

## Nik's Learning Technology Blog

August 2013 – Volume 17, Number 2

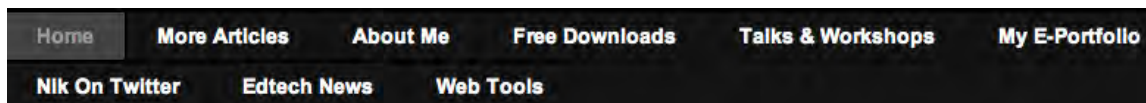
<b>Title</b>	Nik's Learning Technology Blog
<b>Author</b>	Nik Peachey
<b>Type of Product</b>	Blog for learning technology
<b>Minimum Hardware Requirements</b>	Computer with internet access
<b>Contact Information</b>	<a href="http://nikpeachey.blogspot.com/">http://nikpeachey.blogspot.com/</a>
<b>Price</b>	Free

### *Introduction*

Nik's Learning Technology Blog is one of the more useful blogs for educational technologies. It guides educators and students alike to use web tools for English language teaching and learning. Not only does the blog enhance learners' and teachers' awareness about the educational resources available online, but it also empowers them by alerting them to where they can find these resources and how to use the resources in the language learning classroom.

### *Description*

The navigation bar (see Figure 1) provides nine tabs for the user to explore the blog. We will visit the main tabs in this review.



**Figure 1.** *Nik's Learning Technology Blog navigation bar*

The "home" tab contains short, clear descriptions about the selected educational technologies and the blogger's (Nik's) experience using them. This is where the blogger provides a summary of a resource and elicits comments, reactions, and reflections from others about the resource. As with most other blogs, posts are organized by date; newer articles/posts appear above older ones. Most of Nik's posts are interactive, allowing blog visitors to contribute to the post. For example, in a section called "Criteria for Evaluating

Web Tools and Apps” the blogger suggests some assessment criteria for evaluating the pedagogical worth of sites, incorporating a small survey for the readers to vote for the criteria suggested, sharing pros and cons for the proposed criteria and inviting the readers to suggest other criteria (see Figure 2). This unique feature of the interactive blog posts provides different points of view on the topic being discussed.

**Nik's Learning Technology Blog**  
For English Language Teachers

Home | More Articles | About Me | Free Downloads | Talks & Workshops | My E-Portfolio  
Nik On Twitter | Edtech News | Web Tools

Thursday, 18 April 2013

### What are the qualities of a good educational technology trainer?

Whilst in the process of designing a unit of online learning I started thinking about the qualities and skills that a good educational technology trainer should have. After thinking of a few myself I decided to draw on the wisdom of my PLN and crowd-source a few more ideas.

Please feel free to add your ideas and to copy any of the ones you find here. I'd also like you to selectively vote for the ones you think are most important. You can also add some pros and cons to say why. You can add your ideas and comments without registering.

Ideas	Pros and cons	Votes
<b>Pedagogical application</b> Training is delivered about how the tools can be pedagogically applied.	The trainer must be an educator at least as much as a tech person. A trainer is there to help tea... more by Drora	<b>13</b> Vote
	Using the bells and whistles just for the sake of being 'modern' or impressing students is a comm... more by Brenda	Lisa, Karolina Nedelkovska, Brenda and 10 more

68 days left

Add argument

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**Figure 2. Homepage with an interactive post**

The “More Articles” page (see Figure 3) provides a list of articles that have been published on the blog since it was started in 2007. The articles are organized chronologically, with more recent evaluations of resources appearing at the top. All articles reviewed are related to technology integration in teaching and learning.



**Figure 3. “More Articles” page**

On the “Free Downloads” page (see Figure 4), Nik provides his blog followers with the option to download some of his articles and documents free of charge. As stated on this page, the documents are designed to “help teachers teach themselves to use technology” and provide step-by-step picture tutorials on how to use different Web tools.



**Figure 4. “Free Downloads” page**

On the “Talks and Workshops” page (see Figure 5), users have the option to sign up for Nik’s face-to-face or online workshops and conference events where he trains groups of teachers and managers to appropriately use different technology and web tools. Users may sign up to receive newsletters notifying them of upcoming talks and workshops.

## Talks & Workshops

As well as publishing blogs and writing materials I also design and deliver face to face and online workshop training for groups of teachers and managers and talk at conference events.

If you would like to hire me to train your teachers, or speak at your event, just drop me a line.

For more information :/contact me

Sign up to recieve a notification when my online courses become available.


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**Figure 5. “Talks & Workshops” page**

On his “E-Portfolio” page (see Figure 6), Peachey uses a website called Scoop.it to show a collection of his writings on the web, including reviews, tutorials, manuals, and articles. The page also allows users to share and comment on Peachey’s work.



