

**Title of Session:** The Frugal Educator - US Government Freebies

**Moderator:** Rosemary Harris

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**BJ:** Welcome to tonight's Frugal Educator.

**BJ:** Rosemary is our host. We usually start all our discussions with introductions

**BJ:** I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania

**ShereeR:** I am an artist / art educator. I teach SED (severely emotionally disturbed) students K-12 in St. Petersburg Florida

**SusanR:** K to 8 Occasional and K to 3 Resources Presenter

**MaryVR:** I am a Post-Bac student in Texas

**RosemaryEH:** Welcome everyone. I am a 6th year computer teacher at two inner city schools in Detroit, MI

**MollyMS:** I'm an education major at the University of Education in Ohio

**RosemaryEH:** Although I did not have a theme for this month originally, I have since decided to focus on some US government freebies.

**RosemaryEH:** With the hurricane Isabel an appropriate start is FEMA

<http://www.fema.gov/kids/pubs.htm>

**MaryVR:** Is this source mostly for elementary age?

**RosemaryEH:** You will have to order the materials over the telephone. There are tons of things that you can order for all age groups.

**ShereeR:** Rosemary, if you order these items, do you know if you can order enough for a class or can you get only one copy of each thing you order?

**RosemaryEH:** You can order whole class sets on most things. The operator will tell you of any limits.

**ShereeR:** Oh that is nice!

**RosemaryEH:** Usually if there is a limit is 35 or 50+

**SusanR:** Will they send to Canada or outside the US?

**RosemaryEH:** The Disaster Twins is a great book for K - 3

**RosemaryEH:** That I am not sure of Susan.

**MaryVR:** It looks like they won't

**SusanR:** Shucks!!

**MaryVR:** It says a sentence down from the address

**RosemaryEH:** Susan, I will get you a list of some things that are available only for Canadian teachers!

**SusanR:** Thanks! Just got some goodies from Starfall!!

**RosemaryEH:** FEMA has much more than is listed on the site. Tornados, floods, hurricanes you name it.

**MaryVR:** That sounds great

**RosemaryEH:** <http://order.starfall.org/k/order/new.html> Starfall is a freebie from last month K-3

**SusanR** shows the freebies to all who just entered the hot tub

<http://www.fema.gov/kids/pubs.htm>

**RosemaryEH:** The 3rd grade teacher used the artist booklet from Starfall and is having her students paint in the style of the various artists. It's awesome.

**LindseyD:** you can just call and order these things whenever you want?

**RosemaryEH:** Yes Lindsey.

**LindseyD:** that is really a great thing to know...I just added that website to my favorites

**RosemaryEH:** Although 9/11 already passed, the Department of Labor is offering a free DVD on the labor efforts to clean ground zero. <http://www.dol.gov/opa/dvd/>

**LynetteFS:** This is great information. How do you find out about these things

**MaryVR:** Good question!?

**DemetriaB:** have you ever heard about the book free stuff for kids

**MaryVR:** no

**LindseyD:** I can't believe there is so much of this out there...I am so glad that I came and joined this chat!

**RosemaryEH:** That is a great question! I sign up at many email newsletters. The best for teachers in my opinion is <http://www.freethings4educators.com/#resources>

**LynetteFS:** Where can you find this book?

**DemetriaB:** I got it at the public library

**MaryVR:** I've read a book called the Best Free Things in America, but it seemed a little out of date - are they related?

**DemetriaB:** basically the kids send of for certain items that can be used at school

**DemetriaB:** I don't know Mary

**RosemaryEH:** I like to do everything on the internet myself. I just read and search all the time. As with anything on the internet offers come and they go.

**RosemaryEH:** go to <http://www.freethings4educators.com/#resources> just click on the link

**LynetteFS:** These are great links. How can I save them fast enough?

**BJ:** Lynette, all the links will be in your transcript

**RosemaryEH:** I don't know about any of you but, I like totally free things!

**MaryVR:** Indeed

**LynetteFS:** Free is the name of the game for us poor college students and new teachers.

**LindseyD:** I totally agree

**DemetriaB:** I love free stuff

**LindseyD:** I am a big fan of the dollar tree

**ShereeR:** Lynette, I am an OLD teacher and FREE is still the name of the game!

**LynetteFS:** It seems like teachers should have a big collection of materials and info to share.

**BJ:** Since Rosemary is our discussion leader, let's see if she has any other goodies for us tonight

**RosemaryEH:** <http://app.ny.frb.org/cfpicnic/frame1.cfm> and <http://app.ny.frb.org/cfpicnic/frame1.cfm> is for Federal Reserve comic books and videos.

