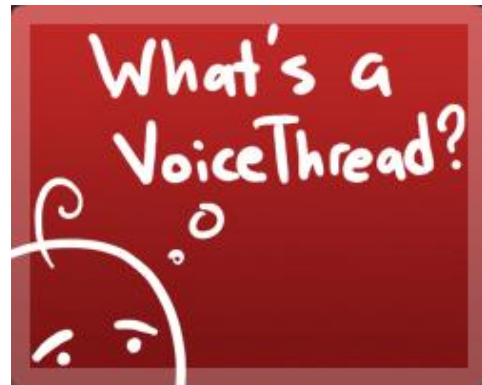


Combining Images and Commentary with VoiceThread

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Do you ask your students to talk about pictures, give directions using maps, or tell digital stories? Using **VoiceThread** (<http://voicethread.com>), a browser-based, user-friendly tool, your students can do this online and comment on each other's work.

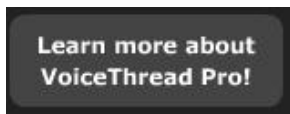


Any image-based task can be done using VoiceThread. For example, a teacher can upload an image and ask each student to record a description for other students to hear and comment upon. The image may be a map that students use to give directions for other students to follow. VoiceThread excels at collaborative digital storytelling; students and teachers can upload images and talk about them individually or in groups. Students studying art can create virtual exhibitions with audio commentary.

What are the advantages of VoiceThread? There are many ways to combine images and audio commentary, but VoiceThread is browser-based and requires no additional software. It accepts images from various sources, including Flickr™, and is designed to encourage multiple comments. Most important, VoiceThread is very easy to use, so students and teachers can focus on content.

Classroom teachers will particularly appreciate that VoiceThread has privacy controls, comment moderation, and a system of 'identities' that allows all students in a class to work within one account. **Note: K – 12**

teachers can obtain a free 'educator' account that is equivalent to the \$29.95/year 'pro' account. To find out more, create an account using your school address, sign in, click 'go pro' then 'learn more about VoiceThread Pro', and scroll down to the sentence "VoiceThread is offering a special account for K-12 classroom educators, click here for more info."



Getting Started with VoiceThread

- Before you start, make sure that you have a working microphone. It is possible to type commentary, but the power of VoiceThread is its use of audio. Consult the VoiceThread FAQs (click 'help') for help setting up a microphone or webcam. You may also want to assemble a few images on your own computer or in Flickr™ that you'll use to create your first VoiceThread.

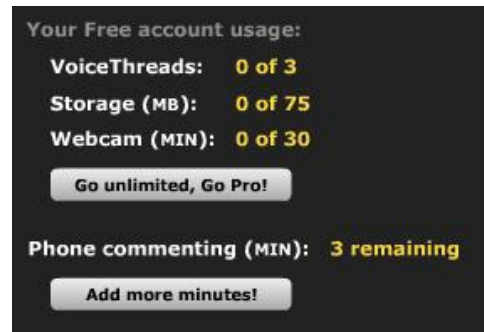
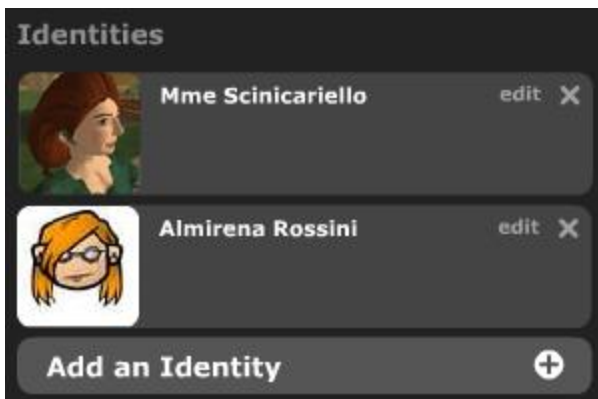
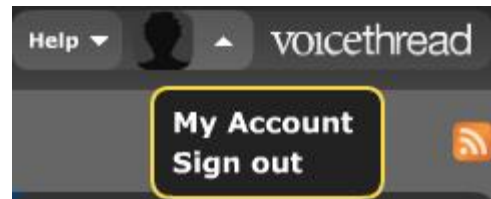
- Go to <http://voicethread.com> and click the **Sign in or Register** button and then 'Register' to create an account. You need to supply a screen name, which you will be able to change, an e-mail address, and a password. To get the benefits available to K-12 teachers, you need to use your school e-mail address.

