

THREE WAYS TO BRING THE WORLD INTO YOUR CLASSROOM



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1. VIDEO CONFERENCING

More districts than ever have installed videoconferencing equipment, and this is great news for educators. If you're not sure about your district, by all means check with your IT/Tech person and you may just be pleasantly surprised.

Once set up, you'll have a field day on the Center for Interactive Learning and Collaboration's [website](#), where you can explore literally thousands of low- and no-cost interactive programs from content providers around the globe.

TIP – use the Search box to type in key terms and topics from your current curriculum –fractions, Ancient Egypt, the science of heat, creative writing . . . you name it!

Canadian schools will be interested in the [Digital Human Library](#) as well - - another free service.



A STORY

This past September, I connected via videoconference with a classroom of 9th and 10th graders in Chefnak Alaska. They live 600 miles from the nearest McDonalds! I performed a concert for them, took questions and asked many of my own. Then, they sang some of their traditional songs for me at the end. It was incredible.

2. SKYPE IN THE CLASSROOM

I just recently discovered [this marvelous resource](#), which seems to be especially well suited for finding other classrooms around the country and around the world to connect your students with. You can also find lessons, find guest authors and speakers, and perhaps most fun of all, you can “Mystery Skype,” which is described as “an educational game, invented by teachers, played by two classrooms on Skype. The aim of the game is to guess the location of the other classroom by asking each other questions. It’s suitable for all age groups and can be used to teach subjects like geography, history, languages, mathematics and science.”

What will you need? Just a webcam, a microphone and a Skype account. Fairly simple stuff for your tech person to set up.



3. WEBCAST PROGRAMS

These live, interactive events require only an internet connection — they're broadcast online and can be enjoyed on any computer, SMART Board, interactive whiteboard or other internet-connected screen. Classroom settings are ideal, with students participating right from their desks or cozy on the classroom floor. Computer labs work well too, as do larger-group gatherings.

Students respond to the presenter just as if he/she is standing right in the room with them, and because of the economies of scale (multiple schools can participate in the same event), these tend to be just a fraction of the cost of a field trip, assembly, or guest artist visit. Many of **my own distance learning programs** are now being delivered in this way using the **Concert Window** platform, and while I'm not aware of other presenters utilizing this format, I think it's only going to grow in the years to come.

Here's **what educators have said** about these programs.

THANK YOU.

I hope this is a useful guide! I'm always happy to hear from you with questions, comments, ideas and additional resources you'd like to pass along.

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