# Nik Peachey

E-Portfolio: A Collection of my writing from around the web  
Curated by Nik Peachey


11.6K Views Filter Share

Follow

Scooped by Nik Peachey

## Nik Peachey: Freelance Learning Technology Consultant, Writer, Trainer

Scoop.it!



From about.me - May 31, 2012 10:08 AM

Nik Peachey has been involved in ELT since 1992. He has worked all over the world as a language teacher, teacher trainer and technology trainer.


**Nik Peachey's insight:**  
This site has links to all my professional information and blogs etc. It also has my contact information.

Comment Recommend 0 Tweet 0 +1 0 +

No comment yet. Sign up to comment

Scooped by Nik Peachey

## Interview with Jeremy Harmer | Liverpool Online




From latefi.britishcouncil.org - April 17, 3:11 AM

Jeremy Harmer was talking about the connection between developing musical ability and developing linguistic ability and some of the parallels between successful musicians and successful language learners.

Rescooped by Nik Peachey from Learning Technology

## Some Pros and Cons of iPads for ELT



From www.deltapublishing.co.uk - April 24, 7:06 AM

From a quick comparison of these two lists it may well look like the benefits far outweigh the disadvantages, but those disadvantages are BIG, especially the cost. If you are thinking of introducing iPads in your school, then I think by far the best way to start is just by having a few in the teachers' staff room and letting the teachers explore them and see what they can do with them. If this can generate some enthusiasm then you could be on your way to having a 21st century language school.

**Nik Peachey's insight:**  
This is an article I wrote some years ago now, but it has been attracting a lot of attention and comments recently, so I thought I would share it and open up the debate. I'll also try to write a more up to date one soon.

Comment Recommend 0 Tweet 0 +1 0 +

Nik Peachey's curator insight, April 24, 7:05 AM  
This is an article I wrote some years ago now, but it has been attracting a lot of attention and comments recently, so I thought I would share it and open up the debate. I'll also try to write a more up to date one soon.

Sign up to comment

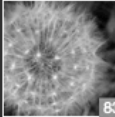
Scooped by Nik Peachey

## Blended learning in English Language Teaching: Course Design and Implementation

1/? < > 🔍 📄

**Figure 6. Nik Peachey's E-Portfolio**

The “Edtech News” page (see Figure 7) displays a database of different news and research relating to learning technology on the web. Here users may read, comment on, and share technologies for free. Peachey also provides his own insight and opinions to each of the news selected.



# Learning Technology

News and research from around the web  
Curated by Nik Peachey

134.9K Views Filter Share

Follow

Scooped by Nik Peachey

## Evaluating web-based tools for language instruction

one stop english .com

### Evaluating Web based Tools for ELT

By Nik Peachey

From iatefl.britishcouncil.org - April 13, 12:33 AM

Over the last few years, interest in web-based tools has expanded rapidly, but how do we know which ones to use and which to avoid? In this workshop, we will look together at some web and mobile applications and establish criteria by which we can evaluate them to ensure we use tools that will lead to enhanced language learning.

**Nik Peachey's insight:**  
This is a recording of my workshop from IATEFL 2013. You can also download the presentation from this page and contribute to the criteria.

Comments (more) Recommend 1 Tweet 0 +1 2

Dr.Revathi Viswanath's comment, April 18, 2:07 AM  
Very informative presentation. I created my account in some of the links.

Blake Turnbull's curator insight, April 18, 9:22 PM  
A 50 minute online seminar/class on how to best evaluate web-based tools in determining which ones beneficial to use, and which ones are not.

Gayla Keesee's curator insight, April 25, 4:45 AM  
Nice overview of tools for the language classroom.


Sign up to comment

Scooped by Nik Peachey

## Student Blogging Guidelines | always learning

From kimcofino.com - April 26, 10:07 AM

Interestingly, the guidelines our grade 4 students created last year were just as applicable to middle (and high) school as they were for elementary. We ended up using almost all of the guidelines from last year, with just a few minor re-phrasing issues and consolidation.



**Nik Peachey's insight:**  
Some useful guidelines created by students.

Comment Recommend 2 Tweet 0 +1 0

Guille Florian's curator insight, Today, 1:35 AM  
Collaborating teaching / learning: guidelines to find a methodology


Sign up to comment

Scooped by Nik Peachey

## Exploiting two computer-based RPGs

From nikpeachey.blogspot.co.uk - April 26, 1:27 AM

In this article I'd like to look at how we could use two computer based RPGs (Role playing games) as the basis for language development.



**Figure 7. News and research related to technology database**

On the “Web Tools” page (see Figure 8), Peachey provides a list of web-based applications to help learners exploit particular educational resources on the web. Each resource is accompanied by his ideas for using the specific web tools in the classroom. Users are encouraged to comment on or share these “scoops.”



