

Westwood Regional Jr/Sr High School

The [Westwood Regional Jr/Sr High School](#) will be participating in Digital Learning Day. In recognition of the effort to promote digital learning teachers will be using technology to engage students in motivating, content driven and technology infused experiences. On Digital Learning Day, similar activities will be happening around the school and online. Below are some samples of digital learning that has occurred this year.



[Mr. Richter – Educational Media Specialist](#)

The [Westwood Regional Jr/Sr High School Media Center](#) is the place where teachers collaborate with the media specialist to teach students how to be effective researchers, enabling them to handle a problem, assignment, decision, or task by utilizing the necessary information literacy skills while utilizing the latest in [digital technology](#) and engaging the students in digitally driven learning experiences in the classroom or online.

This is in support of the [21st Century skills](#) initiative that seeks to transform current common core state [curriculum standards](#) to address the needs of the world of globalization where information literacy demands the gathering, processing, and utilizing of information in a collaborative way utilizing [Web 2.0 technologies](#).

Below are some samples from 2011–12. Mr. Richter

[Mr. Delaney's](#) 8th grade World History classes utilized the library media center to learn cyber safety and online collaboration. Media specialist Mr. Richter first presented some examples of the possible consequences of not being careful when posting online and then some tips for students on maintaining their own cyber ethics and security. Students also set up their first Edmodo accounts which will be used as an online collaboration forum for assignments and projects, and they engaged in a practice quiz that was electronically graded for instant feedback. Utilizing Web 2.0 tools, such as [Edmodo](#), productively and safely, not only represents the latest development in the use of technology in the classroom, but also are important skills needed in college and the business world.

[Ms. DeMaio's](#) English II experimented with a “Class Tools” website called [Fakebook](#). This website allows students to create a mock Facebook account in an effort to bring fictional characters into the 21st century. Ms. DeMao's class used this illustrate the relationships, interactions, and expressions of characters in the novel *The Catcher in the Rye*. Her students will continue to utilize this technology in an effort to create an ongoing unit project.

[Mr. Collis's](#) American Government class created Websites for prospective Presidential candidates. Students pretended to be running the campaign for a selected politician, and then used media center resources to research their views, legislative record, speeches, and overall background from various Congressional websites. Then, using the online websites builders [Wix](#) students created websites to promote their candidate. Building websites not only helps students to analyze political candidate information, but engages them in the 21st Century web site building skills needed for their future.

[Ms. Kavanagh's](#) 8th grade Spanish classes utilized the [media center computers](#) to practice their world language writing skills by creating an online comic strip using [Pixton](#). Students were asked to create a story, dialog, create various characters, illustrate, and then use [Audacity software](#) to record and narrate their comic strip. Pixton is an example of a Web 2.0 technology that fosters collaboration, creativity, and engages students in higher order thinking skills as they experience an alternative writing opportunity.

[Mrs. Winter's](#) 10th grade Spanish classes utilized the media center resources to create a "Una cartelera del cine" online poster project. Students were asked to watch a movie of their choice, write a summary, and review in Spanish, including details about plot and characters, and also how Spanish countries rate films. Media Specialist Mr. Richter reviewed with the students how to make an online poster using the Web 2.0 tool [Glogster](#). The electronic poster will accompany their oral presentation. Using online resources for research and creating an online poster enables students to structure their thinking about culture and language in a three-dimensional way, while engaging them in the tools needed for the 21st century.

[Ms. Grenz's](#) Geometry classes went to the computer lab to explore slope using the computer program, [Geometer's Sketchpad](#). The students discovered how the slope of a line changes as the students change the steepness of the line, how the slopes of parallel and perpendicular lines are related, and found the slope in real world pictures.

[Mr. Atkins](#) 8th grade engineering class utilized media center resources as they completed their "Innovation" project. Media specialist, Mr. Richter, demonstrated the [Facts on File](#) database Science Online to the students so they could find the latest articles pertaining to their research. Students were asked to identify an innovation or invention, and then conceptualize improvements that could be made in the future.