Sign in or Register

- Once you register or sign in, you are taken to your MyVoice page, which holds the VoiceThreads you create, subscribe to, or are invited to view. You'll see a number of tutorials to which new users are automatically subscribed. Click on the icons to see options or new comments.



- Go to 'My Account' to create your profile; you can change your screen name, upload a picture, and create new identities. **Note: For classroom use, you can add an identity for each student. Once you log into your account, each student can use that identity for his/her own work.** You can also keep track of your account usage in the 'My Account' area.



- Once you have created your profile, the best way to get started is to experiment with the "What's a VoiceThread?" presentation. When you are signed in, you can find this VoiceThread in one of several ways. (1) Go to <http://voicethread.com> and click the "What's a VoiceThread?" picture. (If you don't see it, click the 'Featured' tab.) (2) Click the 'Browse' tab; this presentation is usually the first one offered. (3) Go to 'Help' > 'Tutorials'.



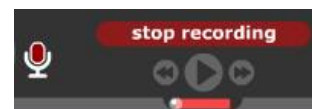
- When you're ready to create your own VoiceThread, click the 'Create' tab and choose 'Upload' to load your images. **Note: You may upload still images, documents, and videos.** If your images are located in Flickr™ or Facebook, you will be asked to log into your account. Follow the instructions on screen to import your images.



- Give your VoiceThread a title and description by clicking the 'Add a title and description' button. Use keywords as tags. Click 'save'.



- You can name individual pictures—and add links—by highlighting the picture and clicking the '(add a title and link)'. You can also rotate or delete pictures by clicking the appropriate icon.
- Ready to record your commentary? Click the 'Comment' button. You can record comments via phone, webcam, or microphone. You can also type. Click 'record', 'allow', 'stop recording', and 'save'.



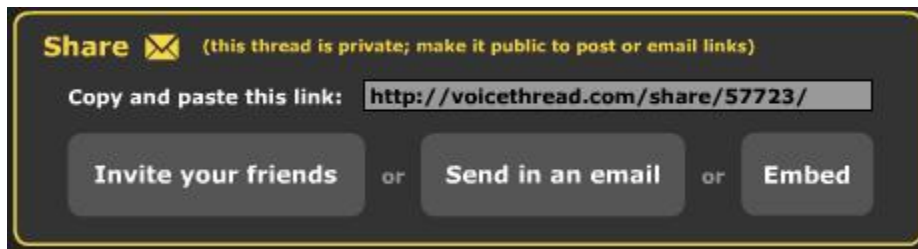
- When you have recorded and saved a comment, your picture will appear beside the image. Click on it to see your name and hear your comment. Click on the trash can button to delete the comment.



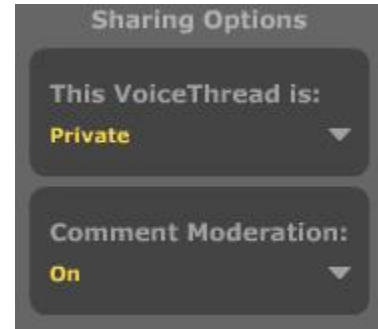
- To navigate through your images, use the arrow buttons or the slide selector.



