



Welcome to A Teachers Guide to the Internet

Class Website: <http://theflyingcat.com/cweb>
Instructor: Paula Edmiston paula@theflyingcat.com (251)340-8447

A Teachers Guide to the Internet is a class offered to teachers in the Fulton County School System for continuing education credit. This class requires 30 hours of work in 6 topical units of study, and upon completion awards 3 SDU credits. The class begins with a face-to-face meeting to orient you to the software used in this class.

After the orientation meeting you'll be working independently (but not alone! Your instructor is looking forward to working with you online. Her motto is "I am here for you").

The goal of this class is to familiarize you with the great expanse of the Internet. This class will introduce you to the myriad resources of the Internet with a special emphasis on K12 education. You'll learn about the Internet in general, specialized and general resources and the best methods for communicating with others, the various tools that can be used on the Internet to enhance education and collaboration, and to impress upon you the need for flexibility and openness of mind when working with the Internet. As you move through the course you'll encounter inevitable roadblocks: software that doesn't perform as expected, "dead links", lost data. These are all normal frustrations. Keep in touch with your classmates and exchange experiences with them. Especially keep in touch with your instructor, who wants to help you every step of the way. An online class does not have to be an isolating event.

Requirements

Internet Access

This class requires Internet access and an email account. If you don't have an email account you can still be in the class but you need to talk to the instructor who can arrange an email account for you. If you don't already have an Internet account at home, please consider getting one. I recommend Bellsouth because I have not heard any complaints about them from previous students. Having an Internet account at home will greatly enhance your experience with this class, and with the Internet in general. Ready-access to the Internet will help to make the Internet as familiar to you as the telephone.

Class Notebook

Not strictly required, but highly recommended.

- Please get a large 3- ring binder to contain printouts from this class. There will be some material from this class, and some material that you find on the Internet, that will be of lasting value to you.
- You'll need a package of 8-tab dividers for this class to help organize the material you'll collect.
- A 3-hole punch will be useful for punching the printouts from your explorations.

Discussion Fora

Your instructor is charmed by the discovery of a new way to use the term "forum" in the plural: fora. There is a discussion forum for each topic. These fora are for demonstrating your understanding of the material and for supporting each other's efforts in this course. For each topic you will post one new discussion topic and reply to an existing discussion topic. The idea behind this assignment is two-fold: that you think critically about what you're learning, and that you consider carefully the thoughts of the people in class and respond to them. Thus you'll be finding new ideas both on your own and from your colleagues.

Link Share Board

You'll demonstrate your ability to identify appropriate resources on the Link Sharing board. For each topic of study you make an entry on the Link Share board that illustrates the subject of the topic. The entry will link a web page that best represents the topic under study.

Assignments

Most topics contain one or more assignments in addition to the Link Share and discussion fora. The assignments are not turned in to the instructor; they will provide you with information and experience that you'll be able to use on the Link Share board and in your forum discussions.

Getting Started

It can be difficult to **get started** with an online class. The most successful online students are those who can motivate themselves. Just jump right in and don't be afraid of looking bad. We are all here to learn, it's a lifelong endeavor. Your instructor admires most those people who **try** and is always delighted to offer help. She offers patience and empathy and acutely remembers her first struggling days on the net! Remember too, this class is a learning experience and you are invited to feel comfortable and safe here to try new things without fear of looking foolish. Be as **bold** as your text!

