

**Newsletter****Special Interest Articles**

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## Five Reasons I Love Using QR Codes in My Classroom

by: Monica Burns, Educational Consultant



There are so many tools that educators can use to get students interested and engaged in their work. Like most teachers today, I integrate technology into my instruction everyday. I'm lucky to work in a school with one-to-one technology and use iPads with my students throughout every school day. That makes it easy to use QR codes in my classroom -- and there are many reasons I love using QR codes!

### **What is a QR Code?**

A Quick Response Code is a digital image that can be scanned without the beam of light needed to scan barcodes at the supermarket. It's used in advertising and marketing for smartphone users. You may have seen QR codes on flyers, subway posters, brochures and even cereal boxes. They are often accompanied with a message that says, "For more information scan this code." They can be scanned using one of the many free QR scanner apps available for smartphones and tablets. When you scan the code, you'll be taken directly to a website.

What does this marketing tool have to do with education? If I want all of my students to visit one website, I'll create a QR code for that website. And that's only one of the benefits.

### **How QR Codes Can Make a Difference in the Classroom**

#### **1. Eliminate the Frustration of Long Web Addresses**

Instead of asking students to type in a long web address where they could easily make mistakes, a QR code will take them straight to a website. It's easy to type in USA Today.com, but directing students to a specific article might require them to type in a combination of case sensitive letters and numbers. QR codes are perfect for students of all ages, but especially for children with special needs and those students who are easily frustrated.

Continued on the next page...

## Five Reasons I Love Using QR Codes in My Classroom - continued

### ***2. Take Students Directly to a Designated Website***

We all want to avoid using search engines that might bring our students to the wrong website. This direct approach also limits their exposure to similar sites that might not be kid-friendly. You can create a list of QR codes for websites to make Internet research easier for students.

### ***3. Save Time***

Instead of waiting for each student to type in a long web address, they can all quickly scan the QR code. You won't have to waste valuable minutes from your lesson because all students will be on task and viewing the correct website in seconds. Try projecting the QR code on the board or printing just one QR code for each table of students to save yourself the time of making extra copies.

### ***4. QR Codes are Easy to Make***

Websites like Qurify.com allow you to generate your own QR code for free. Copy and paste a long web address, and they'll create a code that is unique to that particular website. You can save, print and distribute the QR code to students.

### ***5. Change Up Your Normal Routine***

I love to keep things new and exciting for my students. Try creating scavenger hunts that will get your students to visit a variety of websites to gather information on a topic. Get students engaged and moving by placing QR codes in different parts of your classroom or school building.

Are you already using QR codes in your classroom? I'd love to hear how you're integrating this technology tool into your instruction.

Read more online at: <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/using-qr-codes-in-classroom-monica-burns>

**Additional Resources for QR Codes in the Classroom:**

<http://www.schrockguide.net/qr-codes-in-the-classroom.html>

# Handouts for a Perfectly Paperless Classroom

by Monica Burns  
Class Tech Tips



Handouts is a paperless student/teacher platform for tablet-centered classrooms. With this app teachers can create handouts to distribute to students by taking a picture of a paper activity sheet or importing digital files they've already made. Teachers can select which handouts they want to distribute and send them to the whole class or individual students.

Once students are sent handouts they can open them on their tablet and use their finger or a stylus to complete the activity. After they've finished, students can turn in their work straight to their teachers. Teachers can grade student work from within the app and send feedback for kids to review. With Handouts teachers can even select certain pieces of student work to put in a digital portfolio.

To learn more or to download this app go to:  
<http://handouts.in/>

# Moodle Voted Best LMS in Top 100 Tools for Learning

*Centre for Learning & Performance Technologies*



Open source platform, Moodle, has been recognised as a [Top 100 Learning Tool](#) by the [Centre for Learning and Performance Technologies](#) for another year. Moodle landed at #12 in the Learning Tool category and was voted the #1 leading Learning Management Tool for 2014. The rankings are based on a survey of over 1000 learning professionals across 61 countries to highlight trends in learning technologies as the industry continues to expand and evolve.

“I am proud that Moodle continues to be recognised in the field of internet-based learning technologies” commented Martin Dougiamas, Founder and CEO of Moodle Pty Ltd. “Our users benefit from Moodle being free and open source, allowing it to be easily adapted for any learning requirement – from major universities and corporations to small individual classes. We enjoy what we’re doing to help teachers and learners and this recognition just gives us more energy to push the envelope with Moodle.”