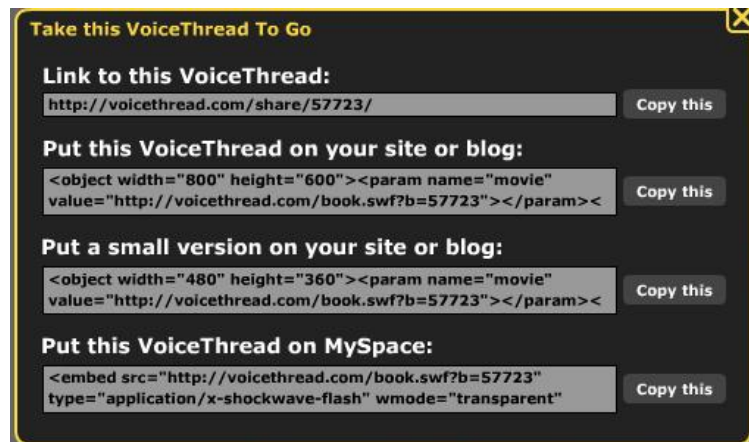
- The last slide of your VoiceThread provides a set of options for sharing your new VoiceThread. You can ignore this slide—and the sharing options—until you are ready to show your work.



- Use the 'Share' button to choose whether to keep your VoiceThread private, allow everyone (Public) to see it, or allow everyone to both see it and add comments. You can also choose to moderate all comments.



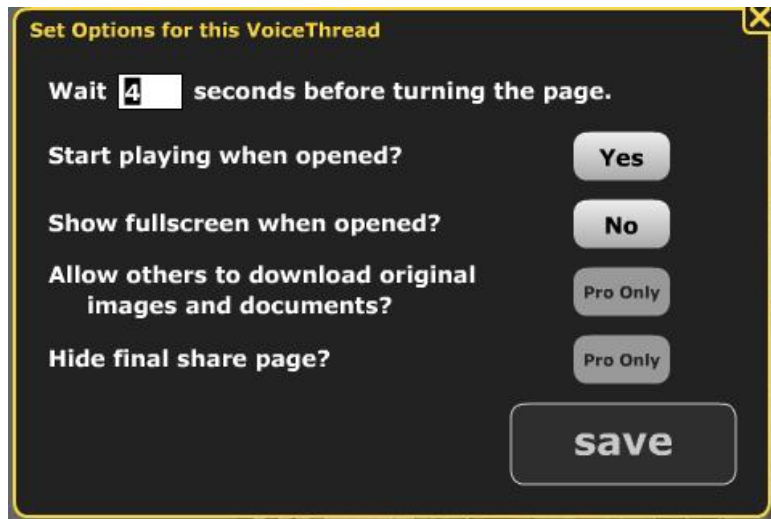
- 'Embed' leads to HTML that you can cut and paste into various applications. The 'To Go' button leads to the same screen.



- You can invite friends to view, comment on, or edit your VoiceThread. Friends do not have to be registered VoiceThread users; they receive an e-mail invitation with a link to your VoiceThread.



- Finally, you can change the playback options using the 'Options' button. Note that some of the options only work in a 'pro' account.




Using Your VoiceThread

- To see and use your VoiceThreads, click on the 'MyVoice' tab. (If you are not signed in, the sign in screen will appear.)
- To edit or share a VoiceThread, click first on the options icon and then on 'Edit' or 'Share'.
- To play your VoiceThread and add commentary, click on the VoiceThread.
- To switch identities, click on your picture in the lower-left corner. **Remember: If you use VoiceThread in the classroom, each student can have an identity.**



More to Explore

- The best way to discover the possibilities of VoiceThread is to browse those that have been shared. You can search for topics that interest you by entering a term in the search box.
- VoiceThreadU (<http://voicethread.com/help/forum/?CategoryID=4>) is a discussion forum for educators.
- The number of educators who have blogged about the use of VoiceThread is extensive. Google 'VoiceThread' and 'education' to get started. One example: Jo Rhys-Jones uses a VoiceThread to illustrate "Some ideas for using Voicethread in Primary MFL" at <http://primarymfl.ning.com/profiles/blog/show?id=738935%3ABlogPost%3A8621>
- **Ed.VoiceThread** (<http://ed.voicethread.com>) is a VoiceThread network designed for the K-12 environment. Classrooms and schools pay subscription fees; access is restricted to K-12 educators, students, and administrators.