Course Location (URL) and Logon Information

To access this course enter the following URL in your browser:

http://theflyingcat.com/cweb/

You should now see a screen that looks like this:

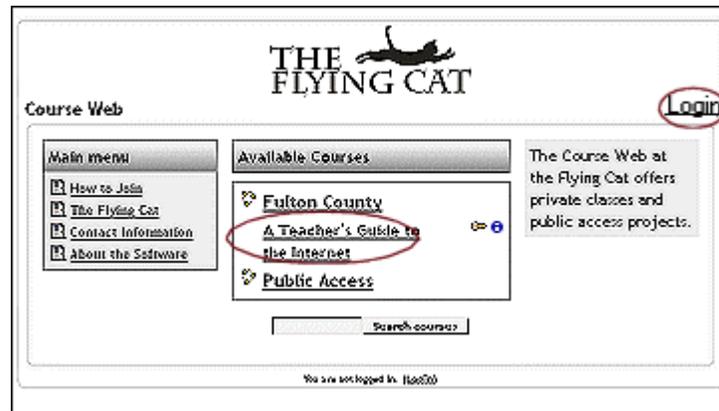


Figure 1: The Flying Cat Course Web Home Page

Figure 1., above, shows the Home page, or Opening Screen, of the courseweb. This home page links to the classes and resources available at the courseweb, including your class, **A Teachers Guide to the Internet**. Resources at the courseweb are grouped into **Project Categories** in the first column.

Click on the course, **Teachers Guide to the Internet**. If you're already logged in, the course will open. If you're not yet logged in you'll be prompted to log in and then the course will open.

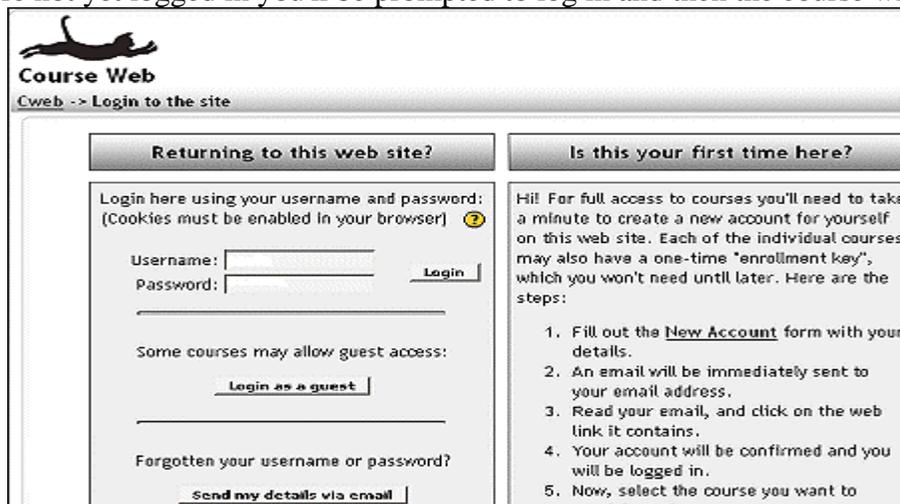


Figure 2: The Login Page

Before this class began you received a notice to come here and create your user account. You create an account only once. If you were not able to create your account before class just tell your instructor, who can create one for you on the spot. Now you're ready to log in using that account information. Enter the username and password you chose and click on the Login button.

Troubleshooting

Notice that if you ever forget your password there's an option on the login screen to obtain a new one. If you do forget your password please don't create a new account; use the "Send my details via email" button to receive a new password. If you have difficulties arriving at this point, consider the following possibilities.

- Am I connected to the Internet properly? (Can I access a different web site?)
- Did I enter the correct URL (Web Address)? Even one letter wrong or an extra space will give you an error message.
- Did I enter the correct logon and password information? Again a wrong letter, a capital when it should be lower case, a space: all of these will give you an error message.

If you are sure that you have completed the logon procedure correctly and still cannot access the course, please contact your course instructor for help. As many details as you can provide will be of value in tracking down your problem.

The top part of the class home page is illustrated in Figure 3., below.

