



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- 2 About Special Ed Tech
- 2 About Aspiring Games Foundation
- 3 Using Facebook to your advantage
- 4 PlayWorthy: Satisfaction

## Leveling Up

Earn CE certificates via these free online webinars. Find these and more at [edWeb.net](http://edWeb.net).

- **How Video Empowers Education: Uses, Best Practices & How-To's**, Wed., May 7, 4 to 5 p.m. [Details](#).
- **Finding a Safe Environment Where Your Students Can Blog**, Tues., May 20, 5 to 6 p.m. [Details](#).
- **Implementing a Multiplayer Classroom: Designing a Class as a Game**, Wed., May 21, 4 to 5 p.m. [Details](#).
- **50 Apps That Will Rock Your World**, Wed., May 21, 5 to 6 p.m. [Details](#).

## Teachers receive nat'l honors for technology use in classroom

One hundred teachers nationwide recently received the 2014 PBS LearningMedia Digital Innovator award, which provides one year of professional development and, for the top 16, an all-expense paid trip to Washington, D.C., for participation in a Digital Summit in June 2014.

*Teacher Tech* interviewed one of the winners, **Anne Kohler**, who teaches a self-contained classroom of mild-intellectually-disabled 9th to 12th graders at South Forsyth High in Forsyth, Ga.

**Q. Have you always used technology in the classroom? What prompted you to do so?**

**A.** I began using technology in the classroom very heavily in 2011 when some of my students walked into the first day of school with these cool tools



*Ann Kohler*

*Please see Kohler on next page*

## Website Review: edWeb.net

Any education professional looking to keep abreast of the times would be well served to join [edWeb.net](http://edWeb.net). It's award-winning and free, and offers a wide range of learning communities, webinars, and networking opportunities for anyone interested in education, especially teachers, administrators, faculty, and librarians at K12 and post-secondary institutions.

With a host of sponsors at the forefront of education, edWeb.net currently offers 35 professional learning communities, including technology-based

groups such as 'Digital Citizenship,' 'EdTech Innovation,' 'Game-Based Learning,' 'Mobile Learning Explorations,' and 'TechTools for the Classroom.' There are also nontechnical communities such as 'Growing School Gardens' and 'Stop Bullying.' 



*Kohler, from page 1*

called iPads! They began teaching me and I began learning, and since then the learning goes back and forth daily, between something new they saw or learned on their devices or something I found the night before while searching apps or in an article I read. Our school has been a huge BYOT (bring your own technology) school for almost five years now, which helps a lot because we have a great wireless infrastructure to handle the bandwidth.

**Q. What tech tools do you use and in what instances?**

A. We use desktops, laptops, (both PC and Mac), iPods, iPads, Google Nexus7 and Samsung Galaxy Android tablets, iPhones, Droid smartphones, and anything else that the students may have and can bring to school. I have a teacher iPad provided by my county.

**Q. What tech tools have you found the most success with?**

A. iPads are great unless you need “Flash” – which you need a lot. That’s where the non-Apple devices come in.

My students will work on any surface. Some take a Socrative quiz on their phones and other students prefer the desktop or their tablet.

For one class project, students made a picture collage about *The Odyssey* with pictures they found and labeled from the Internet. Each chapter we read was a new adventure. Online math has also been fabulous and my students use a different online math product or app daily. Some good ones are MobyMath, Sumdog, Khan Academy, Manga High, iXL.

**Q. Have you noticed an increase in student performance because of your use of technology? If so, how much?**

A. Yes, when I did my thesis paper last year I documented the results of pre-testing and post-testing for some specific online math sites. My students ALL increased their post test scores over their pre-test scores. Some more than others, but they ALL showed quantifiable improvement. I also see these types of results on English and Vocabulary related sites. However, the ELA sites are not currently quite as good as the math sites in showing real time data, so math is easier to get very drilled down data. My students’ scores in math increased from 5 percent on the low end to 1½ grade years (in one year) on the high end. ✍

## About *Special Ed Tech*

*Special Ed Tech* is produced monthly from September through June by the director of Aspiring Games Foundation  
1400 Pershing Drive  
Lansing, MI 48910

*Special Ed Tech* welcomes your questions and article suggestions. Direct all queries and subscription requests to the editor, Becky Palmer-Scott, at [SpecialEdTechEditor@gmail.com](mailto:SpecialEdTechEditor@gmail.com).

## About Aspiring Games Foundation [www.aspiringgames.org](http://www.aspiringgames.org)

Aspiring Games Foundation supports the creation and use of learning games and ed technology for individual, group, and classroom use.