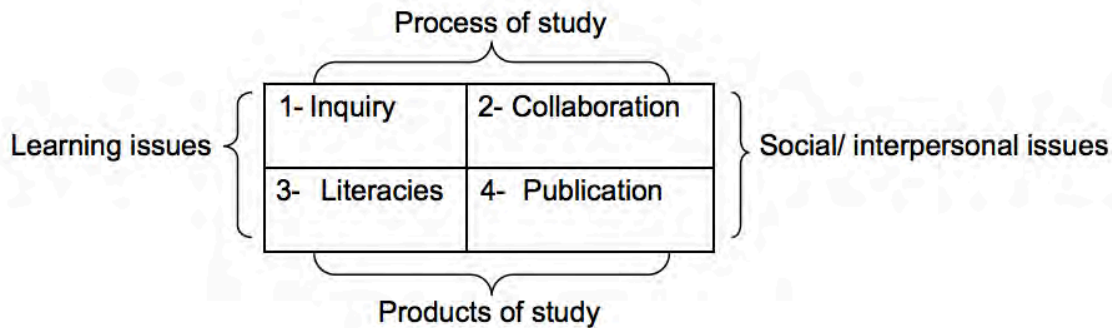
**Figure 8. “Tools For Learners” page**

Finally, Peachey allows his blog follower to stay connected to his blog through social media by incorporating a plug-in feature located on the bottom right of the home page. Icons for Twitter, Facebook, Email, and Youtube, as well as a search and translate feature, are included.

### ***Evaluation and Applications***

According to Crook et al. (2008), there are four central themes that summarize the impact of Web 2.0 application in educational settings: inquiry, collaboration, literacies, and publication (see Figure 9). The authors state, “These four themes define a set of possibilities for the appropriation of Web 2.0 in educational practice” (p. 28, 2008). In this evaluation of Nik’s Learning Technology Blog, we will examine the blog’s appropriateness for teaching and learning English in the light of the four themes suggested by Crook et al. (2008).





**Figure 9. The four central themes surrounding Web 2.0 applications in education**  
*(Adapted from Crook et al., 2008)*

### Inquiry

Nik's Learning Technology Blog offers a rich space for inquiry by providing a wide range of articles about educational technologies and by introducing and reviewing web tools. Another way the blog motivates users' inquiry is with the inspiring homepage surveys which invite users to participate. The blogger also introduces interesting authentic topics on the homepage and seeks readers' interaction and participation through voting. Thus, the blog elicits different insights about the users' thoughts and interests and encourages the user to be "an independent learner" by "[inviting] new ways for a learner to conduct personal research" (Crook et al., 2008, p. 27).

### Literacies

Navigating Nik's Learning Technology Blog engages the learner in a variety of creative online tools and resources that can be utilized in educational settings. As a form of new literacies, this blog provides various ways of presenting ideas, expressing meanings, and introducing innovative technologies. The blog represents a creative repository for teachers, students, and digital immigrants and digital natives alike. Being rich in digital text, digital artifacts, authentic material, and new internet tools, the blog stimulates considerable growth in the users' creative exploitation of the internet. Besides exploring the new web tools, surfing Nik's blog involves users in learning through communication and social practices, thereby joining members in the "discourse" of new literacies by understanding language and its social context (Gee, 1999; Lankshear & Knobel, 2003).

### Collaboration

The blog is a sort of social club based on text-based communication, involving identity expression and interaction between users. It allows blog users to communicate with each other and the blogger freely in a friendly and professional environment where they can eventually "learn and build knowledge" (McCloughlin & Lee, 2007, p. 667). By joining this social club, even users with a more basic background in computer skills can participate and add to the collaborative atmosphere. Users can develop teaching skills and creative approaches to using web resources, as well as share experiences with other teachers and learners.

## Publication

Nik's blog helps its users to be publishers in many ways. First, the blog guides users by giving them a solid understanding of resources that will enable them to "make their work available to the rest of the world" (McLoughlin & Lee, 2007, p. 667). Second, Peachey leads simple, informal interactions with users and he inspires novice writers to choose their publication resources using his reviews of the tools. Third, the blogger motivates users to post their "user-generated content" (Egbert, 2005; McLoughlin & Lee, 2007) and to publish their ideas and comments, which will eventually prepare blog followers to create their own blogs and social networking accounts.

In addition to evaluating this blog using the four criteria suggested by Crook et al. (2008), it is worth noting that it is free, accessible, and simple to use, helpful for both students and teachers, and can be connected to users' lives and previous learning (Crook, 2008; Egbert, 2005; Peachey, 2009). Finally, to evaluate this blog using the criteria suggested in Peachey's own blog, his blog is easily learnable and teachable.

## **Conclusion**

To summarize, Nik's Learning Technology Blog is a very useful, interactive, and authentic resource for English language teachers. Besides the reviews of web tools, users have the option to read, download, share and/or comment on the articles or posts published in the blog. Teachers who are interested in integrating technology into their classroom can teach themselves how to do so by using the freely available resources on this blog.

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### ***About the Reviewers***

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