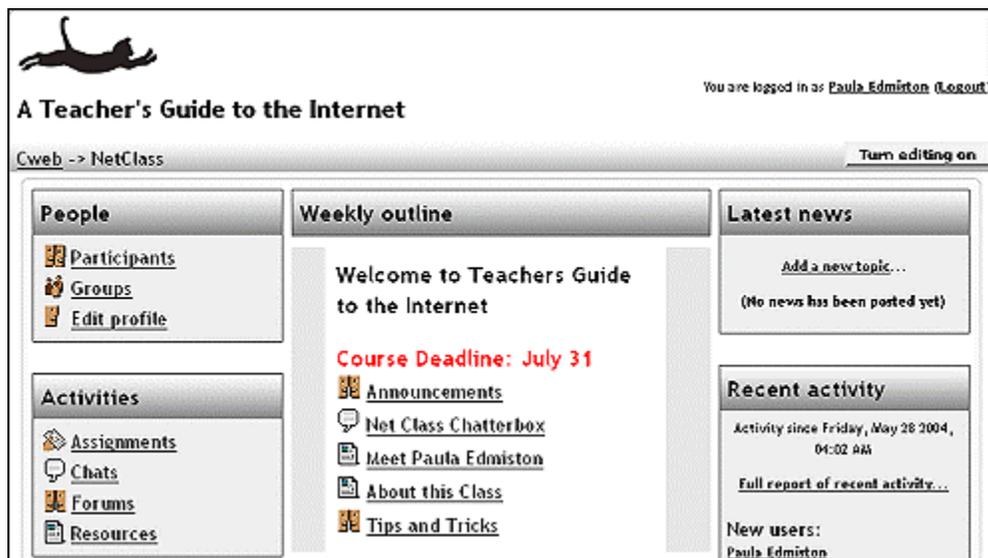


Figure 3: The Top Section of the Course Home Page

Course Format and Layout

The class site is divided into 3 columns. The first column contains course-wide resources and tools. You can get a lists of all the course participants and edit your own profile (including uploading an image of yourself). You can also display the assignments and discussion fora for all topics in the class at once.

Column 2 starts off with a section of "Course Tools" which you can see in Figure 3, above. Below that is a series of sections listing the course topics individually with their individual assignments, fora and resources.

The third column links the latest site news (such as the status of Paula's Office Hours, recent enhancements, new material) and show recent activity on the site (who has posted to a forum recently, for example).

The Class Tools

This is a collection of readings and fora to enhance your overall experience with the class.

Meet Paula Edmiston

Learn a little more about Paula, your instructor.

About this class

A general overview of the topics covered in this class, requirements and the deadline for completion.

The Net Class Chatterbox

A link to the class talker. Briefly, it's a special connection on the Internet that allows people to communicate with each other in real time, by typing. When you will click the link to the chatterbox (in the top section of the middle column) you'll open the chatterbox web page in a new, small window. Once you're connected all you need to do is type something on your keyboard and press the enter key. After you press the enter key everyone will be able to see what you "said". It's that easy! Conversations are logged so that you can return at a later time and review our work together. This will help you avoid spending time taking notes while we're talking about something.

Paula holds Office Hours here once a week. You are welcome to attend as many as you like; you are required to attend one (see Topic 3: Communication).

General Class Discussions

This is a forum where you can ask general questions, get help, and clarify issues pertaining to the class. Paula will always check this board and respond to posts when she's preparing for her Office Hours. (She may check the board more often, but you can count on a weekly check!)

Tips and Tricks

This is a collection of helpful information to make life in this online class a little easier! Here you'll find quick guides to how to copy and paste (which can make life very easy) and how to work with multiple windows.

Announcements

Posting of news that will affect the class. An example would be a change in Office Hours for one week.

The Course Structure

In the center column you'll see that the course is arranged in 6 topical units of study.

Viewing the Topics

The topics are listed in the center column. To help save space you can toggle between viewing all of the topics and only one topic. Each topic entry contains a small white box in the right blue margin. Click the box to view only that topic. When you're viewing a single topic there will be two white boxes in the right blue margin. Click on the double boxes to restore the view of all the topics. Figure 4, below, illustrates the toggle boxes.

