



## A World of Information on the World Wide Web

Stakeholders in the education community have access to a vast array of knowledge. Students can access more content on a mobile device about a specific topic than a teacher may know. Likewise, a parent may be armed with information and suggestions linked to a child’s disability or impairment. Teachers need to be internet-savvy as well as tech savvy.

The following are just some of the many websites teachers can use to access information to stay current in their content and see what’s happening in public education. Also, in the “data-driven” school community, teachers need access to data about their students, their school and district, and their community. So, here are some places on the internet you can visit to satisfy your intellectual curiosity, get some questions answered, create new questions. Anything in **TSTA BLUE** links to a specific website.

### **TSTA and NEA**

#### **Texas State Teachers Association (TSTA).**

TSTA is a movement to change the way public schools, their students and employees are treated.

**National Education Association (NEA).** With over three million members, NEA is the nation’s largest professional employee organization committed to advancing the cause of public

education.

#### **NEA Member Benefits (NEAMB).**

The members of the NEA are linked by a common thread—dedication to students, to families, and to community. At NEA Member Benefits, we take pride in serving you! We are dedicated to making the personal and professional lives of educators better through “best in class” programs and services.

**Healthy Futures.** NEA Healthy Futures is a nonprofit organization that is affiliated with the National Education Association (NEA). It provides health and wellness solutions, advocacy tools, and funding and resource opportunities for NEA members and the education community at large.

**NEA edCommunities.** The **NEA's** premium online professional practice and learning area

**NEA Foundation.** The NEA Foundation is a public charity supported by contributions from educators' dues, corporate sponsors, foundations, and others who support public education initiatives. The foundation provides grants to educators to enhance teaching and learning to advance student achievement. Each year, the foundation also identifies educators to participate in a global learning fellowship.

## **Texas**

**Texas Education Agency (TEA).** The Texas Education Agency is the state agency that oversees primary and secondary public education.

**State Board of Education (SBOE).** The State Board of Education (SBOE) sets policies and standards for Texas public schools. The board consists of 15 members elected from single-member districts with the board chair appointed by the Governor.

**Certification.** Stay current by reviewing **certification announcements and updates**, that include deadlines to obtain your certificate based on tests that have been eliminated.

**State Board for Educator Certification (SBEC).** Created by the Texas Legislature in 1995 to recognize public school educators as professionals and grant educators the authority to govern the standards of their profession, the board oversees all aspects of the preparation, certification, and standards of conduct of public school educators.

**Teach For Texas.** The Teach for Texas website is sponsored by TEA and contains all of the

state-developed resources for the Texas Teacher Evaluation and Support System (T-TESS).

**Teacher Retirement System (TRS).** The Teacher Retirement System of Texas is the largest public retirement system in Texas, serving more than 1.5 million people.

**University Interscholastic League (UIL).** The UIL exists to provide educational extracurricular academic, athletic, and music contests.

**Lead4Ward.** Helps educators focus their work, creating structures that give teachers and students a sense of hope and confidence, and supporting leaders with systems they can trust.

## **United States**

**U. S. Department of Education (ED).** ED's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

**Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA).** Signed by President Obama on December 10, 2015, and represents good news for our nation's schools, this bipartisan measure reauthorizes the 50-year-old Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), the nation's national education law and longstanding commitment to equal opportunity for all students.

**Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).** This site was created to provide a "one-stop shop" for resources related to IDEA and its implementing regulations, released on August 3, 2006. It is a "living" website and will change and grow as resources and information become available.

**Civil Rights Data Collection (CRDC).** CRDC collects, analyzes, and disseminates data on school issues such as equity, disparate impact, and disproportional impact.

# Scholastics 24 Best Websites for Teachers

## 1. Best for Young Readers: **The Stacks**

At The Stacks, students can post book reviews, get reading recommendations, play games based on the latest series, watch “Meet the Author” videos, and more. It’s like Facebook for reading and it’s safe for school, too.

## 2. Best for Finding Books: **Book Wizard**

Use Scholastic’s Book Wizard to level your classroom library, find resources for the books you teach, and create reading lists with the click of a button. You can also plug a title into the Book Alike feature to find books with an easier, similar, or more difficult reading level.

## 3. Best for Craft Projects: **Crayola For Educators**

With hundreds of lessons for every grade level, you’re guaranteed to find a colorful idea for your class, such as the “Chinese Dragon Drum” for Chinese New Year or the “What Do You Love?” project for Valentine’s Day.

## 4. Best Way to Start the Day: **Daily Starters**

Establish a morning routine with Scholastic’s Daily Starters — fun, fast math and language arts prompts and questions, including Teachable Moments from history and Fun Facts, such as “Before erasers, people used a piece of bread!” Sort by grade (PreK-8), and project them onto your interactive whiteboard or print copies for your students.

## 5. Best for Writing: **Education Northwest**

The creators of the 6+1 traits of writing offer a terrific overview of the model on their site, with research to support the program, lesson plans, writing prompts, and rubrics. You can also find writing samples to practice scoring and see how other teachers scored the same piece.

## 6. Best Online Dictionary: **Wordsmyth**

Add the beginner’s version of the Wordsmyth widget to your toolbar, and students can look up new vocabulary no matter where they are online.

