

# 10 Ways to Use Instagram in the Classroom

Move over, Facebook—if you teach middle or high schoolers, you know that Instagram is one of the most popular social media channels for teens and tweens today. And while it may not seem like it at first, there are many applications for Instagram in the classroom.

Of course, it's important to protect students' privacy, especially when using a public channel like Instagram. If you're interested in trying any of the ideas below, we recommend creating a classroom account that you set to "private" and carefully vetting any potential followers. You might also try adapting our suggestions to an educational social media platform such as Edmodo. Finally, be sure to check your school's technology policies before you begin.

Okay, disclaimer over! Here are 10 awesome ways you can use Instagram in the classroom.

1. **Showcase students' work.** Snap pictures of students' artwork and other special projects to share on a private Instagram account only accessible to families and others in your school community.
2. **Feature a student of the week.** Invite students to alternate "taking over" your classroom Instagram account and sharing photos from their daily lives. Then have the featured student share his or her photos with the class.
3. **Capture field trip memories.** Invite a student volunteer "archivist" to take photos on your field trips or during class parties and share them on your Instagram account.
4. **Imagine how a famous person in history would use Instagram.** Have students browse historical photos and create a bulletin board or poster display showing Abraham Lincoln's or Buzz Aldrin's Instagram feed.
5. **Imagine what a favorite character would post.** Challenge students to find photos that would appear in Harry Potter's or Katniss Everdeen's Instagram.
6. **Share reading recommendations.** Invite students to snap photos of their favorite books and then browse the photos in your feed for more ideas on what to read.
7. **Record steps in a science experiment.** Watch as a plant unfurls or a chemical compound slowly changes colors—and keep the changes preserved on Instagram.
8. **Go on an ABC scavenger hunt.** Challenge kids to find print in the world around them—on signs, packaging and in the mail.
9. **Discover ideas for writing.** Tap an "inspiration fairy" to take ten photos that could serve as a prompt for writing—an empty bird's nest, a For Sale sign and a broken doll, for instance.
10. **Document student progress.** Snap photos of student's writing at the beginning and end of the year. Order inexpensive prints from sites such as [Prinstagr.am](http://Prinstagr.am) to show students how far they have come!

What do you think, teachers? Would you or have you used Instagram in the classroom? How so?

## So what are blogs and why should you care about them?

A **blog** (*web log*) is a discussion or informational site published on the [World Wide Web](#) and consisting of short entries ("posts") typically displayed in reverse chronological order (the most recent post appears first).

Until 2009 blogs were usually the work of a single individual, occasionally of a small group, and often covered a single subject. Blogs can also be interactive. For example, in some blogs anyone who views an entry can also leave a comment. Blogs can be focused on a topic (such as politics, car care, a favorite TV show) or be completely unfocused.

A majority are interactive, allowing visitors to leave comments and even message each other. In that sense, blogging can be seen as a form of [social networking](#). Indeed, bloggers do not only produce content to post on their blogs, but also build social relations with their readers and other bloggers

Educators are starting to use blogs as an online discussion tool. For example, a high school social studies teacher might create a discussion blog about current events where students have to look at a political cartoon posted by the teacher and then type a comment into the blog about their opinion about it. Teachers could use blogs to share ideas about educational strategies or just communicate about student discipline problems. Such blogs should probably be kept confidential however.

If you would like to get started with blogging slowly, click on the link below and we'll blog with each other this week. Next week, I'll show you how to create your own blog.

Join my Sonya's Tech Tips blog here and we can blog about technology...

<http://sonyastechtips.edublogs.org/>