



## Social Media (avoiding the 'Creepy Treehouse')

Find this worksheet, video, and more information from this session at [bit.ly/ATL-socmedia](http://bit.ly/ATL-socmedia)



"Creepy treehouse is what a professor can create by requiring his students to interact with him on a medium other than the class room tools. [E.g.] requiring students to follow him/her on peer networking sites such as Twitter or Facebook." — [excerpt via Mr. Jared Stein – Flexknowledge \(purdue.edu/learning/blog/?p=210\)](#)

**EASY: Use Twitter or Facebook or Instagram or Pinterest or [whatever is hot this week] for classwork.** Creating a social media account is easy, and creating assignments that isn't difficult. See the [Promise of Social Media](#) →

**HARD: Engaging Students in using it outside of class.** The perennial problem is that [x] is only cool if students' parents and teachers aren't using it. so, if you're using it for class, it must not be cool. **Solution:** Let go of being cool, and just be authentic.

**MEDIUM: Use social media yourself** — not because it's cool, but because it's useful. (from [Educators Should Use Social Media to Engage and Empower Students](#))

- Use it professionally, and simply model how you use a tool as a scholar. ([Leading By Example - Transforming Education for the 21st Century](#))
- Be authentic! Be yourself. Remember when your dad tried to be cool in front of your teenage friends? ([Get Real: Authenticity in Social Media for Education is Key](#))
- Participate yourself, and highlight tweets in class. If you don't value the activity enough do it; why would they? ([Tweeting in Higher Education: Best Practices](#))

**MEDIUM: Require students to create and use a professional online presence.** ([Engaging students through social media is focus of ISU prof's new book](#))

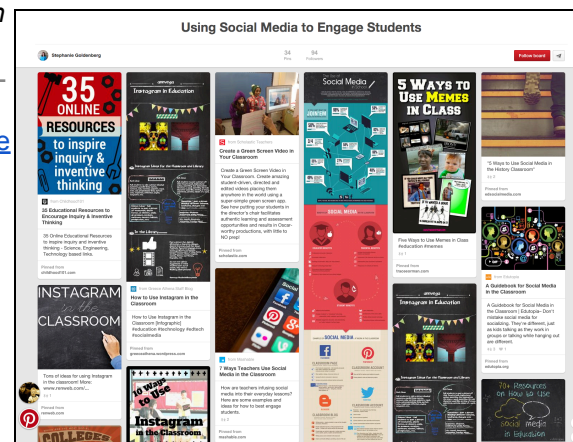
- Students are used to interacting *their* way. Honor that and don't try to appropriate it for your class. Instead, require them to create a **professional academic profile** — as a new member in the field of study, representing themselves, you, and the university — and require that they use that profile for academic work.
- Identity formation is part of their development in the university, and [social media in academics can help them with this](#).
- If you do not feel that you should require your students to create a social media account (e.g. Twitter), use [Google Plus](#); everyone with a NetID already has one, by default, through UW–Madison ([apps.google.wisc.edu](http://apps.google.wisc.edu)). In addition to being a great place for creating a professional online presence that they can share with potential employers, it solves the problem of how to connect with peers without "friending" them — *it's for their academic work in your class* (and hopefully other classes).

### Specific Ideas

- Address current issues & connect students to experts ([3 Ways Teachers Are Using Social Media to Engage Students](#))
- A Pinterest page of ways to use Social Media — check them out and consider whether some might work in your classes ([Using Social Media to Engage Students](#))
- Don't try everything at once ([50 Ways to use Twitter in the College Classroom](#))
- Basics of using Twitter in Teaching, including online safety, netiquette, etc. ([Guide to Using Twitter in Your Teaching Practice](#))

Social learning is a critical part of the 21st-century classroom. If you've hesitated to use social networks in your classroom, consider these 10 ways that social media will transform your school.

1. **You'll see unbridled engagement** — Ask your students to take out pencil and paper, and they will cringe. Tell them to prepare to discuss something on [Twitter](#) or Today'smeet room, and every student will participate.
2. **You can teach appropriate use** — Students will never read three-page Acceptable Use Policies, filled with Do's and Don'ts. Ask them to take out their devices, and start a discussion on how to appropriately use social media, and they'll embrace appropriate use immediately.
3. **It will help you teach digital citizenship** — Our students are digital citizens, but this birthright doesn't mean they're good citizens. [Social media](#) use will help hone the skills and responsibilities that come with using social networks.
4. **You can all share powerful information** — Social media is about sharing, so why not share classroom content for learning around your school and around the world.
5. **It builds a classroom of curators** — The 21st century is about [content curation](#). Nothing encourages this more than social media.
6. **It encourages autonomy** — With multiple platforms and so much content to share, students can choose what they curate and which platforms to use. This autonomy will make them independent learners, eager to teach others.
7. **It will make your students writers** — You can throw out your worksheets and workbooks. Social networks make students writers. With mini lessons from you on appropriate style and diction, the platforms will do the rest.
8. **Your students will become avid readers** — Break out *The Great Gatsby* and you're likely to lose more than half of your students. That goes for the science text, too. Let your students find a favorite book on [Figment](#) or an article on [Issuu](#), and they'll read until you make them stop.
9. **Students will become creative geniuses** — With social networks like [Vine](#) and [Padlet](#), students can share their creativity, while also learning your subject matter.
10. **It manages your content** — With a social network like [Edmodo](#), [Schoology](#) or even [Facebook](#), you can manage all of your students' content and social sharing in one place. This is not the best way to engage in social media, but it will work and the kids will still love it.



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**ALTERNATE TOOLS** (also not supported, but used)

[todaysmeet.com](http://todaysmeet.com) (see [20 different ways to use TodaysMeet in School](#))

[twitterfall.com](http://twitterfall.com) — for realtime backchannel visualization of tweets

[tweetbeam.com](http://tweetbeam.com) — a very pretty realtime backchannel visualization

[tagboard.com](http://tagboard.com) — yet another realtime backchannel visualization of tweets

[tweetarchivist.com](http://tweetarchivist.com) — for analysis of tweets and trends — **very cool** potential for both in-class discussion or assignment activity

[twitonomy.com](http://twitonomy.com) — another tool for analysis

[twistori.com](http://twistori.com) — tweet stream: I love, I hate, I think, I believe, I feel, I wish

[wefeel.csiro.au](http://wefeel.csiro.au) — a **very cool** emotion analysis tool for Twitter

[foller.me](http://foller.me) — analyze your own profile, or someone elses. Good tips.

[tweetdeck](http://tweetdeck) — easier to keep up with different people and hashtags

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**Other Ideas (Write them down as you get them, and SHARE them with us!)**