The Value of Social Media in The Classroom

1. Tweet or post status updates as a class. Teacher Karen Lirenman lets students propose nuggets of learning that are posted for parents to read.
2. Write blog posts about what students are learning. Teacher Kevin Jarrett blogs reflections about his Elementary STEM lab for parents to read each week.
3. Let your students write for the world. Linda Yollis' students reflect about learning and classroom happenings.
4. Connect to other classrooms through social media. Joli Barker is fearlessly connecting her classroom through a variety of media.
5. Use Facebook to get feedback for your students' online science fair projects. Teacher Jamie Ewing is doing this now, as he shared recently.
6. Use YouTube for your students to host a show or a podcast. Don Wettrick's students hosted the Focus Show online and now share their work on a podcast.
7. Create Twitter accounts for a special interest projects. My student Morgan spent two years testing and researching the best apps for kids with autism (with the help of three "recruits"), and her work just won her an NCWIT Award for the State of Georgia.
8. Ask questions to engage your students in authentic learning. Tom Barrett did this when his class studied probability by asking about the weather in various locations.
9. Communicate with other classrooms. The Global Read Aloud, Global Classroom Project and Physics of the Future are three examples of how teachers use social media to connect their students as they collaborate and communicate.
10. Create projects with other teachers. *(Full disclosure: I co-created Physics of the Future with* Aaron Maurer*, a fellow educator I first met on Twitter.)*
11. Share your learning with the world. My students are creating an Encyclopedia of Learning Games with Dr. Lee Graham's grad students at the University of Alaska Southeast. The educators are testing the games, and the students are testing them, too.
12. Further a cause that you care about. Mrs. Stadler's classes are working to save the rhinos in South Africa, and Angela Maiers has thousands of kids choosing to matter.

**.Encourage students to share work socially.**

Anna Divinsky created an [iTunes U](http://mashable.com/2013/08/06/best-itunes-u-classes/) class at Penn State University called Art 10: Introduction to Visual Studies, which she then adapted into a massive open online course (MOOC) on Coursera. The MOOC, called [Introduction to Art: Concepts and Techniques](https://www.coursera.org/course/art), amassed more than 58,000 students.

For each class assignment, students were responsible for evaluating each other's work. Because the class was online, social media played an essential role in connecting students and creating an online community.

Students shared their work on a variety of platforms. On [Flickr](http://mashable.com/category/flickr/), they tagged their artwork with "artmooc." On [Twitter](http://mashable.com/category/twitter/), they included the #artmooc hashtag. Others posted to [Facebook](http://mashable.com/category/facebook/), and continue to do so to this day, even though the course has been over for quite sometime.

"It was fascinating to see learners from all over the world wanting to connect with one another in order to build a sense of community," Divinsky says.

But what was even more surprising was how social media allows students to self-organize into smaller, independent groups. These groups were based on commonalities like age, language and art proficiency levels. By allowing students to share on the site of their choosing, social sharing will come more naturally.

**2. Use a hashtag to facilitate guest speaker discussions.**

According to a recent [YPulse](http://www.ypulse.com/post/view/millennials-and-news-fact-checked) survey, 21% of Millennials use Twitter as their primary source for finding news. Encouraging students to engage with guest speakers via Twitter makes them more engaged with the platform and prepares them to raise important questions online.

During an investigative journalism class at New York University, one professor invited prominent journalists to come speak to the class of more than 200 people, and encouraged students to live-tweet the interview using the hashtag #IJNYU. Because the class was so big and the tweets so frequent, the hashtag occasionally became a trending topic in New York City. Students were then required to turn in a [Storify](http://mashable.com/category/storify/) summary based on their classmates' tweets, within 24 hours.

Another way to incorporate hashtags during classroom discussions is to encourage students to tweet questions to a guest speaker as the speaker is talking. This is exactly what Mara Einstein and Chad Boettcher did for NYU's Innovations in Marketing class. This method ensures that students don't interrupt the speaker while he or she is talking. More importantly, however, is that it also engages the students' social communities outside of the classroom, so people who aren't taking the class can also chime-in with questions for the guest speaker.

<https://www.edutopia.org/blog/guidebook-social-media-in-classroom-vicki-davis>

<http://mashable.com/2013/08/18/social-media-teachers/#eWhu3Hcyegqu>