[Mr. Thomas's](#) Spanish 4 Honors class utilized the [media center](#) computers to access the World Language departments online activity center. Students examined daily activities in several Spanish cities and were asked to compare and contrast those that may take place in the NYC area. In addition to engaging in higher order thinking skills, the online activity center enables students to practice their language writing skills in highly interactive web-based activities linked to their textbook work. It also features study and guided practice where students can independently practice their speaking skills. Click [sample activity](#) to view one of the many options.

[Casey Gaspartich's](#) English I classes created a two part independent reading project. After selecting a non-fiction book of their choice, students first wrote a short paper using the AP SOAPStone process for analyzing non-fiction, (speaker, occasion, audience, purpose, subject, and tone). Students used the media center resources to do research and create an online interactive poster that best represents their interpretation of the book they read. In this way, students can be reflective in their reading and be able to communicate that to others using the 21st technology media site [Glogster](#)."

[Ms. Ondrof's](#) English classes used the computer labs to work on projects using the web-based program [stupeflix.com](#). In a memoir genre study, the English II CP students applied their knowledge of

characteristics of memoirs to create their own digital memoirs, using text to tell their stories and enhancing them with images to provide detailing and music to convey voice.

[Mr. McGuirk's](#) English II Honors class utilized the media center resources to begin their American Dream Independent Study Project. After media specialist Mr. Richter introduced the students to the current events database *Issues and Controversies*, students worked in groups to make decisions on what contemporary topic they are interested in researching. Students were encouraged to utilize the online blogger [MyFindings.com](#) to follow each other's work online. Collaborative research is not only a valuable educational tool, but a skill that students will need in college and beyond.

Westwood Professional Learning Academy offers courses taught by district teachers, including Beginner and Intermediate SMART Board, [SKYPE](#), and I Movie. Approximately 30 staff members are participating voluntarily in these after-school professional development offerings. Pictured here is high school Media specialist Mr. Richter, who conducted a workshop on utilizing Web 2.0 skills in the classroom. Participants can continue to sign up for workshops throughout the year.

Digital Media students submitted enough content to [MSG Varsity](#) to meet both the September and October incentives, which resulted in two \$50 B&H gift cards being given to the school. Digital Media will donate one of these gift cards to the W-Tube event, sponsored by the PSO. Film Club is participating in the Power to Learn Charity Champions competition, to raise money for the American Cancer Society. Students are currently organizing community outreach efforts to compete against other schools to win the \$5000 donation from Cablevision for their charity.

[Ms. Pezza's](#) Digital Photography Club attended several dress rehearsals of *The Beverly Hillbillies* and took professional-style photos of the rehearsals, which they burned on a CD.

[Mr. Pena's](#) Music Technology has been hard at work familiarizing themselves with Apple's [Garage Band Software](#). The students have been learning about sound editing, sound production, and microphone mechanics. They have produced three projects to date, an original composition using sound loops, a remix of their favorite song that employed a great deal of editing technique, as well as allowing the student to make real artistic choices when rearranging the piece. Finally, the students have just finished producing the "Pre Show Announcement" for the Woodington Players' production of *The Beverly Hillbillies*. This project allowed students to complete their first real recording, because as part of the project, they were to produce a soundtrack as well as record themselves or a friend reading the text of the announcement. The recordings will be submitted to Mrs. Bialkin, and she will choose the one that will be used for the run of the production.

Students in [Mr. Gaffney's](#) Physics class used computer [probeware](#) to analyze the motion of a cart on a track and the forces acting on it. Using digital graphical analysis methods, students studied how an applied force changes the momentum of an object over time. This relationship, called the impulse-momentum theorem, can be applied to explain the science behind airbags as well as other devices designed to minimize the forces experienced during an impact.

