

SETTS AT TIPS FOR TEACHERS: EDITOR, DENNIS DEEDS, PSUSD
[HTTP://SETTS.CTAP10.ORG](http://setts.ctap10.org)

ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY IN YOUR CLASSROOM

Assistive Technology in the classroom doesn't have to be intimidating to teachers, out of reach for students, or expensive for the district. My ongoing theme in the Assistive Technology newsletters for this year is "What can teachers easily do for FREE or on a limited budget?".

By "easily" I mean with very little technical background and with a minimum of preparation and maintenance. Life in the classroom is way too busy and doesn't always leave much time for teachers to learn too many new skills during the school year.

Let's start with an outstanding web site that you can type into your web browser (Firefox, Safari, or Explorer). The County of Los Angeles Public Library has a great web site where students can choose a book and listen as it's read to them while they follow along with highlighted text.

To access the FREE service, go to:
<http://www.colapublib.org>

From the menu on the opening page, click on: **Children's Services**

Next, click on the icon that says, "**TumbleBooks, e-books for e-kids**" Now, you're on the book choice page.

If you click on "**Story Books**", you'll be taken to a selection of audio books that allow the student to follow along via highlighted text.

If you click on "**Audio Books**", you'll find a menu of strictly audio files, like books on tape - no pictures, no words to follow - just listen. Other choices on the menu will offer the student books to read with no audio accompaniment.

WELCOME!

Good! You took the time to open the attachment to the e-mail message! As a reward for making the effort to look at this newsletter when you probably have a dozen other things to do, within the newsletter you'll come across an offer that will give you the secret to FREE 411 information calls on your cell phone - no more \$1 or \$2 charges to get a number you need from Information.

Books range in reading level from K-7 and include titles such as **Black Beauty** and **Anne Of Green Gables** as well as many you've probably never heard of. When you go to the site, be sure to check out the "Puzzles & Games" menu choice that is linked to the available stories.

Many of the listed book titles are also available on the site in **Spanish and other languages**, so be sure to click on the "Language Learning" menu choice. Now, here's the first free offer for teachers who have read this far. If you need Directory Assistance while you're out and about with your cell phone, just dial 1.800.FREE.411 for business or residential listings. Follow the prompts you hear and you will get the number you need without paying a phone company surcharge for the service. Read more at www.free411.com. It's easy - and no more \$1.50 charges on your monthly cell phone bill.

FLASHCARDS

If you thought Flashcards were left behind in the last century and didn't make the jump from 1999 to 2007, check this web site:

<http://www.quizlet.com>.

Flashcards are alive and well in the digital age. You can create your own math, social studies, or vocabulary sets of flashcards that can be accessed by your students in the classroom or from home. All it takes is a little time. If you don't have time, you can use ready made card sets already on the site for everything from math to foreign language vocabulary practice.

All you have to do is set up a FREE account and spend a little time making card sets or exploring pre-made sets and you're set for the rest of your teaching

career - maybe.

As examples of how the site can be used, you can create flashcards with math problems - multiplication tables for example, or for Social Studies, you may want to create flashcards that pair events with places or dates. When the student goes to the list on the web site and clicks on the flashcard list test, he, or she, will be presented with problems or questions in various answer formats such as fill in the blank, true or false, or multiple choice.

The learning opportunities are only limited by your creativity and imagination. While it takes time to set up, it will save you time in the long run. This site can be even more effective than commercially made software if used properly.

GOOGLE TIPS

GOOGLE IS A DICTIONARY

Want to look up the definition of a particular word, but don't want to bother going to the bookshelf to get your dictionary? Not sure of a specific spelling? Then use Google as an online dictionary to look up any word you can think of. It's easy—and there are two ways to do it.

The first approach to looking up definitions is to use the Google search box. Enter the keywords that are in your query, followed by the word in question. (No question mark is necessary.) For example, to look up the definition of the word "confiscate," enter "what is confiscate".

When you use a "what is" search, Google returns a standard search results page (typically with several useful definition links in the list), as well as a definition section at the top of the page. This section includes a short definition of the word and two useful links. The first link, disguised as the result title, is actually a link to other definitions of the word on the web. The second link, Definition in Context, displays an example of the word used in a sentence.

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