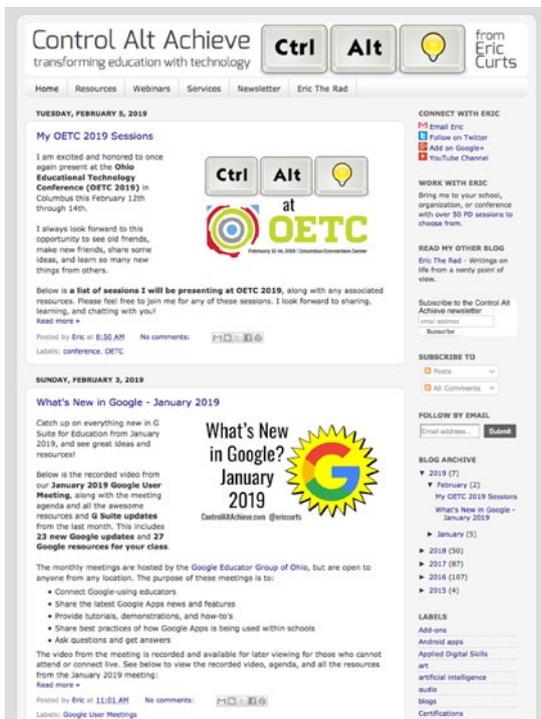




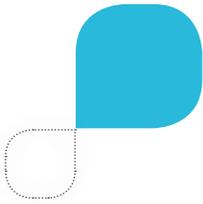
Blogs of Note

■ The blogosphere is alive and well with resources and innovative ideas on using tech in education. In this regular feature we highlight five blogs on edtech that are worth checking out.

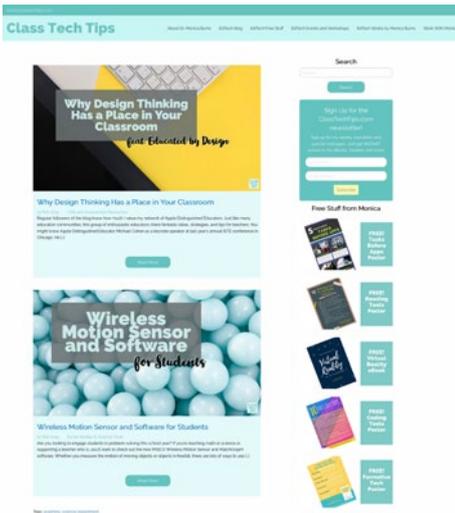


Control Alt Achieve www.controlaltachieve.com

Eric Curts is the kind of guy who seems to know all the cool things out there and can think about great ways to use them. He's a Google Education Trainer and Certified Innovator so he's well connected to the source of the latest and greatest. His blog is a fantastic compendium of resources, mostly related to Google apps and tools, but with many that would work outside of the Google suite. From music education tools (Groove Pizza anyone?) to add-ons for Google Docs, Curts shows how to get the most out of the applications out there. In addition to noting which tools exist, he has great ideas for using them in the classroom. His post on Writing Prompts offers inspirational ideas for starting writing projects and he has a wonderful post on learning the basics of spreadsheets by creating artwork in the style of Mondrian. All his posts are creative and offer real insights and inspiration.



Class Tech Tips classtechtips.com/blog



Have you ever seen a great app or program but weren't sure if it's really something you can use? Class Tech Tips offers in-depth reviews and ideas for using tech tools in the classroom. Dr Monica Burns is the face behind the blog, and she has published several books on how to incorporate tech in classrooms that focus on creativity, deep learning and thinking skills. Her blog posts include features on creative writing using Writable, augmented reality lesson plans, responsive curriculum management using a new platform Kiddom, and problem solving apps for kids. The posts are often sponsored by the companies, but the content is not advertorial. Her insights and ideas are informed and well-considered, making this a great resource for both teachers and school leaders for finding out about new technology in a meaningful way.



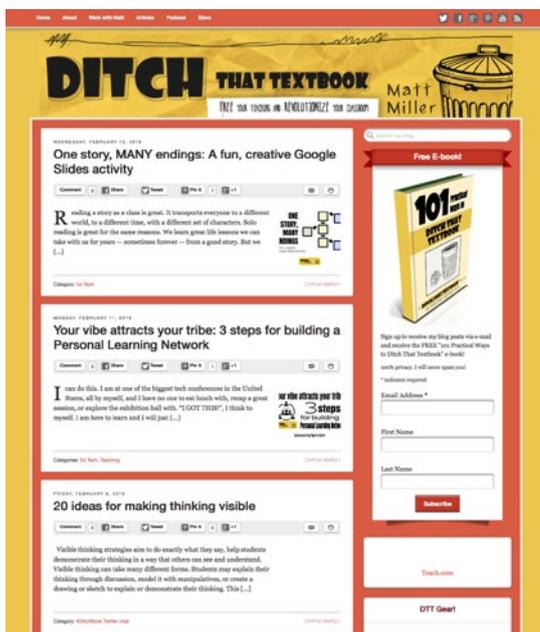
The Innovative Educator theinnovativeeducator.blogspot.com

Sometimes you can have all the tools but not be sure of the issues that surround using them or be unclear about how to adapt them for your particular situation. Enter Lisa Nielsen, a.k.a. the Innovative Educator. Nielsen blogs about a wide variety of edtech issues, particularly in areas of accessibility. Have you ever thought about how to make your Facebook group or Tweets more inclusive and accessible? She has, and she has great ideas about how to do so. She's thoughtful and engaging on issues such as screen time and practices relating to policy implementation, and she's great at debunking the latest social media myths and fears (Is Facebook Really Kicking Members Out of Groups?). If you want intelligent and thoughtful writing, in addition to great tips and suggestions for the latest tech tools, the Innovative Educator is where it's at.



Edtech Emma www.edtechemma.com

With a very personal, confessional style, Edtech Emma aims to show teachers how easy and exciting it can be to incorporate technology into classroom teaching. Her blog is straightforward and direct, showcasing new tools, providing classroom resources and offering lesson plans. The content is divided into several sections if you wish to browse by subject: Assessment, Chromebooks, EdTech, FREE Resources, Google, Lesson Plan, Non-Tech, Reading, Student Centered, Tablets, Time Savers. She recommends books to read and shares her experiences with teaching. She is an Educational Technology consultant and a Google educator, so Google technology does feature prominently in her posts, although many of the tools she features can integrate with other platforms and systems. Her choices are interesting and useful for a wide variety of subjects.



Ditch that Textbook ditchthattextbook.com

The brainchild of Matt Miller, Ditch that Textbook shares ideas for pursuing a textbook-less path where learning activities are often custom-produced for students in addition to being infused with technology. Miller is a prolific blogger, posting every few days. His posts are engaging and each is designed to look at a specific problem that teachers face that has a tech solution. One great guest post talks about how to change the approach to writing plans for substitute (supply) teachers, while another addresses the issue of burnout. There are many posts with ample examples of how to use specific tools, such as Wakelet, Google Slides, Google Forms, etc., but all with very specific uses that are relevant to teachers of all subjects and levels. Miller also offers a few free e-books on his site that offer more in-depth tips and tools on various topics. His energy is infectious and his insights and tips are relevant and practical.

Jory Debenham