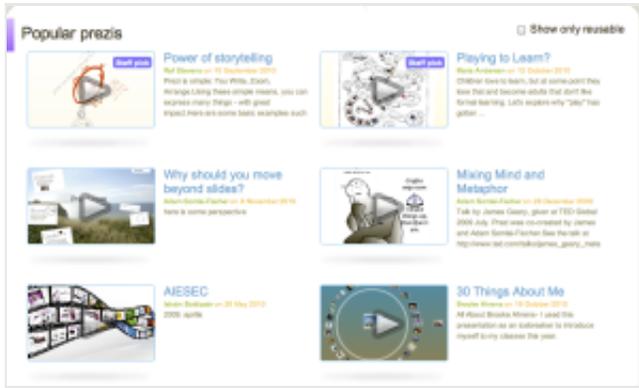


Prezi. Just Plain Good for Content



The Prezi sample window

I've been messing around with [Prezi](#) for the better part of a year now, and I like what I see. If you aren't familiar with Prezi, it's that very popular presentation software that allows the presenter to easily zoom in, flip things around, and play videos with relative ease. I like it for a whole host of other reasons.

First and foremost, I'm not a big fan of student created powerpoints. Far too often the bulk of their efforts are put into the animations and transitions with little thought to the way these detract from the content. Students read from slides without having a good grasp of the information they are trying to present, and the audience is numbed into silence when it comes time to ask questions. They are just glad it's over.

Here are the advantages of Prezi as I see them:

Formatting: Prezi limits “glitz” options significantly. It has about 8 backgrounds to choose from, and each has pre-programmed fonts and colors that can't be changed. No more getting lost in the color picker or the font window.

Text: It's easy to put in small amounts of text and more difficult to enlarge the boxes to add “too much” text. This encourages students to use bullets rather than paragraphs.

Images: Images can be added and users can use frames to zoom in to a particular portion of a photo. For example, you can have the program zoom to a portion of the photo- ask prediction questions- then have the program zoom out to show the entire scene. You can also easily focus in on a detail that might be lost when viewed as part of the whole photo.

Video: Embedding video doesn't get much easier than Prezi, especially if you are taking it from YouTube. Prezi also lets you upload a wide variety of file formats for images and

videos, but limits the file size to 50 MB for the free version.

Sharing: This is a new feature in Prezi, and a pretty significant one. You can share presentations with up to 10 viewers and allow them to edit-making collaborative work a breeze. Users can sign up for accounts easily.

Prezis embed easily into most webpages and can be used as standalone teaching aids with some creativity in the design of the presentation. Links to public prezis can be posted or emailed- making student work easy to share with family and the world.

Differentiation: The biggest difference between Prezi and traditional slideshow programs is the layout. Picture a large, flat palette upon which you lay the different elements of your presentation. They can be in any arrangement you choose, unlike the linear display of a PowerPoint. Creators use a path to connect the elements, and this path allows users to move easily from one element to another and back again. This layout is great for kids who need to brainstorm, move things around, figure out the order, move it again, and have flexibility in their design.

Wheel Reinvention: It just may be that the presentation you are wanting to create for your class already exists, at least in a semi-useable form. Many users post their prezis and allow others to copy them, edit them, and use them for their own purposes. What a great time saver!