

# Social Media Tools for Librarians



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I spend very little time on twitter because I don't like to tweet. My 80-yr-old mother-in-law has over 3,000 followers and I don't even know what she is saying to garner such interest! Some guy named Derrick is following me from NYC, and I don't know why. I tried to jump in during the last presidential race and was left in the dust by a thousand (it seemed) experienced tweeters. The feed was so fast and bombarded me with all these thoughts and ideas that I didn't have a moment to really process all the information. By the time I responded to one person, I was a hundred tweets behind. So this week I decided to spend some time exploring TL Chat and a few other social media learning sites that I am not familiar with and see if I could find some kumbaya moments in using them.

The first thing I notice about TL Chat Live is that it has a cool award ribbon on its site. I



have no idea what it means, but it's impressive. What's a hashtag? I have a

"feel old" moment before moving on to an archived chat on decorating

displays for the holidays, and I'm in heaven and think WOW! This is great! I

soon realize I could spend every minute of every day here and not even scratch the surface of incredible information. It's like there was this great conversation in a room of librarians from around the world and every word was captured in time and

recorded, with live links to pictures even. It really is a unique

platform and now I'm seeing the appeal. I save a picture for a

Christmas display idea and move on to TL Chat's Virtual Café

and peruse a webinar on Classroom Cribs—catchy title!—

where I discover ideas on re-thinking and re-designing learning spaces, another

appealing topic to me. Again, I'm amazed by the rich source of information. I watch the slide

show and glean some great ideas, including some wonderful reading space and organizational



designs that I could use in the library *and* teacher workroom. I also discover several links listed that were mentioned in the webinar, like “Erin’s Pinterest Board for Classroom Design.” I became instantly enthralled because the list saves from having to take notes as you go through the webinar or having to go back and weed through to find those links. I found TL Chat to be a very efficient hub of information for teachers and librarians, and I will be going back.

Next on the Personal Learning Network tour is Instagram. There are lots of hashtags here too, but that’s okay, I plan to master them: #teacherlibrarianscanlearntoo. My first impression is that Instagram is Twitter meets Pinterest. Here are the stats according to the Daring Librarian, Gwyneth Jones (2015), who wrote an excellent blog on using this platform:

- 200 Million monthly active users
- 13% of all internet users
- 51% of 2014 high school graduates use Instagram daily
- 23% of US teens consider Instagram their favorite social network
- 85% increase in global usage among teens from Q1 – Q3 last year
- 34% of US teens and millennials (14 – 34) use Instagram

Apparently the younger crowd thinks Facebook is sort of fuddy-duddy and Instagram is “the cool thing” for sharing events almost instantaneously. I set up my account and was off and running to SimpleK12 and already signing up for a Google Apps for Education webinar coming up on September 27<sup>th</sup>. This webinar looks promising with classes on Beginner Skills, Grading



Assessments and more. When I punched in “teacher librarian,” I was overwhelmed with a billion photos of amazing colorful and creative ideas. The nice thing about this platform is you can follow and post to everyone in your own circle of choice, so if you really like Teacher Idea Factory (and I do!), you can see everything in your feed from that pool of posters. There are also

websites and blogs connected to these accounts to follow up on for further enrichment. Instagram has a very fast-paced feel, like Twitter, but with lots of pictures, and is definitely one of those places I could spend all day scrolling through. Here are the ten best book-related Instagram accounts according to the New York Public Library. They were voted best for various programs and special features. For example, Burlingame is the undisputed King of #bookfacefriday. For those of you unfamiliar with book-faces, the basic concept is to take a book with a body part on the cover—usually a face—and hold it in front of your own face to line up (Holzer, 2015).

1. Burlingame Public Library (1,232 followers, 307 posts)
2. LeClaire Library (113,873 followers, 305 posts)
3. University of San Francisco Gleeson Library (1,652 followers, 433 posts)
4. American Antiquarian Society (4,266 followers, 1,716 posts)
5. Jefferson Market Library (598 followers, 375 posts)
6. Harper Perennial (1,936 followers, 421 posts)
7. US National Archives (2,615 followers, 339 posts)
8. Strand Bookstore (13,942 followers, 966 posts)
9. The Morgan Library & Museum (1,651 followers, 177 posts)
10. Books 4 Kids (2,250 followers, 369 posts)

Our last stop is Google+ Community, which I didn't know existed until the start of this course. It's like this whole secret world was going on behind my Gmail, and now, like the Great OZ, they are uncloaked. I know when I see a number next to my profile my Google community is alerting me of something that's happening! *Cool*. I've already spent time searching posts and presentations on UCD's Highly Effective Librarian and School Librarian's Town Hall. These sites are chock-full of slide shows presentations, articles, and timely messages. And what I really like about them is that they are *local* groups, so the information there is relevant to Colorado librarians and what's trending in CASL. In searching other library groups, I found a lot, I mean A LOT, of articles on Teacher Librarian roles and the changing landscape of public and school libraries in America. I feel like if I want to get in on discussions regarding policy, theory or

practice in today's library environment, then the Google community can offer me an endless treasure trove. Some good ones I discovered:

- Libraries and Librarians
- The Library Corporation (TLC)
- Teacher Librarian Role
- The EdReach Network

The possibilities are really endless with all these resources. And the amazing thing is their linkage—what you post on Instagram can pop up on other platforms, like Twitter, Facebook, and Pinterest. Collaboration has taken on a whole new meaning in this new digital age.

### References

Jones, G. (2015, March 10). The Daring Librarian: Say Yes! To a School Instagram! Retrieved September 19, 2015.

Holzer, M. (2015, January 6). The 10 Best Book-Related Instagram Accounts. Retrieved September 19, 2015.