Technology 101
for
General Music Teachers

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A new language for us all…

What is **Web 2.0**? Web 2.0 is a term representing the changes in the way we use the internet. These may include:
1. Social networking
2. Wikis
3. Blogs
4. Podcasts
5. Video-sharing

What is **social networking**? Social networking is an online social structure comprised of people who share common experiences, friendship, ideas, values, etc. Common examples of social networking are Facebook and MySpace.

What is a **podcast**? A podcast is an audio or video file (vodcast) that is distributed over the internet.

What is a **blog**? A blog is a online log (or journal or diary) in which opinions and ideas are shared with the online community.

What is a **wiki**? A wiki is a collaborative website in which multiple users access and contribute to it.

What is a **flash drive**? A flash drive is the new floppy disk and is accessed through a USB port.

What is a **MP3**? A MP3 is a digital audio encoding format that is compressed (typically $1/10^{th}$ the size of a CD file.)

What is a **PDF**? A PDF is a portable document file that can be used independent of the application, software, hardware, operating system.

What is an **interactive white board**?   An interactive white board is a large interactive display board connected to a computer and projector.   The projector displays the computer screen on the board, which is controlled by a pen (think wireless mouse).

Ok, so now I know what it is called — what do I do with it?

First, we transition from thinking about all of these technologies from a social standpoint and start thinking about them from an educational standpoint.

Engage your students with their own tools!
We only see our students once or twice a week.
Why not engage them anywhere, anytime?

Podcasting

Remember, a podcast is simply an audio or video file distributed over the internet. You can download a podcast onto your computer or iPod and listen to it over, and over, and over again...

What would you want to your students to hear more than once? Think of skills and concepts you teach in class. What if you recorded a lecture and posted it online? Think your students won t listen? You re wrong! Not only will your students listen, so will their parents.

Podcast Ideas

- Record a lecture
- Record a song (check copyright)
- Record tonal or rhythm patterns
- Record a bass line for students to improvise over
- Record a game
- Record recorder songs
- Record pronunciations for choir

Ok, so you are on board, right? But now the obvious question is how do I do this? Depending on which platform you use (Windows or Mac), you can try a couple of programs. Audacity is a wonderful, easy to use program and it is totally FREE! If you are a Mac user, then the obvious choice is Garage Band. Besides a computer, the only other piece of equipment you will need is a microphone. A simple USB microphone that sits on your desktop will give you a good quality sound.

For links to Audacity and directions on creating a podcast, visit my wiki!
Click on the Teacher s Only link!

Blogging

I began my blog as a way to communicate weekly curricular goals with parents with the intent that parents would communicate back. What I got was much more interesting. Each week I would post the skills, concepts and activities we were learning in music class, and each week the kids would log on and give me their opinions and thoughts about what we were learning.

Even more intriguing to me were the kids blogging each week! They were not my most active kids in music class, rather they were some of the quietest, shyest kids in class. I love knowing that the blog has provided them an outlet and a voice to share their feelings and opinions about music class.

There was one other unexpected outcome of the blog and you need to know about it upfront. Think of when you show the kids a new instrument or software program in class. What is the first thing they want to do? Explore! The same is true with the blog. Many of the initial comments had to do with how cool this was, or simply saying hello to me. After the dust settled, the comments and posts become more meaningful. I also found it helpful to post questions for kids too. They (especially the younger kids) need concrete questions with which to respond.

Blogging Ideas

- Post questions about a skill or concept discussed in class (what did you learn about that skill/concept)
- Post questions about around aesthetics (why did you like that piece of music?
- Post follow-up questions based on discussion in your class

Ready to jump right in? Again, the obvious question: how do I do this? There are a number of wonderful hosting sites but this one I would defer to your media tech or technology team. Here s why — so many of the educational blogging sites are now beginning to charge hosting fees. Your district or ISD may already have a contract with a blog site thereby saving you money!

For links to my blog, visit my wiki!
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Other Great Online Tools for Teachers

Animoto

Free online service allows you to create a music video.   You upload the photos, choose the freeplay music.   Animoto arranges your photos into a 30 second music video.   You can create longer videos but you must purchase credits for those. Videos can be embedded into other sites.

Sprouts

Until recently, this was a free service.   There is now a monthly charge associated with the service.   You upload the assets (photos, video, audio, etc.) and arrange them on a variety of pages.   Sprouts are like a mini-webpage that can be embedded into other sites.

Voice Thread

Free online service allows to create interactive lessons.   You upload the content and you and/or the students can comment via cell phone, microphone, or video camera. Check out my voice threads by clicking on the I Can Read! or Recorder Karate links on my wiki.

Promethean Interactive White Boards

To learn more about Promethean products go to macprofessionals.com.   To view online resources and downloadable lessons for Promethean boards, go to prometheanplanet.com.