



# LOW HANGING FRUIT

## As it Turns Out, TV is not a Vast Wasteland After All

By Jeannie Standal

Remember filmstrips? If not, think of them as the horse and buggy of today's video and multimedia tools. Between YouTube, TeacherTube, streaming services like United Streaming, subscription services like Amazon Prime and Netflix, channels like National Geographic and History Channel, not to mention PBS and so many more, there is educational video content coming from every direction. Now, with cameras attached to everyday devices, teachers and students can even create their own video content.

Is video really beneficial, or just an easy shortcut? To be sure, no other medium can take a class on an impossible field trip to Mars, or a journey through the digestive system. According to the Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation at the University of Queensland in Australia, there are also pedagogical benefits to using video as an integral part of a lesson plan. Video facilitates thinking and problem-solving in making connections between visual clues, memory, and the recall of new knowledge; assists with mastery learning by communicating facts and demonstrating procedures; inspires and engages students in a number of ways including both independent learning and enhancing team work and communication skills; and providing authentic learning opportunities.

### About the Headline

Although the "vast wasteland" quote from former FCC head Newton Minow's speech to the National Association of Broadcasters is famous, the full quote is "When television is good, nothing—not the theater, not magazines or newspapers—nothing is better. But when television is bad, nothing is worse.... I can assure you that you will observe a vast wasteland." He delivered this speech in 1961, and it is just as true today. I'm looking at you, Honey Boo Boo.

If the ancestor of classroom video is the filmstrip, the newest generation is the flipped classroom. Video lectures and practice exercises allow teachers time for projects and hands-on learning, making video opportunities vast, but more fertile than wasteland.

Sources:

Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation at the University of Queensland. Pedagogical benefits. Viewed at <http://uq.edu.au/tediteach/video-teach-learn/ped-benefits.html>.

Crain, Rance. *Does Minow Still Think TV is a 'Vast Wasteland'?* AdAge, April 18, 2011 accessed on 1/5/15 at <http://adage.com/article/rance-crain/minow-tv-a-vast-wasteland/227002/>.

Low Hanging Fruit is available through school libraries, and made possible with support of the Idaho Commission for Libraries. For previous editions, go to <http://libraries.idaho.gov/lowhangingfruit>.

### LINKS TO MORE LEARNING



#### Khan Academy

A hugely popular resource to flip a classroom. Students learn from Khan Academy's signature how-to video and exercises while a dashboard alerts teachers to items that are proving difficult to each student.

<http://www.khanacademy.org/>

#### Edutopia

From the George Lucas Educational Foundation, video content for teachers' professional learning.

<http://www.edutopia.org/videos>

#### The Teaching Channel

Video shorts from master teachers in every grades and subject area.

<https://www.teachingchannel.org/?national=1>

### PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS



#### Scout, Classroom Edition—Lesson Builder

Using Scout Classroom Edition teachers can create an interactive lesson for students that can be used in class or at home.

The activity might include a video with a short quiz you create. Share the link to the assignment in your classroom webpage or with an assignment code students can use when they access Scout, Classroom Edition.

Learn how easy it is to create an activity by going to <http://idahoptv.pbslearningmedia.org/help/Tools-FAQ/#lessons>.

### DIGITAL TOOLS



#### Scout

A video encyclopedia with full-length content from Idaho Public Television (Idaho Edition) and shorter clips from nationwide PBS partners (Classroom Edition).

<http://scout.lili.org>

#### Consumer Health Complete

Just one of many LiLI Databases with multimedia content to support education. Here, find videos and animations to support learning about how the body's systems function.

<http://lili.org/dbs/db/129>



