

Module 3

Introducing Web 2.0 and New Technologies

In this module, you explore new technologies that can enhance teacher practices, student achievement, and community collaboration. You learn how some educators currently integrate Web 2.0 tools into daily practices, and you discover how Web 2.0 tools can improve communication and information dissemination.

Essential Question

How can educational leaders support teacher effectiveness to improve student achievement?

Module Questions

- How can Web 2.0 technologies be integrated into my school's or district's technology plan?
- What tools can teachers and students use to connect to the global community and enhance teaching and learning?
- How can Web 2.0 tools enhance daily communication with staff, parents, students, and community members?

Module Objectives

In this module, you:

- Learn how some educators currently integrate Web 2.0 tools into their practices
- Review school sites using Web 2.0 tools
- Learn how to use Web 2.0 tools to disseminate information

Tools

- Internet Browser
- Resource CD
- Web 2.0 Tools

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Activity 1: Understanding Web 2.0

Successful schools provide students with more than basic skills. Today's 21st century students need to think critically, solve problems, collaborate, use technology, communicate clearly, and be self-directed. Educational leaders must ensure that schools continue to be relevant to students and keep pace with our changing world. What actions can you take to effectively leverage technology integration in your school or district? One key approach is to support and model new Web 2.0 technologies for teachers and students.

Web 2.0 represents a shift from the *read-only* version of the Web (that is, the Web as a digital encyclopedia) to a *read-write* version. Web 2.0 means users can now participate, manipulate, and contribute to Web content, often without using specialized software beyond their browsers. Wikipedia offers a detailed definition of Web 2.0 at



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Web_2.0.

Many educators (and most of their students) are familiar with Web 2.0 social networking sites. In addition to simply messaging friends or identifying buddies, Web 2.0 tools are being leveraged by educators to enhance students' in-classroom and out-of-classroom experiences.



Note: For additional Web sites and online tools that can be used by teachers to help students work together on projects, access the *Web Resources, Collaboration* folder on the Resource CD.

Web 2.0 tools allow students to expand their learning by collaborating and sharing with a global audience, peers, parents, and teachers. Students can use web-based collaborative learning tools to:

- Share thoughts, ideas, and projects
- Provide links to informative and reliable Web sites
- Gather information from others
- Respond to others' thoughts
- Add, edit, and delete online content
- Create linear, journal-like products

Comparing Web 2.0 Tools—Blogs, Wikis, and Collaborative Web Sites

In this activity, you explore the benefits and drawbacks of three common Web 2.0 resources—blogs, wikis, and collaborative Web sites:

- **Blogs:** Short for weblogs, blogs are used to share information and opinions with readers and to solicit feedback and discussion. Blogs often take the form of a journal and are regularly updated with new entries.
- **Wikis:** Wikis are collaborative Web sites that can be set up to be edited by anyone or only designated users. The creator of a wiki can receive notice of all changes, and can track and monitor the development of the site content.

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- **Collaborative Web Sites:** Collaborative Web sites allow individuals to create or upload documents to the Web where they can then be edited using familiar formatting tools by anyone you invite who has Internet access. Some sites also provide the ability to edit and create presentations and spreadsheets.



Web 2.0 tools and environments take advantage of Web programming that can separate form from content. Michael Wesch, a professor of Cultural Anthropology, demonstrates this in his video on YouTube* (www.youtube.com), *The Machine Is Us/ing Us*. As you can see in this video, Web content can be repurposed for many uses and no longer must be viewed solely from its original source.

The following tables provide additional information on using blogs, wikis, and collaborative Web sites in the classroom.

Blogs	
Examples of Instructional Uses	Character journals, lists of research sources, reflections on learning, collecting responses to ideas, debating issues relevant to the subject area
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Interaction is limited to written responses. ▪ Blogs often can be viewed by anyone with Internet access unless you make the blog entries private. ▪ Formatting, design options, and multimedia are often limited. ▪ Content usually must be edited online. ▪ People may respond to blog entries with inflammatory or inappropriate content.
Blogging Sites	A list of Web sites where you can set up your own blog is available in the <i>Web Resources, Collaboration</i> folder on the Resource CD.
More Information	<p>Blogging: It's Elementary, My Dear Watson www.educationworld.com/a_tech/tech/tech217.shtml Presents an article about using blogs in elementary classrooms</p> <p>Blogging Basics: Creating Student Journals on the Web www.educationworld.com/a_tech/techtorial/techtorial037print.shtml Provides a quick introduction to getting your students to write their own blogs</p>



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Wikis	
 Examples of Instructional Uses	Group writing, collaborative Web development, shared research findings, project planning, information collection
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Other authors could make unwanted changes to your work. ▪ Content must be edited online. ▪ People may contribute inflammatory or inappropriate content.
 Blogging Sites	A list of Web sites where you can set up your own wiki is available in the <i>Web Resources, Collaboration</i> folder on the Resource CD.
 More Information	<p>Using Wikis in Education www.scienceofspectroscopy.info/edit/index.php?title=Using_wiki_in_education Defines wikis and suggests ways students can use them</p>

Collaborative Web Sites	
 Examples of Instructional Uses	Collaborative writing, revisions, feedback from one or multiple writers, tracked author contributions
Drawbacks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Usually, files created online require special software to be viewed offline. ▪ Content can be lost if you revert to a previous version. ▪ Other authors could make unwanted changes to your work.
 Blogging Sites	A list of Web sites where you can set up your own online collaborative site is available in the <i>Web Resources, Collaboration</i> folder on the Resource CD.
 More Information	<p>A Paradigm Shift for School Software www.eschoolnews.com/resources/technology-without-breaking-the-bank Offers a comprehensive article about the use of online applications</p> <p>Type and Travel: Web-based Word Processors http://reviews.cnet.com/4520-9239_7-6627472-1.html Includes an overview of online word processing applications with a comparison chart</p>

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Other examples of Web 2.0 tools used by educators include:



- **Social Bookmarking Tools:** Allow educators and students to bookmark and share favorite sites with others. For example, see www.diigo.com.
- **Media Storage and Sharing Sites:** Allow educators and students to post media (images, audio, or video) for safekeeping and sharing. For example, see www.flickr.com.
- **Podcasts:** Allow educators and students to access and subscribe to regularly updated audio recordings. For example, see www.epnweb.org.

