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As technology has become more prevalent in classrooms, teachers are finding that a few outstanding tech tools are invaluable for classroom use. As a student at Empire High School (Ariz.), I see these resources utilized in incredible, innovative ways in almost all of my classes.

One of the online resources that my teachers frequently use is [Wikispaces](#). This is a fantastic tool for teachers and students because it makes sharing information easy and convenient. Wikispaces can be used for any group project or individual work, and it provides a place for students to post papers, which their teachers edit and post comments directly on the online document. The next draft of the paper, after revision, can be posted on the Wikispace. This is only one example of how the resources offered by Wikispace can be used. Wikispaces.com provides wiki hosting at no cost to teachers.

[iMovie](#), the Apple application that allows students to learn comprehensive movie-making skills, is also incredibly versatile. Students can film video clips on their own and upload them to iMovie, or use still images and collage them together to make movies combined with text. In my four years at Empire, the projects in which I was instructed to use iMovie have unquestionably stood out in my mind.

iMovie is attractive to students and teachers for a number of reasons. Ms. Clary, a journalism and English teacher at Empire, says that iMovie is easy for students to use and makes for a more interesting visual presentation. And students put more effort into making a movie than simply copying and pasting information into PowerPoint slides. iMovie also results in a cleaner, more professional looking product, she adds. As a student, I can also say that making an iMovie presentation of any sort is more fun, engaging and creative than almost any other sort of presentation tool.

A list of valuable tech tools would be incomplete without mention of [PowerPoint](#). While it may not be the most original, it's unquestionably effective when it comes to clearly and easily conveying information. This is most often seen at Empire within the context of teachers' lectures. It's a great tool for students in this way because not only does it allow teachers to organize their thoughts with ease, but it also allows students to take notes more easily. One drawback to PowerPoint, though, is that it's commonly perceived as being "bland" or "boring."

Recently, however, a newer tool has come to light, and it seems that it has the potential to be groundbreaking. [Prezi](#) is described as a tool that can create visually interesting presentations and could take the place of PowerPoint and Keynote, which teachers mostly rely on now for their presentation needs.

Prezi is Web-based, and unlike PowerPoint and Keynote, it uses a single canvas instead of multiple traditional slides. Words, images, videos and other media are placed on the large canvas and then grouped together in frames. The reasoning behind this canvas idea is that the canvas enables users to make nonlinear presentations that can zoom in and out and focus on individual places within a single visual map.


Because the tool is Internet-based, a Prezi presentation can be made in a browser window, then downloaded onto the computer so that an Internet connection isn't needed when showing the presentation. The benefits to Prezi include the fact that it's considered by users to be less complicated to use, while resulting in more of an aesthetically pleasing and engaging presentation than is enabled by its competitors. Prezi is still fairly new on the scene, having only been developed in 2007, but it seems to show great potential moving forward as educators are coming to see on a wide scale how useful it is.

As technology continues to develop rapidly, the benefits of innovative new programs will not only be available to students. Like Prezi, newer and more sophisticated presentation tools and other valuable technological resources will be available for teachers to take advantage of as well.

***About the author:** Anushka Mohideen is a senior at Empire High School.*

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