# TECH TOOLS FOR TEACHERS
## # 11
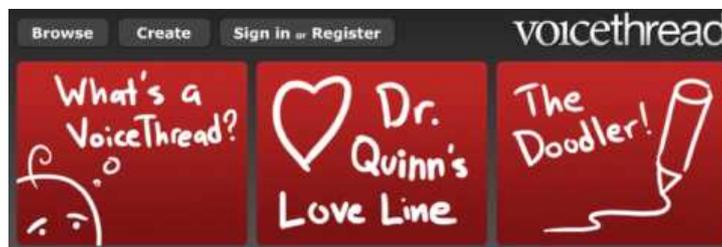
**If you or someone you know has missed any newsletters, click here to find them on Kathleen's blog.**

Through this newsletter we aim to cater for teachers of all levels and experiences. If you have any ideas on how we can do this better or make improvements to the newsletter, please email us at techtoolsforteachers@gmail.com (or hit the reply button).

# VOICETHREAD

This week we review the website VoiceThread.
http://voicethread.com



VoiceThread is a popular tool that allows you to narrate images, documents and videos. Others can join in the conversation too. Your completed VoiceThreads can be embedded in a blog or website, emailed or simply stored and viewed on the VoiceThread site.  Look for the link at the end of this newsletter to the Tech Tools for Teachers VoiceThread where you can have a go at using VoiceThread and share your ideas on how it could be used in the classroom.
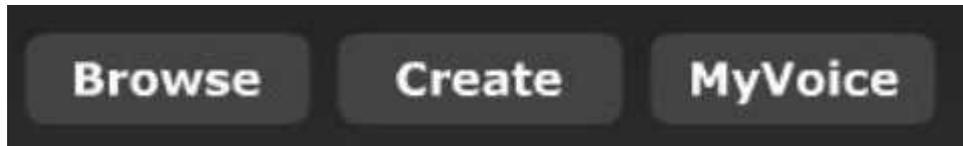
**We like VoiceThread because it:**

- is free (there are paid options but these aren't necessary)
- is easy to use
- permits you to have one account for your class with individual identities so students don't need to sign up
- is suitable for all year levels and curriculum areas
- has a range of possible uses
- is a great tool for collaboration, reflection and creativity
- allows you to control who is able to view and contribute to your VoiceThread.

## HOW TO...

**1.** To **sign up** to VoiceThread go to http://voicethread.com. You will see "sign in or register" in the top right hand corner of the home page. Click here and then click "register."

*\* Note: VoiceThread is offering a free upgrade to K-12 educators, called the VT Educator account. This account allows you to create up to 50 VoiceThreads and gives you 250 MB of storage. It also allows you to upload audio files as comments. You can take a look at the features of the VT Educator account here http://voicethread.com/products/k12/educator/.*

**2.** When you are logged in you will see three options - "**Browse**", "**Create**" and "**MyVoice**." As the names suggest, "Browse" lets you look at VoiceThreads others have made, "Create" allows you to create a VoiceThread and "MyVoice" shows you the VoiceThreads you have created, subscribed to or been invited to.



