Web 2.0 Tools

The most important thing to realize about Web 2.0 tools, besides their ease of use, availability and flexibility, is that, like the Internet itself, they are often FREE. Yep, free! There's this whole web culture of sharing, contributing, and participating that has sprung up, especially in the field of education. This relatively new world-wide level of sharing and collaboration is considered the next generation of internet use and is therefore called 2.0 (Bonk, 2011). They're called Tools because they are indeed very handy.

This phase of educational technology took root around the new millenium, according to Professor Curtis J. Bonk in his book, *The World is Open: How Web Technology is Revolutionizing Education*. One of its hallmarks is that *we are now using technology to transform learning!* "Transforming education with technology has not been as widely adopted as some perceive, but an avalanche of change is underway" (*Ibid.*). And we as online educators are an essential part of this transformation!

> Students can record, communicate, and debate real problems or cases that one or more of them has encountered, instead of debating canned ones from textbook publishers (*Ibid.*).
>
> Education courses are being entirely rethought and revamped to take advantage of authentic learning and real-world audiences for collaboration and interaction. (*Ibid.*)

How about that!

As a result, Professor Bonk says, "sharing . . . is much more flavorful and multimedia rich." Especially with the evolution of the Internet, we advanced into a world-wide era of abundance – knowledge and information sharing – a "free and open access movement" where instead of always privatizing information through copyright, Creative Commons has sprung up with its "Share Alike" feature (see footer of this website page). "What all of these events mean is that you, the people, control your educational experience, instead of someone else controlling it for you" (*Ibid.*). And that, my friends, is the essence of student-centered learning.