## 7. Best Math games: **National Library of Virtual Manipulatives**

At the National Library of Virtual Manipulatives, you’ll find activities for every area of math at

every grade level. Need to teach shapes to preschoolers, for example? Try the Attribute Blocks, which challenge students to sort virtual objects. Working on functions with middle schoolers? Drop numbers into the function machine to identify the pattern.

#### 8. Best for Geography: **Google Earth**

Zoom over the Sahara desert. Fly past the streets where your students live. Take a tour of the Eiffel Tower. You can do it all with Google Earth, the tool that makes the world feel a little bit smaller with its map-generating capabilities. If you're new to Google Earth, the tutorials offer a great introduction.

#### 9. Best for History: **Federal Resources for Educational Excellence**

This fantastic site acts as a clearinghouse for all of the educational materials developed by government organizations. You can find primary sources, videos, and photos for just about any topic. And it's all free!

#### 10. Best for Science: **National Science Teachers Association**

The National Science Teachers Association site is a goldmine for classroom teachers who may not feel as comfortable teaching geology and astronomy as they do reading and arithmetic. You'll find journal articles, experiment ideas, and a roundup of the latest science stories in the news.

#### 11. Best for Current Events: **Scholastic News**

For topics too current for textbooks, Scholastic News classroom magazines offer engaging nonfiction reading online, drawn from the latest headlines. Subscribe to receive news-related, age-appropriate Common Core lesson plans and skills sheets, and free access to the app that comes with each issue.

#### 12. Best for Middle School: **figment**

Figment allows young writers to post their work, receive criticism, and read others' contributions. From fan fiction to poetry to novels-in-progress, all types of writing are encouraged and shared. Be aware that not all content is school appropriate.

#### 13. Best for Virtual Trips: **Smithsonian Education**

The Smithsonian offers thousands of resources for educators, including lesson plans, virtual tours of their latest exhibits, and the opportunity to connect with experts in the field. In one lesson, "Final Farewells," students can see a school yearbook from the Civil War era up close, and discuss

how the political climate may have affected the content.

#### 14. Best Multimedia Tool: **Glogster**

Glogster bills itself as a tool for making interactive posters, or glogs, containing pictures, text, video, links, and animation. A glog on *To Kill a Mockingbird* might contain a link to the Scottsboro trial, a clip from the Gregory Peck movie, and a drawing of the tree where Boo Radley leaves gifts for Scout. Fun!

#### 15. Best for the Interactive Whiteboard: **SMART Exchange**

Go to SMART Exchange before creating any lessons for your interactive whiteboard from scratch. Chances are you'll find an existing lesson ready to grab and go, or inspiration from other teachers who've taught the same material. Plus, the customizable Whack-A-Mole game is a must-have for test prep and review.

#### 16. Best for Interactive Whiteboard Help: **Promethean Planet**

Even if you've deemed yourself an interactive whiteboard pro, Promethean's teacher community offers a boatload of tips and practical advice you'll find useful. Find help the next time your toolbox goes missing, or if you want to punch up a lesson with cool graphics.

#### 17. Best for Online Classroom Workspaces: **Wikispaces Classroom**

Wikispaces Classroom walks you through process of creating an online classroom workspace that's private and customizable. It works across browsers, tablets, and phones, and can be used for day-to-day classroom management, tracking formative assessments in real-time, and connecting with students and parents in and out of the classroom.

#### 18. Best for Video Clips: **TeacherTube**

TeacherTube is the best source for instructional videos in a safe environment. We especially love the clips of teachers showing off the catchy rhymes they've made up to teach certain topics — check out the “Mrs. Burk Perimeter Rap” and the “Mr. Duey Fractions Rap.”

#### 19. Best for Movie-making: **PowToon**

Movie-making has never been easier than it is at PowToon. To create a short animated clip, all you have to do is write a script and choose characters and other graphics using a simple drag-and-drop tool. The classroom possibilities are endless — challenge kids to write an additional scene for a book you are reading in English class, or have one character explain the

water cycle to another for a science project.

20. Best for Tough Topics: **Teaching Tolerance**

Along with an excellent blog that tackles some of the more difficult aspects of education, Teaching Tolerance offers activities and teaching kits on topics ranging from the civil rights movement to the separation of church and state.

21. Best Professional Development On the Go: **Annenberg Learner**

Many of the PD series from the Annenberg Foundation are available on demand here, with videos on teaching measurement, writing workshop, and more. You'll see master teachers at work and undoubtedly snag an idea or two for your own classroom.

22. Best for Your Career: **National Education Association**

**In the hustle and bustle of the classroom, it can be easy to lose track of the outside forces affecting education. The National Education Association explains how to take action regarding the issues you care about most — including merit pay, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), and funding for education.**

23. Best for Inspiration: **Scholastic Top Teaching Blog**

Reading the Top Teaching blog is like paging through a cooking magazine. Just as you might be inspired to try a 12-course meal instead of your usual mac and cheese, you'll leave wanting to push your teaching to the next level. No matter what you're interested in — Pinterest-worthy bulletin boards, savvy tech-integration tips, or how to save money on classroom materials — these veteran teachers' wealth of experience and knowledge will leave you satiated.

24. Best of Facebook: **Scholastic Teachers**

So we may be biased, but we think you'll find our page your most useful one on Facebook by far. Each week, you'll find free printables, lesson plan and craft ideas, frequent giveaways, and note-worthy news. All you have to do is "like" us. And stand by for the fascinating discussion that happens on our page, including the 10 O'Clock Teacher Question, posed by — and answered by — teachers like you.