

Skills for Success

by Lauren Capolupo

Sites to excite leadership potential in and beyond the classroom.

The Web is a perfect place for students to practice leadership skills. Virtual worlds, games, blogs, and other interactive activities give students opportunities to interact with others and work in a variety of settings, learning as they go. These web resources can help students develop skills vital to academic, professional, and personal leadership, including critical thinking, collaboration, and communication.

YouthNoise

www.youthnoise.com

This combination news site and discussion board, created by youth for youth, connects socially conscious young people around the world in a forum where they can express opinions, read and respond to others' ideas, and find and share ways to get involved in various causes, ranging from politics to animal rights.

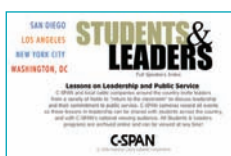
Global Kids' Digital Media Initiative

dmi.globalkids.org

On this blog for Global Kids' Online Leadership Program, students can find videos of the urban youth-engagement program's events and projects, play social-awareness games created by other youth, browse or join the Newz Crew current-event discussion boards, and more. Educators can find curriculum guides for these resources, as well as ideas for incorporating virtual worlds into the classroom. *For more about Global Kids, check out the Spring 2007 issue of Threshold at www.ciconline.org/thresholdspring07.*

Students & Leaders

www.studentsandleaders.org



C-SPAN's Students & Leaders project brought leaders from the fields of politics, business, media, and entertainment to students in four cities across the U.S., and this website hosts streaming videos of the speakers and their interactions with youth. The site also features lesson plans and related information on the leaders who participated in each city.



Youth Speaks

www.youthspeaks.org

Spoken word is an increasingly popular and creative way to get students excited about public speaking, writing, and expressing their feelings and opinions. The website (pictured above) of this youth-development program features an idea generator, audio clips of spoken-word pieces complemented by streaming animation, information on getting involved with Youth Speaks, and more.

JA Student Center

studentcenter.ja.org

The online Student Center from Junior Achievement Worldwide, a leadership curriculum program, features advice, videos, activities, and games for youth related to finding a career, starting a business, learning about ethics, paying for college, and more.

Global Youth Action Network

www.youthlink.org/gyanv5

Thousands of organizations are members of the Global Youth Action Network (GYAN), a not-for-profit organization that facilitates youth participation in global decision making. The site features video presentations about GYAN's mission and several of its programs, information on getting involved with the organization, and related resources that can connect young leaders around the world.



Lauren Capolupo is associate editor of Cable in the Classroom Magazine.

Digital Leadership for the Real World



Global Kids®

Through after-school programs and web resources—from youth-led dialogues to virtual worlds—Global Kids' online leadership director Barry Joseph works to create experiential models with global issues to help develop youth leadership. Here, he gives tips for finding, using, and expanding on digital media for youth-engagement lessons.

What skills are you trying to encourage?

We want youth to be able to learn that education isn't something that other people give to them, but is something they get to be in charge of. It's not a burden, but it's actually something that opens opportunities in their life and can be fun.

What should educators look for in Internet resources for lessons in leadership?

Look for something that truly engages young people—something [they] would want to do if you weren't there making them do it. At the same time, make sure the thing that is engaging them is truly educational. That means looking at things that are explicitly developed for education and making sure they're something that a young person would truly be engaged around, and at the same time, considering things that were not created explicitly for educational purposes and seeing how they can be used to teach.

How can educators promote these skills in their everyday lessons?

Give youth opportunities to create things, to work in groups... Create an environment that understands, for example, that with traditional education, if you ask somebody for help while you're taking a test, that's called cheating, but in the workplace—or playing a massively multiplayer game—collaboration is the name of the game. Talk about who took on leadership skills, who did not, and what that process was like.