

The 33 Step Digital Exercise Program

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The goal is doing this program is to get a feel for the digital world that kids experience every day. This understanding is critical for parents and educators.

Please note: The Internet is a very dynamic place – you may not find the links listed here all work. Use Google or another searching tool if you are having trouble finding these sites. Or just ask a kid to help you.

Connect with the lives of kids today

1. Take the time to explore the online worlds of kids. Try to familiarize yourself with what they're doing and how they're doing it. Ask them the sites to visit.

Play games

2. To gain an appreciation of the amazing visual skills, lightning quick reflexes, and rapid-fire decision-making ability that digital kids have, try playing video games with them on Xbox, Play Station or Wii even if you know they will inevitably kick your butt. And to really get a feel for their remarkable ability to handle the simultaneous bombardment of multiple forms of information, play those video games while music is playing loudly and a movie is playing in the corner of the screen you are using for the game.
3. Play a massively multiplayer online role-playing game like Everquest (<http://everquest2.station.sony.com/>), World of Warcraft (<http://www.worldofwarcraft.com/index.xml>), or Maplestory (<http://maplestory.nexon.net/>).

Access online news and information

4. Create a Google Reader account or another similar RSS reader (Search for Google Reader – the address is rather long). Subscribe to several RSS feeds for blogs and information sites you are interested in. Use this account as a hub for your online reading of digital information sources.
5. Go to CRAYON and create your own personalized newspaper. (<http://www.crayon.net>)
6. Go download some photos at Flickr. Pick a theme for your photos on a topic from one of the courses you teach. This is important because digital photos are the “words” of the 21st century. (<http://www.flickr.com/>) Then use the camera in your cellphone or your digital camera to start taking photos that would be of interest to your students. Upload them to Flickr so your students can access them.
7. Spend some time exploring the visual information on YouTube. (<http://www.youtube.com>) See if there are videos that would be helpful in your classes. Also take a look at what kids are doing with video at YouTube. This is much more than just watching videos - see what people are doing with mashups.)
8. Read this article about modern TV viewing (http://news.cnet.com/A-new-crop-of-kids-Generation-We/2009-1025_3-6151768.html). Then take a look at MTV'S The N and learn about the latest trend: vomenting - visual commenting, adding commentary to video via text blurbs or audio clips. (<http://www.the-n.com>)

Participate in online communication

9. Read and respond to a blog in an area of interest or from a person you know.
10. Go Blogger and create a blog there (<http://www.blogger.com>). Contribute several postings to your blog on topics that your students can respond to.
11. Learn how to use Instant Messenger and participate in several chatting sessions. (<http://webmessenger.msn.com> and click Messenger at top of screen)
12. Go to Twitter and learn how to communicate using short bursts of information. (<http://twitter.com>)
13. Use an Internet phone program to make several phone calls or videophone calls. Download Skype for your computer (<http://www.skype.com>) or use iChat if you have a Mac.
14. Download ring tones to your cell phone and assign them to the people in your contacts list.
15. Add text messaging to your cell phone plan and become a thumbster on your cell phone.
16. Open a FaceBook or MySpace account (FaceBook is better because that's where the kids are going). (<http://www.facebook.com>)
17. Go to Ning and explore the growing list of social networks for people with similar interests. (<http://www.ning.com>)

Make some online purchases

18. Log on to Craigslist (<http://www.craigslist.com>) or eBay (<http://www.ebay.com>) and spend some time exploring the amazing range of goods available for purchase.
19. Go to Amazon.com and buy a book (<http://www.amazon.com>). Notice how Amazon responds when you select a certain book.

Explore online educational possibilities

20. Go to Wurdle and create a word cloud related to one of your classes. (<http://www.wordle.net/>)
21. Create your own website using a free service. Go to Webs.com (<http://www.webs.com>), Weebly.com (<http://www.weebly.com>), Google.com (<https://www.google.com/accounts/ServiceLogin?continue=http%3A%2F%2Fsites.google.com%2F&followup=http%3A%2F%2Fsites.google.com%2F&service=jotspot&passive=true&ul=1>) or a similar site. Take the photos you downloaded from Flickr and create your own website. Make sure you add a link to your blog on your website.
22. Go out to Wikipedia and search for something related to your classes. (<http://www.wikipedia.org>)
23. Go out to Wikispaces (<http://www.wikispaces.com/content/wiki>), Wiki-site (http://www.wiki-site.com/index.php/Wiki_Creation_-_Create_A_Wiki_For_Free%21), or @Wiki (<http://atwiki.com/>) and create a wiki of your own on some area of your curriculum that students in your classes could contribute to. Add a link to this wiki on your website.
24. Go out to iTunes store (<http://www.apple.com/itunes/podcasts/>) or Podcast.net (<http://www.podcast.net>) to find, download & listen to a podcast.
25. Then go out to a site like About.com and learn how to make a podcast (<http://radio.about.com/od/podcastin1/a/aa030805a.htm>). Create your own podcast in an area of expertise and then post it on the Internet at a site like Podcast.com. (<http://www.podcast.com>) Add a link to this podcast on your website.

26. Take time to appreciate the learning potential of the online world. Learn a skill that your students would like to master like playing the guitar or learning how to fix a mountain bike. Search the Internet for sites that will help you develop that skill.
27. Create a personal avatar and attend a course virtually at Second Life (<http://www.secondlife.com>), Club Penguin (<http://www.clubpenguin.com/>), or WebKinz (http://www.webkinz.com/us_en/).
28. Go out to Del.icio.us and explore the Internet bookmarks created by others. (<http://www.del.icio.us>) Also use this site to create a list of Bookmarks of your own for sites that you like. This is better than using the bookmark feature in your browser because the bookmark lists at Del.icio.us can be shared with other people.
29. Take a look at the educational videos at YouTube. (<http://www.youtube.com>) For example, search for Pythagorean Theorem or Ozymandias.
30. Check out to Teacher Tube and watch a Physics or Chemistry experiment or learn how to write a Haiku. (<http://www.teachertube.com>)
31. Go to Google and download Google Earth for your computer. Locate your city, your house, your school, etc. (<http://www.google.com/earth/index.html>)
32. Go to Zoho (<http://www.zoho.com>), Buzzword (<https://www.acrobat.com/welcome/en/home.html>) or Google Docs (<https://www.google.com/accounts/ServiceLogin?service=writely&passive=1209600&continue=http://docs.google.com/&followup=http://docs.google.com/<mpl=homepage>), and create a shared word processing document that your students or your colleagues can edit.
33. Go to Zoho (<http://www.zoho.com>), Buzzword (<https://www.acrobat.com/welcome/en/home.html>) or Google Docs (<https://www.google.com/accounts/ServiceLogin?service=writely&passive=1209600&continue=http://docs.google.com/&followup=http://docs.google.com/<mpl=homepage>), and create a shared presentation document that your students or your colleagues can edit.