Ms. Nagle's 9th grade English class engaged in a problem-based learning project by reading the novel *Monster* by Walter Dean Myers and then researching the nature and causes of crime with the ultimate goal of finding solutions to the problems. Media specialist Mr. Richter first guided the students on how to find pertinent current information from two media center databases: [Gale Virtual Reference \(E-books\)](#) and [Issues and Controversies](#), then students worked in groups to make decisions on how they will proceed with their investigation. Electronic databases have the important advantage in that information such as statistics and news articles are updated monthly to assure that information is current. Reading literature

and linking it to current issues is not only a best practice in English teaching, but engages the student in higher order thinking skills as they research and investigate the possible solutions to the problem.

[Ms. Ondrof's](#) sophomore English classes utilized the media center computers to conduct research on the J.D. Salinger novel *The Catcher in the Rye*, and the short story *A Perfect Day for BananaFish* and began to write an essay that will eventually be checked for plagiarism through the database [Turnitin.com](#). After Mr. Richter demonstrated to students the Turnitin process, they began the literature analysis by comparing and contrasting the different writings styles, comparing themes, stylistic elements, and characters. The two-page essay is an expression of the students' own ideas, and Turnitin will enable them to self-check the accidental plagiarizing of others' ideas. Analyzing literature is not only a best practice in English education, but utilizes higher order thinking skills as they compare and contrast the two works – while giving proper credit to the ideas of others.

[Mrs. Kahn's](#) 8th grade Spanish classes utilized media center resources to record their voices in Spanish and respond on a Web based electronic bulletin board. Students used Audicity software to make recordings and play back their voices to practice their pronunciation skills. Media specialist Mr. Richter also demonstrated the online electronic bulletin board [Wallwisher](#) where students responded to the question “Que hiciste este fin de semana pasado” (What did you do this weekend?) as an introduction on how to use the posting technology for future discussions. Technology tools such as these not only help students to practice their Spanish , but enable them to experience skills needed in the 21st century.

[Mr. Deblasio](#) and [Mrs. McCann](#) introduced the electronic version of their textbook at the [PearsonSuccess.net website](#), where students can access their textbook from any computer or mobile device. Online textbooks make searching and highlighting easier, and the text has an audio file feature so students can listen to their textbook being read to them.

[Mr. Thomas's](#) Spanish 4 Honors class utilized the [media center](#) computers to access the World Language departments online activity center. Students examined daily activities in several Spanish cities and were asked to compare and contrast those that may take place in the NYC area. In addition to engaging in higher order thinking skills, the online activity center enables students to practice their language writing skills in highly interactive web-based activities linked to their textbook work. It also features study and guided practice where students can independently practice their speaking skills. Click [sample activity](#) to view one of the many options.

[Mrs. Zamfotis's](#) and Mrs. O'Grady's 10th grade English classes utilized the media center resources to begin their project “Artistic Rendition of [Animal Farm](#) : Leaders in Conflict”. Students were given some choices of how to express themselves, including a political cartoon, sketch, rap song, poem or role-play to contrast the leadership of Snowball to Napoleon. To incorporate these elements into one presentation, media specialist Mr. Richter showed the students how to make an online poster using the Web 2.0 tool [Glogster](#). This Web 2.0 electronic poster has the capability of adding music, video, images, and text while providing a URL for online posting. Creating an online poster enables students to structure their thinking about literature three-dimensional way, while engaging them in the tools needed for the 21st century.

[Mr. Conrad's A.P. English](#) class participated in an online [Wikispace](#) to collaborate on their [Heart of Darkness](#) project. Media specialist Mr. Richter first provided the students with the cyber safety tips they need to keep in mind when writing online. The students were then invited to join the Wikispace where they can collaborate while they researched the socio-historic background of the novel on the database [Modern World History Online](#). Wikispaces is an example of a Web 2.0 technology designed to foster real time student collaborative online writing ; an important skill they will need in college and the business world.