Emerging Technologies for School Librarians

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Codecademy
http://www.codecademy.com/

Codecademy is a free, online interactive site that teaches basic coding languages such as Python, JavaScript, and Ruby as well as markup languages like HTML and CSS. This site is a great start for beginners wanting to learn the basics of the language of computers. School libraries can use this site to guide inquisitive students on the basics of coding without needing to know much about it themselves. This is a great way to incorporate technology into the learning environment of a school library and get students to really engage the technologies that their school library has to offer.

Some schools are already using codecademy within their curriculum. In a Wired article, Lapowsky (2014) reports on the use of codecademy in UK schools as part of the country's push to bring computer science into the classroom.

Goodreads
http://www.goodreads.com

Goodreads is a site that offers school librarians a social manner in which to show what they're reading, create "shelves," and connect with their students. Librarians can create many different types of shelves in order to help answer the age-old question, "What book do you recommend?" A librarian can create shelves based on his/her favorite books, students' favorite books, new releases, most popular, and more. Other Goodreads users provide ratings and reviews of books, and the librarian can write reviews as well. Students can choose to set up their own account and become "friends" with the library, "browse" the library's shelves, create their own shelves and reviews, and connect with other users through the site. Goodreads allows the librarian to promote books the library offers and also allows students to have a social experience when searching for their next book.

An example of how Goodreads can be utilized in school libraries is by looking at Jenna Goodall's profile (http://www.goodreads.com/user/show/659853-jenna-goodall). While she is a YA librarian at a public library, her shelves include categories such as "Best of 2014," "Series to keep up with," "Favorites," and much more. Her account can be a good model for how a school librarian can organize his/her account.

The Khan Academy
https://www.khanacademy.org

The Khan Academy is an online resource school librarians can use to help students "learn about anything" through short videos. This digital library of educational videos was created with the goal of making education free and accessible to anyone anywhere. With thousands of videos ranging from 2-10 minutes in length, The Khan Academy offers a flexible format for students to learn, review, and study everything from math and science to computing and art. This free tool can be an invaluable tutoring aid for students. If a particular math concept is forgotten when a student is at home, a short lesson can easily be played to review the topic. In a school library, it provides an opportunity to incorporate an engaging technology followed by questions geared toward higher-level thinking on the subject. Additionally, teacher librarians can also gather student performance data through this technology, which is undoubtedly important.

According to "Education Week," Idaho was set to begin a statewide pilot of The Khan Academy in the 2013-14 school year (Ash, 2013). No research has been found about the success of the pilot yet.

My Friend Robot App
https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/my-robot-friend/id555121423?mt=8

The My Friend Robot Application is a game made from Apple products that teaches coding for young children (grades K-3rd). By picking out a robot, children then use basic coding skills like directions to guide the robot through different mazes, earning coins they can use to decorate and outfit their robot. As they unlock new games, more skills are taught, all with an element of fun that will keep them engaged and curious. This app would work well in school libraries that meet with the lower grades in schools. Children could be introduced to the technology of tablets and librarians can utilize this game to provide instructional, basic learning through a fun, interactive game.

Netflix for Kids
http://www.netflix.com/Kids

Netflix is arguably the most popular on-demand television and film streaming application that is available today. While the effect of television on children has been stereotyped for decades, new research on educational television programs for children has revealed the positive results these programs have on many aspects of a child's mental and social development. Sesame Street, with over one thousand research articles studying it, is the most heavily researched television show in the history of television (Shalom & Rosemarie, 2000). The result garnered attest to Sesame Street's positive influence on children's literacy, numbers skills, and social behavior (2000).

Netflix has its own "Kids" page, which has hundreds of options for learning focused shows for kids, including Sesame Street. While Netflix is the online streaming application listed, there are many other alternatives that offer direct, user-controlled access to a variety of children's educational television programs such as Hulu, The Roku, Apple TV, and Amazon Instant Video. Some libraries have already added a television to their respective "kid's Corner," but this has mostly been utilized for playing video games. Subscribing to Netflix or investing in one of the alternatives could benefit young library patrons in their mental and social development and make them more interested in not only their library, but in learning as well.

Pinterest
https://www.pinterest.com/

Pinterest is an online pin board with millions of users collecting and pinning links to anything and everything from videos and pictures to articles and recipes. In a library setting, Pinterest can be used to not only interact virtually with patrons, but also stay up-to-date on and contribute to the many trends that other libraries are setting in their communities around the world. The Otis Library in Norwich, CT is an exceptional example of how to successfully integrate Pinterest into a library's social media presence. The Otis Library Pinterest page is filled with a large array of different "boards." Some of the most notable ones are the collected pins for creative display ideas, a vast assortment of pins for recommended books for just about every genre or category one could imagine, and a board promoting the library's upcoming events.

