

Terry Freedman's Digital Education Newsletter

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Dear

This is a **very** short email to let you know about some updates, to remind you about the prize draw and subscriber survey, plus a few other useful bits and pieces:

- Fake news news
- Tech tip: formatting blues
- Useful articles, including an enormous repository of resources
- Books in brief
- Prize draw
- Subscriber survey

Enjoy!

Best wishes

Terry

Fake news news

I suppose it's rather fitting in a way, but a few of the links I included in the

item in the June newsletter turned out to be, erm, fake news. I don't know how it happened, but some of the links ended up being the wrong ones.



So, I've copied and pasted the article into a subscriber-only area on the ICT & Computing in Education website, with all the correct links this time, plus a few more.

The additional ones are:

- a few fact-checking sites
- a collection of fake news sites (probably out of date already, but what can you do?)
- news about free media literacy resources for schools from the Times newspapers
- plus links to satirical news sources: The Daily Currant and The Onion.

Here's the link: [Fake News](#).

On the subject of The Onion, a couple of recent articles made me smile in a wry, sort of lopsided, way. The headlines tell you all you need to know:

The trouble is, of course, that the people such articles are aimed at probably won't read those articles, or see themselves in them if they do. Still, at least the kind of behaviour they are getting at is more and more out in the open these days.

Tech tip: how to deal with weird formatting errors



I've been holed up recently entering details of receipts into a spreadsheet. I've created a nifty set-up whereby when I 'tell' Excel what the money was spent on, it automatically categorises it and even colour-codes the entries.

I thought I'd do some of this on a laptop, using Apple's spreadsheet program, Numbers. Unfortunately, when I imported the new entries back into Excel, not only had the colour scheme changed (not a major disaster), but so had all the dates (a major catastrophe).

Obviously there was some hidden code which, for the life of me, I was unable to find or fix. In the end, the workaround I used was as follows:

1. Export the Numbers spreadsheet into an Excel format.
2. Copy the column of dates from the spreadsheet Numbers into Notepad.
3. Copy the Notepad dates into my original Excel spreadsheet.

Indeed, I have found that Notepad, or similar text-only programs, solves every formatting issue I've experienced, whether in a spreadsheet, a word-processed document or anything else. It's definitely the nuclear option, because it gets rid of **all** formatting. Nevertheless, it's better, in my opinion, than spending hours trying to fix the problem properly.

It's not an approach that satisfies the problem-solving aspect of my personality, but if a workaround saves hours then I'll use it.

Useful articles

Not at ISTE18

There was a vibrant online conference/community event going on during the ISTE conference, for those who not get to the conference itself.

Called, appropriately enough, #NotAt ISTE18, it comprised discussion, shared presentations



and resources. There are lots of links which look useful, but as there are so many of them, a good starting point would be:

Navigating the [#NotatISTE18 Livebinder](#).

Mobile matters

Do mobile phones help or hinder? In the light of the decision by France to ban them in all schools, and a British member of Parliament's call for the same, Chris Shelton weighs up the issues in:

[Mobile phones in school: problem or opportunity?](#)

Big data

I think schools can benefit from using big, anonymised, data sets as well as the personalised and highly focused data they usually pay attention to. I explain my reasoning in:

[The value of big data](#)

Dinosaurs

My lady wife and I recently revisited Dinosaurs in the Wild, an amazing virtual reality experience that uses the idea of time travel. The facts presented are scientifically accurate, as far as is known, so it's all very educational too. Unfortunately, it finishes at the end of July 2018.

Elaine and I wrote about it. You can read our review, and see a gallery of photographs, in:

[A great example of virtual reality.](#)

Books in brief

I bought a couple of books recently that not only looked potentially interesting or useful, but were also very inexpensive -- and still are.

Each of the following books were 99p or 99c when I last looked, which was earlier today (01 July 2018). I've only skimmed through them, so these 'reviews' are very much a first impression.



[Arduino: The ultimate guide to Arduino, including projects, programming tips & tricks, and much more!](#), by Geoff Adams.

This seems fairly comprehensive, if not exactly bedtime reading. It looks at the different models available, how to program the Arduino, and gives you some simple projects to try out. If you're planning to get pupils to create applications using the Arduino, but are not an expert yourself, this book will probably be a good place to start. At the very least, it should help you to become familiar with the terminology and give you the self-confidence required to conduct some interesting lessons.

[How to Get Your Screen-Loving Kids to Read Books for Pleasure](#), by Kaye Newton.

The author starts by declaring that she is not a teacher, librarian or 'tiger mom'. Rather, she is a mother who tried, and succeeded, in getting her kids to read for pleasure.

The book is readable, well-researched, and covers various strategies. It includes some useful websites and lists of podcasts (for which, frustratingly, she fails to provide links).

Although the target audience appears to be parents, I think there is enough in this book that will be useful to teachers as well.

Reminders!

Prize draw

You could win a copy of Reflective Practice, which I reviewed here:

[What I've been reading: Reflective Practice.](#)

Enter by completing the form at the link below. The deadline is midnight (British Summer Time) on 02 July 2018.

[Enter prize draw](#)

Subscriber survey

If you're one of the people who have filled in

the Digital Education subscriber survey, thank you! The responses so far have been very helpful. Most people like the section called [Digital Education](#), and the book reviews, and there is quite a bit of disagreement about the format the newsletter should take (for example, full articles, links to articles, or something in between).



The aim of the survey is not to target you with personalised advertising or anything like that. In fact, the survey does not ask for your name or email address. I ask for your country of residence because I should like to ensure that, over several issues, I provide content that is relevant wherever you happen to live. Google forms automatically collects IP addresses, but I delete that column from the spreadsheet.

I've designed the survey to not take up too much time: I doubt it will take you more than five minutes, possibly ten at the most if you decide to give a fulsome response to the 'Any other comments/ question.

The results of the survey will help me to continue to provide a first class newsletter in these changing times.

Thanks in advance. Here's the link:

[Digital Education Subscriber Survey.](#)

That's it from me, for now! In the next issue of the newsletter, I'll have another great book to offer in a prize draw, so look out for that.

If you fancy passing on this newsletter to colleagues, please feel free. And if you're reading someone else's copy, why not subscribe in your own right? The link is here:

[Digital Education.](#)

Thanks

Terry Freedman



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