Use the lines below to note any thoughts or ideas you might want to share with the group, and record any resources you want to explore in more depth later on your own.

Activity 2: Learning from Current Practitioners

Web 2.0 tools and resources allow teachers and educational leaders to:

- Improve communication with staff, parents, students, and the global community
- Ease the burden on technology staff by assisting with information dissemination
- Meet school or district technology goals

Increasingly, administrators use simple content publication tools, such as blogging tools on school networks, to post information online for teachers, students, and community members. Generally, blogs can be set up quickly, and they can be used to communicate to wide audiences easily.

In this activity, you explore some education-related sites that implement Web 2.0 tools. Working in groups of 5 or 6 participants, you review education-related Web sites and answer the following questions. Be prepared to share your thoughts with the whole group later.

1. How do the Web sites compare to what is currently in place in your school or district?

Activity 3: Exploring Web 2.0 Tools

Many educators, when faced with the overwhelming (and constantly multiplying) number of Web 2.0 tools, immediately ask, “Where do I begin?” One of the most powerful sets of Web 2.0 tools you can begin with are the free tools and resources provided by Google*, such as Google Documents (<http://docs.google.com>).

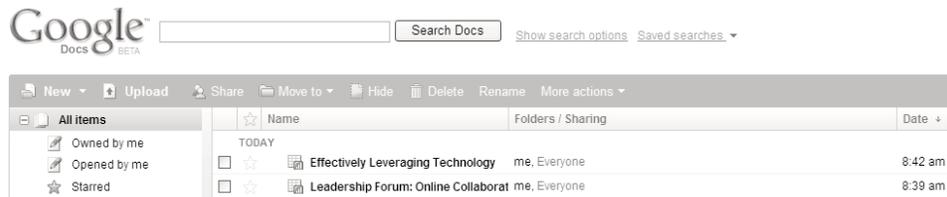
In this activity, you work in small groups with an online collaborative spreadsheet. You use Google Documents to access an online spreadsheet and work collaboratively with other participants to add and edit the spreadsheet’s content. Be prepared to log on to Google Documents and share some of your resources and reactions to Web 2.0 tools. As you complete this activity, think about how you might use Google Documents and similar collaborative tools in your daily work.



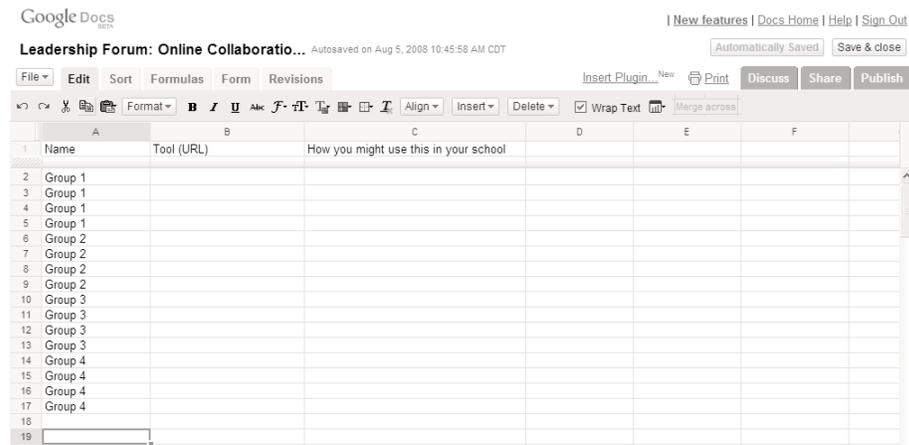
1. Log on to Google Documents at <http://docs.google.com> or use the **TinyURL** provided by your facilitator.

Note: Your facilitator configured a spreadsheet in Google Documents and granted rights to all participants to view and edit it.

2. Open the **Leadership Forum: Online Collaboration Tools** spreadsheet.



3. On the assigned spreadsheet, add the URL of one of the Web 2.0 tools mentioned in this module (or another Web 2.0 tool you currently use) and describe how educators might use it. If you have time, you may also want to spend a few minutes researching the additional Web 2.0 tools listed on the Resource CD.



Module 3 Summary

Explore new technologies that can enhance teacher practices, student achievement, and community collaboration. Review how some educators currently integrate Web 2.0 tools into daily practices, and discover how Web 2.0 tools can improve communication and information dissemination.

Essential Question:

- How can educational leaders support teacher effectiveness to improve student achievement?

Key Points:

- Blogs, wikis, and online collaborative documents allow students and teachers to collaborate on projects by sharing and responding to each other's work online.
- Web 2.0 tools allow students, educators, and community members to participate and contribute online without the need of specialized software (other than an Internet browser) or coding skills.
- Administrators use simple content publication tools, like blogs, to disseminate information online to teachers, students, and other community members.
- Web 2.0 tools are often easy to use, and they extend the reach of communication.