## Board Members

**Director: Becky Palmer-Scott**  
Serious Game Designer  
[aspiringgames@gmail.com](mailto:aspiringgames@gmail.com)

**Treasurer: Rich Schaberg**  
[happydayrj@yahoo.com](mailto:happydayrj@yahoo.com)

**Aroutis Foster**  
Assistant Professor of Learning Technology  
Drexel University  
[anf37@drexel.edu](mailto:anf37@drexel.edu)

**Reid Felsing, Attorney**  
Knaggs, Harter, Brake, and Schneider  
[reidfelsing@gmail.com](mailto:reidfelsing@gmail.com)

**Jason LaFay, English Teacher and Co-Founder of Dewitt Creativity Group**  
Dewitt High School  
[lafayj@dewittschools.net](mailto:lafayj@dewittschools.net)

**Sandra Logan, English Professor**  
Michigan State University  
[logans@msu.edu](mailto:logans@msu.edu)

**Kimberly Mathiot, Educational Consultant**  
State of Michigan  
[kimmathiot@gmail.com](mailto:kimmathiot@gmail.com)

**Carrie Cole, Serious Game Designer**  
Filament Games  
[colecarriea@gmail.com](mailto:colecarriea@gmail.com)



## Using Facebook to your advantage

Teachers and parents, do you have students who don't turn in their homework? Who lose track of assignments and due dates, or say they are unaware of them? Who don't pay attention to test dates?

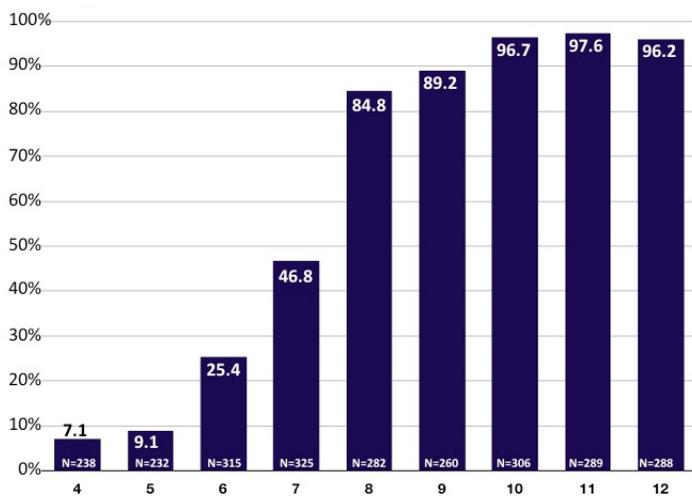
To address this, some schools hand out planners to students. Others use learning community management systems where students and parents can look up assignments and grades. Terrific ideas, but the problem lingers on. Why?

The answer lies in Internet usage habits. It's all about "location, location, location." If information is placed where people regularly go, they will see it.

Enter Facebook, the tsunami of social media. A 2013 Pew Research study reported that 71 percent of online adults use Facebook, and a 2011 survey showed that 96 percent of high school student use Facebook – 94 percent even checked their Facebook account while in class!

Yes, Facebook can seem like a vortex which sucks in its users. ([See Time article, "Kids Who Use Facebook Do Worse in School," Aug. 8, 2011.](#)) But the reality is that whether we like it or not, most kids use Facebook. This is actually a tremendous gift. Put the assignments on Facebook and kids will be reminded to do their homework every time they check their Facebook posts. You can also use Facebook to create a place for class discussion which can be accessed at any time.

% Students with a Facebook account



© 2011 Research from ChildrenOnline.org Grade Level (N = sample size)

### Pages vs. Groups

When you create a Facebook fan page, you needn't be friends with invitees, but everything on it is viewable by the entire Facebook community. Non-Facebook friends will be able to post to the page and send messages to the page.

When you create a Facebook group, access is limited to those you invite, but you need to be 'friends' with them first. But you can set privacy settings to limit or deny access to personal posts.

To create a group, click "GROUPS" on the left column of your home page and follow the prompts.

### No need to be Facebook friends

If being Facebook friends with students isn't an option, teachers can still reach them through a Facebook fan page. Here's how.

**Step 1: Become a member of Facebook**, or sign into your personal account if you have one. You can sign up for free at [www.Facebook.com](http://www.Facebook.com). When signing up, if you don't want to provide friend names, profile info or interests, just click on "Skip this step" to continue.

