packages exist; this is one of the more recent creations and is elegant and yet also sophisticated (even for free users). It also emphasises collaboration. Best use: making students design surveys and assessing the quality of the results; could also be used for students to design tests

## **swicki**

<http://swicki.eurekster.com>

“Unlike other search engines, you and your community have total control over the results and it uses the wisdom of crowds to improve search results.” Aimed largely at commercial usage, not clear how it can be used for productive educational purposes; however, the idea that a person or group can create their own search engine, managing the input sources, and allowing community to train or moderate the outcomes, is intriguing.

## **tangler**

<http://www.tangler.com>

Free online forum / discussion software which attempts to combine persistence and threaded organisation of forums with the real-time interaction of chat; there may be lag questions if many are using it, but value is that people can review conversations later, join and catch up. (Google wave done right?)

## **voicethread**

<http://voicethread.com>

Innovative in creating the idea of a voiced or audio-visual conversation based on an original presentation. Limited now by cost and the degree to which this application relies of audio-visual presentation for collaboration (and thus can deter users who lack the technology or cultural capital). Changes the dynamics, however, of the old ‘av presentation’ + text comments.

## **xtranormal**

<http://xtranormal.com>

“xtranormal’s mission is to bring movie-making to the people. Xtranormal revolutionary approach to movie-making builds on an almost universally held skill - typing. You type something; Xtranormal turns it into a movie.” Probably involves excessive work for limited returns, but demonstrates how creativity can improve learning by requiring representation of knowledge in an alternative format (a movie).

## Three complex, significant yet problematic tools

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### cohere

<http://cohere.open.ac.uk>

“cohere is a visual tool to create, connect and share Ideas. Back them up with websites. Support or challenge them. Embed them to spread virally, and discover who connects with your thinking.” Cohere has so much flexibility and depth of implicit analysis that it would require much effort, over time, to use; it combines people networking, idea management and mapping, resource and information collection, *and* logical analysis into a single tool.

### diigo

<http://diigo.com>

“diigo (dee'go) is about Social Annotation. By combining social bookmarking, clippings, in situ annotation, tagging, full-text search, easy sharing and interactions, Diigo offers a powerful personal tool and a rich social platform for knowledge users, and in the process, turns the entire web into a writable, participatory and interactive media.” Diigo, for full effectiveness, require toolbar plugins and a relatively consistent and constant use so as to become familiar with it and integrate it into everyday web-based research.

### prezi

<http://prezi.com>

“prezi allows anyone who can sketch an idea on a napkin to create and perform stunning non-linear presentations with relations, zooming into details, and adjusting to the time left without the need to skip slides. You can create zooming maps of texts, images, videos, PDFs, drawings, and more.” Prezi is deeply counter-intuitive for those wedded to Powerpoint – this in itself is probably reason to explore it in more detail! There is also a cost question, since the offline editor is relatively expensive. Prezie challenges us to think of the relationship of space *and* movement to ideas, as well as the way that a ‘presentation’ is both the sum of its parts and the whole.

## Three simple, and thus equally problematic tools

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### wikimindmap

<http://wikimindmap.com>

“WikiMindMap is a tool to browse easily and efficiently in Wiki content, inspired by the mindmap technique. Wiki pages in large public wiki's, such as wikipedia, have become rich and complex documents. Thus, it is not always straight forward to find the information you are really looking for. This tool aims to support users to get a good structured and easy understandable overview of the topic you are looking for.” – downside is its reliance on Wikipedia; upside is that it shows people how complex content ‘maps’ into categories and sub-categories

### wordle

<http://www.wordle.net>

Creates beautiful word clouds based on frequency of words in a text; can render ‘quantity’ more important than placement or meaning. Needs to be used with care, precisely because the ‘magic’ of the computer’s cognitive assistance can inflate the value of that work.

### wridea

<http://www.wridea.com>

Online idea storage, with collaborative features, whose simplicity for tracking random ideas is appealing, but which appears at first use to be limited in the kind of knowledge networking features which would make ideas into concrete outcomes. Investing in learning this approach does not seem justified for the limited outputs.

## Six clever, beautiful or playful things

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### **betterme**

<http://betterme.com>

“Open, honest communication is crucial, but not always easy. Give private, anonymous feedback. Go ahead... say what you really think. “ Elegant and simple anonymous feedback system – give it; ask for it; and track results.

### **drawanywhere**

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

Flowcharts, layouts, any kind of drawing involving regular shapes; exportable, shareable; small cost to gain extra features;

### **eyejot**

<http://www.eyejot.com>

“Eyejot is the first, comprehensive, client-free online video messaging platform ideal for both personal and business communications. It offers everyone the ability to create and receive video messages in a self-contained, spam-free environment.”

### **rssvoyage**

<http://rssvoyage.com>

Beautiful RSS feed provider, with graphic interface and timeline; may indicate how elegance and visual display improves the usability of a much hyped but little used Internet feature.

### **todaysmeet**

<http://todaysmeet.com>

“ embrace the backchannel and connect with your audience in realtime. Encourage the room to use the live stream to make comments, ask questions, and use that feedback to tailor your presentation, sharpen your points, and address audience needs.”

### **vyew**

<http://vyew.com>

realtime video conferencing and workspace, with a free version, that is probably the best of the ‘web conferencing’ applications; see also <http://vawkr.com> for something more basic