The staff of the University of Regina's Library in Saskatchewan, Canada also is utilizing their Pinterest page to connect with patrons online and to further advertize their library. Three members of the library's staff wrote an article detailing their process of launching their page and what they added to it. They included the new happenings of their library such as "photos of newly renovated library spaces" and boards with pictures of each of their new displays. They also have a "What are you Reading?" board that followers can post to and add comments about their most recent reading list. Another notable section of this article deals with copyright considerations. The authors address many concerns regarding copyright since one of the main issues is that Pinterest users often link to content from "third party websites and social media sites" (Hansen, Nowlan * Winter 2012, pp. 3). While Pinterest is undoubtedly an engaging way to stay connected with patrons, copyright laws should always be researched before pinning.

Socrative
http://www.socrative.com

Oftentimes in school libraries, the librarian and the technology integration specialist are the same person. For that reason, having one resource that can be easily integrated and made applicable to any into lesson at almost any grade level is extremely important. Socrative is a tool designed to improve formative assessment by allowing librarians and teachers to see in real time what students are thinking and receive graded responses that show immediate

feedback on the subject at hand. Educators can start a quiz, ask a quick question, do a polling activity, or have students complete an exit ticket before leaving the library or classroom.

Another huge bonus is that it works on any device and any operating system, which is a feature that is hard to find. Socrative was also voted the Best Website and App for 2013 by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL, 2013).

Storybird
http://storybird.com/

Storybird is a storytelling website that allows users to create poems, picture books, and longform books utilizing the images provided by the site. Users have the ability to create a free account that allows them to create a limited amount of stories before needing to upgrade to a paid account. The site is built for use for students, educators, and teachers, so it would easily work within a library setting. Students can learn the art of storytelling through the simple formats provided by Storybird and can read and comment on the stories of their peers spanning all age groups. It is a simple, yet elegant way to teach writing through illustrations, examples, and peer analysis.

Storybird, while being used widely in the US, is even being recognized internationally. In her paper presented to the International Association for Development of the Information Society (IADIS), Menezes (2014) emphasizes the importance of storytelling and how Storybird can be used to focus children's attention on writing and help them collaborate. Teachers can create accounts for each of their students and be able to view their students' work. It is also a great way to encourage and develop literacy skills (Menezes, 2014, p. 299-300).

TED-Ed
http://ed.ted.com

TED-Ed combines the fascinating, educational and inspirational aspects of the TED Talks we all know and love with lesson plans that can transform any school library into an interactive laboratory for learning. TED-Ed aims to capture the most powerful lessons taking place in our classrooms right now and share them with lifelong learners around the world. With the goal to ignite curiosity, TED-Ed aims to push teachers to share their best lessons and animators to contribute to the recordings by adding visual appeal to help further engage students. School librarians are constantly pushed to collaborate with teachers throughout the school, so offering librarians a resource that can re-ignite a teacher's passion for education or offer an opportunity to recommend a teacher lesson for TED-Ed will further harmonize the two roles.

The site not only offers the ability to watch top lessons, but it also provides resources for teachers to execute their own lessons with the assistance of easy-to-use technological planning tools. "Educators can flip any video on TED-Ed or YouTube to add supplementary materials and make it their own." Research has shown this tool gaining popularity for it's almost universal

accessibility. One must only have internet access to have a wealth of educational videos at his or her fingertips.(Williams, 2012).

Twitter
http://www.twitter.com

Twitter is a very useful social media tool that many students already utilize. School librarians can use this as a way to engage and interact with students. Librarians can tweet upcoming programs, new or popular books the library offers, and more in order for students to know what is going on in the library. Librarians could also tweet interactive questions that encourage students to engage with the library and one another. While there are many other social media sites, such as Facebook and Instagram, Twitter is among the most popular with students, is more interactive, and allows librarians to deliver short, attention-grabbing messages to their followers.

Karyn Silverman (2013) suggests using social media, such as Twitter, as a way for students to connect with their favorite authors. She gives several ideas on how to use Twitter in the library, including tweeting about meeting an author, having a book signed, and creating programs around teaching students how to use and interact with Twitter and their favorite authors (Silverman, 2013, 29).

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