The Top 100 Tools for Learning list recognised major brands including Twitter, WordPress, and Wikipedia. Learning tools were defined as “any software or online tool or service that you use either for your own personal or professional learning, for teaching or training, or for creating e-learning”.

Social media, publishing and learning management systems continue to transform the way we learn across the world. There are an inconceivable number of learning tools available online, with new platforms arising each and every day for personal and professional learning.

Moodle continues to be recognised across the world as a leading learning management system and course management system with over 70 million users across over 200 countries. The system is supported by a strong active community who contribute to the development, translation and technical support of Moodle.

Read more online at: <http://moodle.com/moodle-voted-best-lms-in-top-100-tools-for-learning/>

# Top Predictions for Tomorrow's Classrooms

by Laura Devaney, Managing Editor eSchool News



Given the fast pace with which technology evolves, it's not entirely a huge stretch to say that a new learning tool could transform classrooms within a year.

In 1984, only 8 percent of U.S. households owned a computer. But today, that has jumped to 79 percent. Fifty-eight percent of people in the U.S. own a smartphone. Only 18 percent of households had internet access in 1997, compared to 75 percent today.

Efforts are underway to expand technology and broadband access to the 25 percent of Americans without home internet

access.

An [infographic from Lenovo](#) outlines how today's technology might shape tomorrow's classrooms. Online education is helping to reshape classrooms, too.

Massive open online courses (MOOCs) give students instant access to some of the top institutions of higher education in the nation, and in the world. As more students have access to computers or mobile devices with internet capability, they are able to access interactive educational opportunities, such as online game-based learning, from classrooms, their homes, and libraries.

Tablets are becoming more common in classrooms, and students seem to feel that there is much more potential there. Ninety percent of college and high school seniors said they believe tablets are valuable educational tools, and 63 percent said they think tablets will transform learning in higher education in the future.

In fact, six in 10 college students said they prefer a digital book format. An International Society for Technology in Education study revealed that when students had regular access to technology, independent seat work improved, as did student engagement, jumping from 29 percent to 72 percent.

Eighth grade proficiency improved from 29 percent to 41 percent. In April, a study in the Journal of Deaf Studies and Deaf Education revealed that tablet-based notes helped to significantly improve retention among four groups of post-secondary students, including those hard of hearing, those with learning disabilities, English language learners, and those without identified disabilities.

Now that technology has put classrooms on the path to transformed learning, what's in store?

Read more online at: <http://www.eschoolnews.com/2014/09/08/future-tomorrows-classrooms-934/>

## Upcoming Events

### 44th Annual HASTI Conference | The Nature of Science

February 11-13, 2015 • Indiana Convention Center • Indianapolis, IN

Registration is now open - [Click here to register](#)

Exhibitor registration is now available - [Click here for more information and to register your booth](#)

Please contact Laura Jackson, Conference Planner, 317-635-4755 or email [lauraj@cmcglobal.com](mailto:lauraj@cmcglobal.com) with questions

### Purdue University Department of Biological Sciences - 2015 Summer Biology Experience June 21 - 30, 2015

A teacher training experience for 9th-10th grade students. Ten intense days of hands-on activities designed to demonstrate the importance of math and chemistry skills in the life sciences.

For more information, please contact Clark Gedney, Ph.D., [cgedney@purdue.edu](mailto:cgedney@purdue.edu)

## What PRISM Can Do For You!

- Easily find the perfect teaching and learning resources from our library of over 4,000.
- Store your classroom materials online so that they are available to you from any computer.
- Select from free learning resources that emphasize visualization, rich context, staged-problem solving, and electronically enabled collaboration / communication.
- Save a list of your favorite resources for quick retrieval.
- Reach your students more effectively by using web media for the digital age.
- Augment your own dynamic presence in the classroom with teaching tools that mirror the skills needed for success in higher education and the 21st Century workplace.
- Create and share lesson plans that teach your subjects utilizing your favorite resources.
- Earn PGP points by completing PRISM led online Moodle course – either Beginning Moodle or Intermediate Moodle courses are available to you at no cost several times throughout the year.

*Through our strong support from the [Lilly Endowment](#) and others, we are constantly growing and improving. Check our site regularly to see what new resources you can use in your classroom.*

[www.rose-prism.org](http://www.rose-prism.org)



PRISM is a free website that provides collections of online resources for Indiana educators in the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM). The primary collection of digital teaching materials is indexed according to the Indiana Academic Standards for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade and secondary education courses.