

Philipps-Universität Marburg
Fachbereich 10: Fremdsprachliche Philologien
Institut für Anglistik und Amerikanistik
PS New Media in Foreign Language Education
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Additional Task 4: Useful Tools for Foreign Language Teaching

There are a lot of different tools that are useful for foreign language teaching. Especially for school life, some of them are going to be introduced here.

The first tool introduced is Skype. Skype is a program to phone, video-phone and chat over the internet. It is free of charge from Skype to Skype, but can also be used to call mobile phones or ordinary telephones. Besides from the normal phone functions, also video conferences and data transfers are possible. For school this is very useful. It is an excellent possibility to get in contact with students from English speaking countries and to communicate with them via internet. This helps to get experience in language use and gives the opportunity to get in touch with natives speakers. Also a cultural exchange about youth life and youth culture can be experienced this way. (<http://www.skype.com/intl/de/welcomeback/>)



Another useful tool for class is *bitstrips*. Bitstrips is an online-tool to create coming strips on one's own. This can be helpful for the teacher, as the Hessian curriculum suggests picture stories in class 5 and 6. This is a good opportunity to create individual comics for the students to work with. Such comics can be used for creating little stories for the students to continue or to explain grammar topics. Bitstrips offers a variety of possibilities with different numbers of pictures for the comics, different backgrounds, characters and additional material that can be used in the comics. For school, I would highly recommend this tool to spice up ordinary English lessons. (<http://www.bitstrips.com/>)



The third tool which is very useful, especially for the upper classes in schools is *dropbox*. Dropbox is a tool that offers an online space to share with several people. There is the possibility to select certain folders and give others the opportunity to access them. So, a teacher can upload homework, tasks or additional information or material to the dropbox folder and make it accessible for the students that way. Also students can share their work on dropbox or sent it to the teacher directly, when a folder is created. It is very useful and comes in handy, especially when dealing with media, such as film clips, interviews or music, so the students can access it again from home. (www.dropbox.com/)

