November Learning

Social Bookmarking with *Diigo*

If you're using the same computer on a daily basis, chances are you have a list of favorites or bookmarks that you've saved and compiled within your browser over time. Your favorites or bookmarks are a quick list of websites that you visit on a regular basis – or great resources that you found at one point and want to revisit. The problem is that if you switch computers throughout the day, your list of bookmarks doesn't come with you.

Enter *Diigo* (http://www.diigo.com). This social bookmarking tool allows you to keep a list of your bookmarks online, which means you can access them from anywhere you have an Internet connection. It also allows others to access your bookmarks; unless it's a bookmark you want to keep private. So instead of adding bookmarks right onto your computer, you enter them into a *Diigo* account. That way, no matter where you are in the world or whose computer you're on, you can still access all of your own resources. Others can use them too.

Registering for Your *Diigo* Account
There are four steps to getting started.
- **Step 1** - Go to *Diigo*, and you will see a button on the right side of the screen that says *Get Started Now!* You will need to create a username, password and enter your e-mail address. If you will be using this in a school setting, we recommend that you use a school email address. This will be helpful at a later time.
- **Step 2** - Now, you will be taken to a page where you are given the option to install *Diigo* browser tools It is recommended that you install one of these, as doing so will make accessing your bookmarks and adding new ones a much easier task (You can always do this later by clicking the *Tools* link at the top of the page).
- **Step 3** - Now you'll have to check your email for a message from *Diigo*. This message will contain a verification link that you will need to click on for final activation of your account. Clicking this link will bring you to a Web page confirming successful registration of your account. Now you can get started with your account.
- **Step 4 (optional)** - Go to http://www.diigo.com/education and request an upgrade to their educator account. This will allow you to create student accounts that are all contained within a group you create. This is especially useful for teachers who teach students under the age of 13. It requires no personal student information. To use this feature, your account must be connected to a school email address.

Bookmarking with *Diigo*
When you find a site you wish to bookmark, take your mouse and highlight some key text on the Web page. This key text might be an important quote or passage, or it might be a description of some sort. (optional)

Now click the bookmark button in your browser toolbar. A window from *Diigo* will pop up. This window contains several boxes. You will see that the *URL* and the *Title* fields are filled in. Feel free to change what is in the *Title* field, but don't change what is in the URL area, or your bookmark won't work. Also, you will see that the *Description* field contains the text you highlighted. You can add more to this box, such as your own ideas and/or other things about the site you want to remember. You'll also see a field called *Tags*. A tag is a keyword that describes the site you are bookmarking. Enter as many tags as you would like separated by spaces (or have a multi-word tag by including it in quotation marks). You can choose

your own tags, and you can choose from recommended tags that will be provided.

Finally, click the *Save Bookmark* button, and your new bookmark will be saved into your *Diigo* account.

Diigo Features
After you have saved a few bookmarks, login to your *Diigo* account. (Login is in the upper right hand corner). You should be taken to your bookmarks page, and you should see the bookmarks you have already saved. This is the main administrative page.

Look in the top left corner. This first section contains several links you will want to use to navigate around your account.
- **My Library -** Clicking on this link at any time will take you back to your own set of saved links. On the *My Library* page, you will see a search box that will allow you to search through your library using the tags you've used to organize your material.
- **My Network** - Clicking on this link will allow you to add people to your network and keep track of their latest bookmarks. This is a great tool to use to keep track of what all of your students are bookmarking. Simply add their *Diigo* account name in the provided box and add them to your network.
- **My Groups** - This is similar to *My Network*, but instead of subscribing to a user, you can subscribe to a group of individuals interested in a similar topic. Anytime a new bookmark is saved by anyone within the group, you will get it here.
- **Community** - This area contains the current hottest links on *Diigo*.

Looking at Your Bookmarks
Look at the first bookmark that you saved. You will see the name of the link you bookmarked. If you click on this link, you will go straight to the site. Also, you will see any description you used when you were saving your bookmark. Then, you see all of the tags that you have associated with this bookmark.

To the left of your bookmarks, you can sort through all of the tags that you have used within your account.

Highlighting and Sticky Notes
Another very cool feature of *Diigo* lies in its ability to add highlights and sticky notes to any Web page. To use this function, highlight the text on the Web page and click the highlight button in your Diigo toolbar. Immediately, the text is highlighted. Then, click the sticky note button to drop and drag your own sticky note anywhere on the page. If you belong to or have set up groups within *Diigo*, your bookmarks, highlights and sticky notes can all be shared with members of the group. Awesome for research collaboration!

Private vs. Public Bookmarks
In general, anyone can access your bookmarks by visiting *http://www.diigo.com/user/yourusername*. Knowing that your bookmarks are available for the world to see, there may be times where you will want to save a bookmark for your private use only. While *Diigo* makes a strong push toward the sharing of bookmarks, there is a way to make a particular bookmark private. Making a bookmark private is helpful if you want to save a site but not allow others to see it.

When you're saving a bookmark, you will notice that there is a checkbox that says private. Select that box, and that bookmark will only be seen by you when you log in.

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Important Notice About Sharing Bookmarks

Sharing bookmarks with the world sounds great, and doing so can really enhance the way that you and your students research. But it would be irresponsible to send you on your way without telling you about the downside of all of this. As you know, the Internet is full of people who spend their time using fabulous tools like this one inappropriately. It is important that you know that searching within *Diigo*, just like searching on the Web, can lead to inappropriate sites. The sites that have been bookmarked within *Diigo* are only as good as those putting them in.

Diigo at Work

Let's take a minute to look at a few ways to use *Diigo* within a class setting. I'm sure you will come up with some other ideas on your own.

- Set up a class *Diigo* page. Make one account, and have all students save their bookmarks to the one class account. Teach them to tag so everything stays organized.
- Take this a step further. Create a group in *Diigo* and add or invite all of your students. Now as a teacher, you can click through all of the individual students within your network and check out what they are bookmarking.
- You can also make use of a shared tag. Let's say that you have a group of three students at Cool Middle School who are working together on a project about air pollution. Each student has a *Diigo* account, and each is working on his/her own to collect sites on air pollution and is posting these within their *Diigo* account. Have the students agree on a tag that they can use to apply to all of the information they collect (coolschoolap for example). Every time these three students find a valid site, they should post it and tag it with the tag coolschoolap. Now, these three students can follow the tag coolschoolap from within their inbox on *Diigo*. Now, they will have access to what all three of them are finding. As a teacher, you might want to subscribe to and post to this as well, and keep track of their work.