**3.** The first two things you might want to do are **change your own profile** (add your name, timezone, photo etc) and **create student identities** so your students can narrate the voiceThreads under their own name. To do this, select "identities" under your profile icon and choose "My Account" or "My Identities".
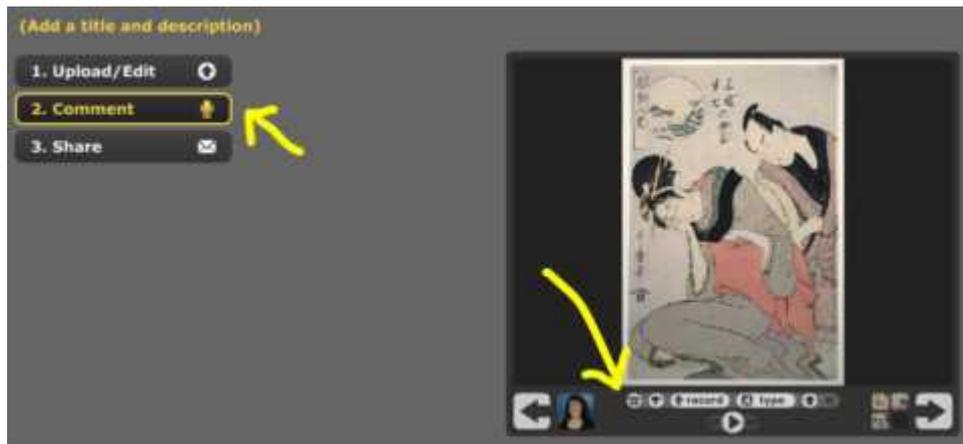
*\* Note: you can create as many identities as you like, however after bout 50 it starts to get difficult to find and manage the identities.*
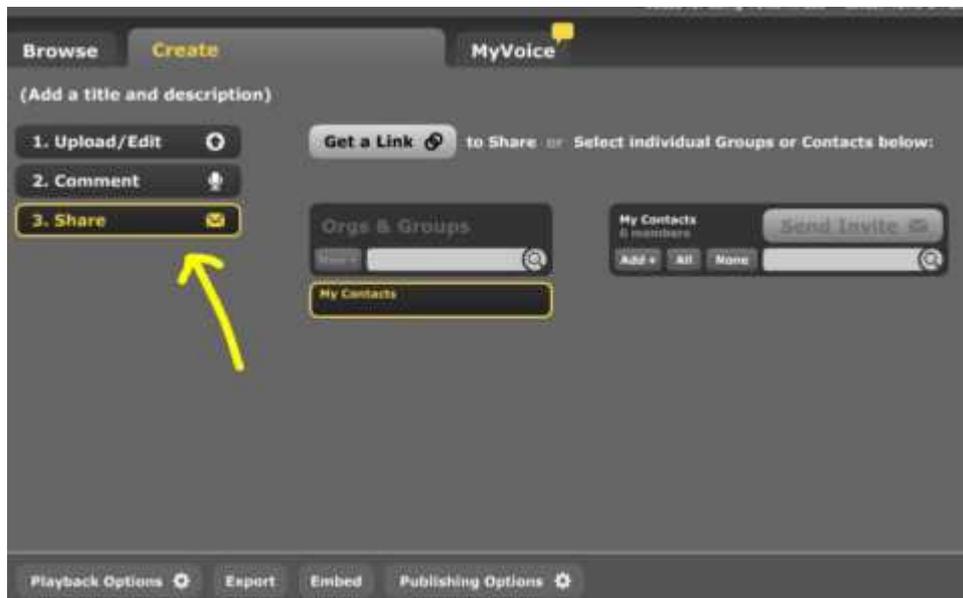


**4. To create a VoiceThread,** click on the "Create" tab. You can then upload some media from your computer (eg an image, video, PowerPoint, document, Excel spreadsheet). Alternatively you can choose media from the "Media Sources". This means places like Facebook or the New York Public Library which has open access of over 700,000 images.  You can put more than one type of media in each VoiceThread.

**5. The next step is commenting**. If you have more than one slide on your VoiceThread you can use the arrows to move to the slide you want to comment on. Then click on "comment" underneath the media. You can then click on the icon showing the way you want to leave your comment. The choices are (from left to right) phone, webcam, microphone, type or upload pre-recorded mp3 file.

*\* note if you want to **change the identity** of the person who is commenting (eg change students), click on the image avatar on the bottom left hand side. This will bring up all the identities and you can select the one you want.*

**5.** The third and final step is "**Share**". Click on "Publishing Options" down the bottom to choose your privacy options. You can also get a link to your VoiceThread, send invitations to any contacts you have set up, and get a HTML code to embed your VoiceThread in websites.



## USES:

There are many ways to use VoiceThread in the classroom. Here are a couple of ways Kathleen's Grade Two students have used VoiceThread in the classroom. They were all embedded on her class blog so check out the links to see the actual VoiceThreads.

**1. Happy Father's Day**
*The students made a comment on why their Dad is special.*

**2. Monster Adjectives**
*The students all drew a picture of an monster which they described using all the adjectives they had come up.*

**3. Winter Poems**
*Students all wrote a poem about Winter and narrated their favourite line from their poem.*

**4. World Earth Day**
*All the students left a comment with a tip about looking after the environment for World Earth Day.*



These are just a few simple examples of how VoiceThread can be incorporated into your classroom, #name#. VoiceThread is also great for peer assessments, self reflections, discussions around videos or artwork, digital portfolios or collaboration with other students/ classes. There are obviously many more great ways to use this tool, only limited by the imagination of the teacher and students!

## HAVE A TRY:

We have set up a VoiceThread as a means for you to try it out and share your ideas on how you could use VoiceThread in the classroom.

Visit this link to view the Tech Tools for Teachers VoiceThread and please leave a comment!
http://voicethread.com/share/1148401/



Look out for the next edition of "Tech Tools for Teachers" later next week.
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