

Friday, February 29, 2008

## Top Tips

Thinkfinity

Lots of no-cost resources are available at Verizon's literacy, education and technology site, Thinkfinity. Verizon Thinkfinity is an innovative online resource for teachers, students, parents and the literacy community, which includes the program previously known as Verizon MarcoPolo and the new Thinkfinity Literacy Network. In partnership with leading educational and literacy organizations throughout the nation, Verizon Thinkfinity offers over 49,000 educational resources -- including lesson plans, student materials, interactive content and web sites -- in seven academic disciplines. A companion, comprehensive professional development program, delivered through a network of State Rollout Partners, prepares educators to effectively utilize these rich resources to improve student learning in the 21st century. All of these resources are available to users anytime, anywhere, at no cost. Thinkfinity is the cornerstone of Verizon Foundation's educational and literacy initiatives. Source: Thinkfinity MetaTag Description Thinkfinity; Home Page MetaTag (View Source) This may seem like a lot of resources to non-teachers, but, non-teachers, politicians and the public fail to comprehend just how much work teachers do. Of course, non-teachers also underestimate just how much material teachers must develop for their classes. Anemic: 54,000 Resources are a "drop in the bucket." Divide 54,000 by the number of teaching days in one year (approximately 170 for public school classrooms), then divide by 13 grades (counting Kindergarten). The result is just less than 25. This means that teachers will have to:

Adapt, adjust and create a lot more lessons

Spend a lot of time sifting through the Thinkfinity site to find something that they can use

What does Thinkfinity offer?

Teacher Resources

On-This-Date Calendar

Student Materials Index

Lesson Plan Index

Educator Newsletter (Currently Suspended for Revamping)

Professional Development

No-Cost Training

Trainer Resource Center Changing Website; seems to be new and changing frequently.

Links appear, then disappear, perhaps in an effort to remain current and fresh.

Unfortunately, teachers need a stable and trustworthy site because planning should be yearly for the most streamlined results.

Teachers expect to return to a resource site six or seven months later, and find the same materials that they bookmarked.

If you find online resource materials, you can:

Create "Favorites" or "Bookmarks"

Build a set of nested folders with desktop shortcuts pointing to the resources

Use Google Notebook to store the links

List all the links in an application such as a word processing document outline, spreadsheet, or presentation program

What Happens if the Site changes the Links? Sometimes, you are able to use the "way-back" systems on

Google; or Alexa;. This strategy is worth a try if you are desperate (and didn't plan ahead).

Note: You find the "Way Back Machine" after you search for a specific Website's traffic rank. A Better Research

Solution A better research solution for must-have references is a Surfulator; is essential.

Sites change. So, evaluate the resource material. If you must refer to the material later, then a copy on your desktop,

with live links will save you hours of anguish and save you tons of stress.

Here is a link to the Surfulator program. Link to the Surfulator site

Purchase Surfulator; now

Posted by Classroom Toolkit Newsletter in Top Tips at 06:00