VoiceThreads in the Classroom

'Participation is not optional'

A VoiceThread allows every child in a class to record audio commentary about the ideas and experiences that are important to them. Whether it's an event, a project, or a milestone, children can tell their story in their own voice, and then share it with the world. For teachers, a VoiceThread offers a single vessel to capture and then share all the diverse personalities of an entire class. A VoiceThread can be managed with little effort, creating an heirloom that can be shared by students, parents, and educators alike. You can hear the pride and excitement in their voices as the students "publish" and archive their work.

Behind every photo, drawing, or project, is at least one story, and often many more. VoiceThreads offer a simple way to capture and share them. This act of 'publishing' a creation which can then be seen all the way from Cheyenne to Shanghai, strongly reinforces the message we try to send to our children everyday, that their work is great, and worthy of the world's attention.

VoiceThreads are free for educators! Creating VoiceThreads will always be free for K-12 classroom educators and the kids that fill their classrooms. This includes publishing them on the web, and sharing them with the child's friends and family. Voicethread will only charge for extras like prints or downloadable movie versions in the future. It's really important to us that there is no barrier to entry, no cost to fully participate, no software to buy or download, and no contracts to manage.

Step by Step

1. Register, and then apply for a free educator account by clicking the '**Go Pro**' button in the main header of the site, then click the '**K-12 Educator**' link and fill out the form. After you click the link in a confirmation e-mail your all set.

2. Go to the **Create** page and make the VoiceThread by importing and arranging images, documents, presentations, or short videos.

3. K-7 students(13 and under) should only participate using 'identities' which are extra 'faces' of the teachers account and consist of nothing more than a picture and a first name. The picture does not need to be of them at all, but simply needs to represent them so they can recognize their 'mark.' Open your VoiceThread and click on the Avatar next to the left arrow and then select 'Create another identity.' Add a new identity for each student.

4. Have your students prepare to comment on the images by at least thinking about the story, issue, or problem behind the images, and even better, to write a script for their commentary.

5. Now when you are viewing the VoiceThread and one of the students wants to comment on a particular image, you simply click the Avatar next to the left arrow and then choose that child's 'identity.' Now they are all set to comment.

That's it; you're all set to make a classroom VoiceThread. After the VoiceThread is complete, send invitations out to all the parents. You can even choose to add a page at the end of your book for the parents to leave their comments. Keep in mind that all VoiceThreads start out absolutely private, and are only viewable by people whom you invite. After you've made a couple of VoiceThreads you can experiment and explore other formats, i.e. poetry reading and VoiceThreads made and narrated by individual students. The possibilities are limitless. Also, please tell us about your experience by going to the VoiceThread U. Forum on our site. We need lots of help as we develop classroom specific features and we're counting on your guidance.