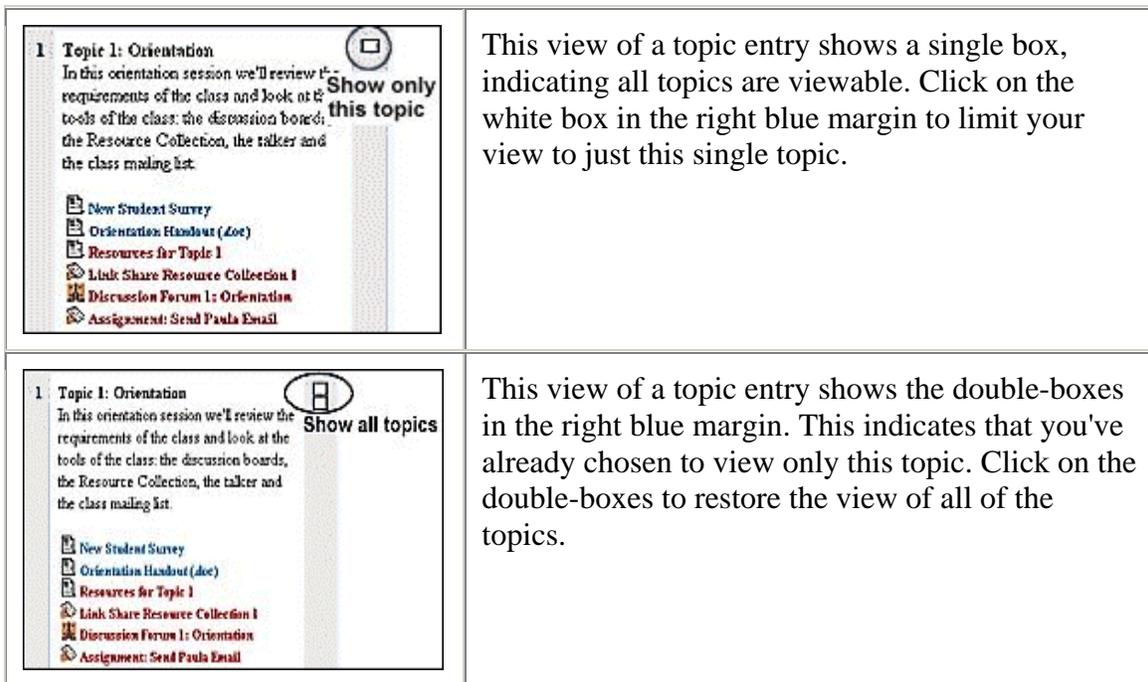


Figure 4: Toggle boxes for viewing topics.

Working through the topics

It doesn't matter what order you work in or the speed at which you work (as long as you finish by the deadline!). For each topic in the course you will:

- Read about the topic under study
- Explore provided resources
- Complete one or more assignments
- Post a resource to the Class Link Share board
- Forum Postings (2):
 1. Post one New Discussion Topic
 2. Respond to at least one topic posted by another class member

It's generally best to start at the top of a list of assignments in a topic and work your way down. You want to examine the Resources before you complete an assignment. Browsing through the resources and working through the assignments will lead you to plenty of websites to choose from for your post to the Link Share board. You'll want to complete everything before posting to the discussion board (so you'll have an experience to discuss!)

Navigating the Course

As you move through the many resources in your course you'll find a "navigation bar" at the top of the window. This feature is sometimes called "breadcrumbs" since it helps you to find your way back whence you came. Figure 5, below, shows a sample navigation bar. Note the white bar labeled "Quick Page Selector". This is a "drop down menu" you can use to jump to all the pages in the course.