**Step 2: Create a fan page.** On the left column of your home page, click "PAGES" and when prompted, click the "+Create a Page" button. Click the "Cause or Community" square, then follow the prompts. When naming your group, be sure to make it unique and easily identifiable, such as "Mrs. R's Homework Page." Don't call it by just your school name.

**Step 3: Tell students to "Like" your page.** Students who do will see your posts and will be able to write on your page and send you messages. If desired, use the "Invite Email Contacts" link in the Page Tips panel.

**Step 4: Use the page.** To get to your page, click on its link under your profile name on your home page. In the "Write something" field you can post assignments, photos or videos, and also enter test dates using the "Event" link.

Some teachers do prefer using Facebook groups, citing them as giving students more ownership and group privacy. Groups require 'friend'ing students, but teachers can maintain professional distance through privacy settings. For more information, google "creating a Facebook group for a class."

# Play Worthy

## Satisfraction

Created by Filament Games

Reviewed by Becky Palmer-Scott

It's a sad truth that most so-called 'math games' are in reality just a series of quizzes. This is understandable, since drills and repetition are a time-tested way to build memorization so helpful in doing equations. Nevertheless, solving equations over and over can become tedious. Thus the challenge in designing a fun math game.

A welcome exception is *Satisfraction* by Filament Games. Rather than presenting equations, the game presents a series of puzzles which teach the fundamentals of simple fractions in an interactive way. Fractions are represented as shapes that can be divided into smaller parts, which can then be individually selected. A displayed fraction is updated as the player divides the shape and selects pieces within it.

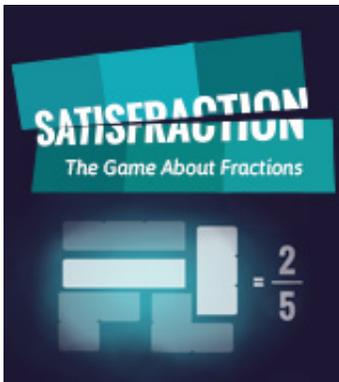
If the player gets an answer wrong, the feedback is immediate and the player is allowed to try again.

Famed game designer Sid Meier (who created *Sid Meier's Pirates*) said that a good game is "a series of interesting choices." *Satisfraction* uses this principle as it allows players some choice in how to divide the shapes. The game's first level is very easy, and as the difficulty level grows, it becomes less obvious how to divide the shape, which presents a pleasant challenge.

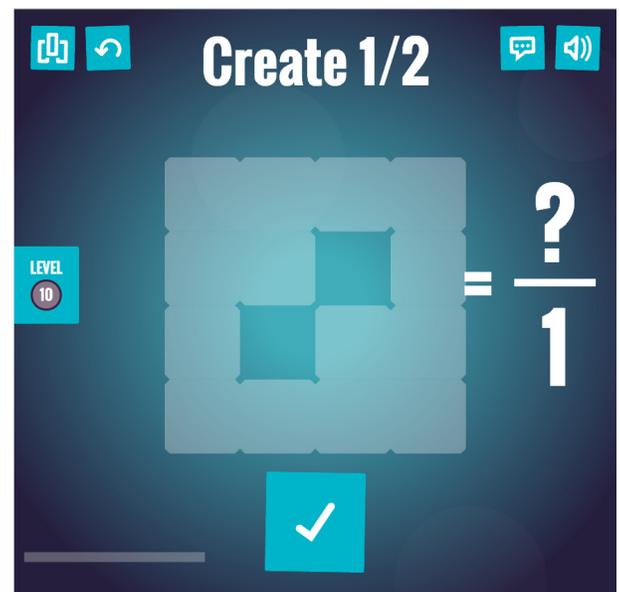
The audio adds to player enjoyment. The music is nonintrusive yet intriguing, and a satisfying "slice" sound, as if paper is being cut, plays as the user divides each shape.

Best of all, the game is free and accessible on Filament's website at <https://www.filmamentgames.com/fws2/projects/satisfraction>. But the easiest way to find it is simply to do an Internet search for "Satisfraction Filament." Once at the site, click on the "Learn More" button to access the game.

Do you know of good learning games you would like to tell others about? Write to our editor at [SpecialEdTechEditor@gmail.com](mailto:SpecialEdTechEditor@gmail.com). ✍



FILAMENTGAMES



### At a glance

**Game:** Satisfraction

**Cost:** Free

**Topic:** Basic fractions

**How to get:** Do an Internet search for "Satisfraction Filament" and click on the "Learn More" button.