Focus on Learning

My Upcoming Schedule:

I will be in Park Rapids on Tuesday, March 21st, Thursday morning, March 23th and Friday, March 24th. I will be in Nevis on Thursday afternoon, March 24th. Next week I will only be in on Friday, March 31st. Although there aren't any after school classes scheduled, I am available after school, or any time during the school day. Please contact me to set up a meeting time.

Augmented Reality in Schools?!?!

Augmented Reality (AR) layers virtual content on top of the real world, providing opportunities for students to interact with content in new and amazing ways. Although not brand new, AR is just moving into the mainstream, and it's not too early to consider how you can use it in your classroom, regardless of the grade level or subject area!

Learn about some great AR apps in this article on Edutopia: 6 Exciting AR Apps for Student Learning: https://www.edutopia.org/blog/ar-apps-for-student-learning-monica-burns

Two especially fun (and free!) AR apps include Elements 4D (Augmented Reality Chemistry) and Quiver (formerly named ColAR). While Elements allows you to mix chemicals to see how they interact. Quiver lets you color in a picture that comes alive. Both are exciting apps for students and can play a strong role in classrooms.

Google Maps

Although Google Maps is not a new tool, it's one that is often overlooked in the classroom. Google maps can be a terrific tool with many curriculum applications. Get a few ideas for using Google Maps here: https://goo.gl/3gf4rY

Google Slides

Google Slides is Google's "Powerpoint" tool, with a few nice additions. Any Powerpoint presentation can be opened and edited in Google Slides. Slides allows you to focus on the content, as there are not as many transitions, backgrounds and special effects to choose from (although there are plenty!) Any Google slide can be shared among multiple people, making it easy for a group of students to work on one presentation simultaneously, each completing their own slide. Students can also share their presentation with the teacher, so you can continually monitor the work they have completed. And with Google Slides it is easy to add images and videos, and to layout your slide, adjust the theme, and create a professional-looking slideshow.

Notifications

Do your cell phone or iPad notifications sometimes (or oftentimes!) interrupt or annoy you? Each time you install a new app on your device you will be asked if you'd like to accept notifications. People often ask me if they need to, and although it is always an option to turn them on and off, my initial response is that I don't like notifications and I rarely use them.

To turn off or adjust your notifications settings on an iPad or iPhone, go to Settings and select Notifications. From here you will see a listing of every single app on the device. Flip the switches on or off to select your personal preferences. You can select different sounds, banner displays, badge icons and more.

Google Cultural Institute:

Discover artworks, collections and stories from all around the world in a new way through Google's Cultural Institute. At the start of September, Google Arts & Culture partnered with more than 50 of the world's leading natural history institutions to bring natural history displays to life online. More than 150 interactive stories from experts, 300,000 new photos and videos, and more than 30 virtual tours are now available. Explore cultural treasures in extraordinary detail and easily share with your friends by visiting:
https://www.google.com/culturalinstitute/beta/u/0/

Creating a reader at home:

Educator Alex Corbitt has created this great graphic about how to create a reader at home that you might want to share with your families. Feel free to access and share it:
https://twitter.com/Alex_Corbitt/status/837473857657274368
Alex is an awesome English teacher in the Bronx, New York. He loves sharing his work with other passionate educators. You can connect with him through Twitter @Alex_Corbitt or https://www.alexcorbitt.com/.

Essential Classroom Resources

Through relevant webinars on topics such as "Teaching with Technology," "Tech as a Learning Tool," and "Creating Brain-Friendly Classrooms," Quill reaches out to educators to support their daily needs. Quill.com's Education Resource Center puts teachers in touch with grants to expand their programs, awards to recognize their efforts, and sources to enrich STEM programs. Bookmark this growing resource – particularly for their great deals as you complete your ordering for next school year.

http://www.quill.com/content/index/education/education-resources/

Portal for Developing Financial Literacy

Since its launch in 2011, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Knowledge@ Wharton High School (KWS) has operated an online portal that features hundreds of business journal articles, videos, podcasts and lesson plans, a business glossary, and other content to introduce high school students to business concepts, personal finance, and college and career preparation. At the same time, KWHS's resources support educators in building students' entrepreneurship, leadership, and related workplace skills. Many of the student-focused articles, videos and podcasts tell stories through the experiences of teens from around the globe. Professional business journalists and student essayists write the articles, and established educators prepare the lesson plans. KWHS is FREE to anyone who wants to use it: students, teachers, parents, and others.
You can find this portal at: http://kwhs.wharton.upenn.edu/

How is the News impacting Kids?

News and America's Kids investigates how children get their news, how much they trust different news sources, whether they can spot "fake news," and more. This report captures children's candid feelings via an online survey. The survey was conducted in January 2017 and included 853 children age 10–18 drawn from a nationally representative panel, as well as an oversample of African-American and Hispanic/Latino children drawn from an opt-in web panel. Watch the video and read our blog post for highlights. Check out the report here: https://goo.gl/GnWpk0

Are you using Google Chrome extensions and apps? If not, let me know and I'll come share a few of the best tools with you. You won't want to miss these!