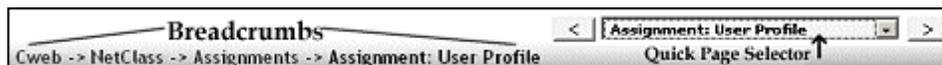


Figure 5: Sample navigation bar

In figure 5., above, you can three links in colored text and your current location in black text. Your current location in this sample is the assignment on vocabulary. The colored text provides links back to the beginning of the course. The "Assignments" link provides a list of all the assignments for this class. The "NetClass" link takes you to the class home page. The "Cweb" link takes leads to the Course Web home page.

Link Share Board

The Link Share program allows students to post references to web sites that are studied in this class. Students will post **a relevant web site for each of the six units in the class**. That's a total of 6 links that you'll enter. This assignment demonstrates both that you understood the material covered in the class and that you are able to identify relevant resources. At the end of the class

this resource will be formatted into a general-use web page that students can refer to in the future. There are a number, from previous classes. These archives are an excellent place to look for sites to post on your Link Share assignment.

Section 4 K12 Resources	
Title	Description
abcteach	Contains lesson plans, activity sheets, forms, and much more for subject areas, theme units and research topics. Basics for pre-k through research for middle school included. Contributed by [Redacted]
College Bound Reading List	an excellent resource for students to be sure they are reading books that will be helpful in preparation for college Contributed by [Redacted]

Figure 6: Link Share entries

Figure 6 shows entries made by a previous class. The first column contains a hyperlink to a web site. A **hyperlink** is composed of two elements: the URL (Uniform Resource Locator, the **address of the web page**) and the **link text**, the colored descriptive text that is clicked to open the linked the web page. The second column contains a description of the web page, and the name of the student who made the entry. It is important that you enter your complete name, first and last name, to avoid confusion when two or more students happen to have the same first or last name.

Figure 7 shows a completed entry form for the Link Share program. There are 6 parts to the form:

1. Enter your name, **both first and last names**.
2. Enter the URL of the page. You must include the **http://** part of the address; if you don't, your link will not work.
3. Enter the title of the web page. This text will form the colored hyperlink text in column one of the Link Share board that is clicked on to open the page.
4. Enter a descriptive analysis of the web page. Including the grade level and subject is important.
5. Select a section to file your entry in - this will correspond to the units of the class.
6. Click on the **Add My Page** button to enter your web page.

The image shows a web form titled "Post a Link". It contains the following fields and content:

- Your Name:** Paula Edmiston
- Page URL:** http://www.ipl.org
- Page Title:** The Internet Public Library
- Description:** An excellent resource for educational, professional web sites.
- Course Section:** Section 4: K12 Resources

At the bottom of the form is a button labeled "Add My Page" with a mouse cursor pointing to it.

Figure 7: A completed Link Share form

Class Discussion Fora

Each topic in the class contains a forum for discussing the material.

Forum Requirements In each topic unit of the course you're required to post one "New Discussion" topic and to respond to a discussion topic that was started by another member of your class. Your New discussion topic will demonstrate your grasp of the material you've studied. When replying to another student you should reflect not only upon the message written by the other person but also upon your own response to the message

How to Use the Discussion Fora

New Discussion Topic

To create a New Discussion topic, click on the link **Add a new discussion topic ...** and you'll open a window that allows you to type in a **subject** and a **message**. Choose your subject line with great care. Compose a subject line that briefly and concisely describes the content of your message. "Need Help" is a poor choice of words. "Need help with Link Share" is a much more descriptive subject line!

Reply to a Topic

To enter a reply for a topic click on the link that opens a discussion. At the end of the message will be a link to **"reply"**.

Editing Note:

You have 30 minutes to return and edit your (new or reply) entry. After that 30-minute window you cannot change the content of your post.

Forum Email

Once you post a message to a forum you have 30 minutes to return and edit your post; email notices of your post will not be sent out until after that 30 minute editing period is over.

The fora are set up to send people email copies of posts. It is not necessary to retain the email copies because the posts are permanently stored in the fora. The emails are sent as an "alert" service and to keep you feeling apart of the class community.