Most but not all are for upper ed. The Federal Reserve gives tons of things.

**LindseyD:** sounds great

**RosemaryEH:** Once Upon a Dime is one of the best in my opinion.

**LynetteFS:** What grade level will this cover?

**RosemaryEH:** Say about 5th on up.

**MaryVR:** This is great - I'm hoping to teach 9-12

**RosemaryEH:** There are many things for that age group here.

**LynetteFS:** Thanks. Do you have any materials for kindergarten?

**DemetriaB:** what about first grade?

**RosemaryEH:** Not so much at the federal reserve. However at <http://www.treasury.gov/kids/> there are some lesson plans and a lesson plan contest about money.

**RosemaryEH:** Also some neat games.

**RosemaryEH:** Online games

**LynetteFS:** Kids love games

**LindseyD:** they really do

**RosemaryEH:** One of the other things I do with money is Money Origami. Get the book called The Buck Book from Klutz press. It cost about \$11 or \$12 but well worth it.

**LynetteFS:** Rosemary, Do you know any neat ways of getting parents involved in collecting materials and info?

**RosemaryEH:** Lynette, give them web addresses of things that you find and that you know are bonafide offers.

**LynetteFS:** That's great!

**RosemaryEH:** <http://www.ed.gov/free/index.html> is a great clearinghouse of free things for educators.

**LindseyD:** cool, thanks

**ArtieO** joined the room.

**LynetteFS:** I had no idea there was so much available for us to use

**BJ:** Make sure you join Rosemary every month...she's got some great stuff!

**LindseyD:** I definitely will

**LynetteFS:** Rosemary, Who are you?

**RosemaryEH:** Although this is not government, one great freebie that needs parent approval is a two year subscription to LEGO (the plastic bricks).

<http://club1.lego.com/registration/signupmagazine.asp?>

**DemetriaB:** do u know of any stores that give away stuff to teachers

**RosemaryEH:** Lynette, I am just a tech teacher from two inner city Detroit schools. We have no money for anything!

**LindseyD:** I just found out that Kinkos gives a teacher and student discount...I know it's not free, but it helps

**LynetteFS:** I was just wondering. This is my first time in this chat room.

**MaryVR:** I've been told that Barnes and Noble gives a discount to teachers too

**SusanR:** Try Garage Sales for acquiring almost free resources!

**LynetteFS:** For the teachers and pre-service teachers in Houston. Texas Art Supply also gives a discount.

**LindseyD:** good to know

**MaryVR:** definitely

**RosemaryEH:** Demetria you can always ask. Office Depot and Staples have an annual giveaway. You can also get a 10% discount card as you can at Barnes and Noble. With Barnes and Noble it has to be for school related books.

**ArtieO:** Most bookstore will give a discount if you ask, just bring in your teacher ID.

**LindseyD:** barnes and noble gives a 20% discount to pre-service teachers and teachers

**SusanR:** Thanks for the Freebies, Rosemary! Excuse me, I must leave early. I have a Mac User meeting in a few minutes.

**MaryVR:** bye

**SusanR** left the room (signed off).

**LynetteFS**: Which of these materials will be tax deductible? and for how much?

**MaryVR**: I would think anything used for your classroom is tax deductible

**RosemaryEH**: I once got 6 free Chicken Soup for the Teenage Soul books just by writing a letter to the foundation that was in the book.

**LindseyD**: wow...that's really neat

**LynetteFS**: That is great. I will have to try that!

**RosemaryEH**: <http://www.usgs.gov/education/> This is the US Geological Survey. Not everything is free but they are worth the investment.

**RosemaryEH**: <http://interactive2.usgs.gov/learningweb/explorer/georesource.htm> then go down to the various categories on the bottom.

**RosemaryEH**: Lynette what subject are you interested in?

**RosemaryEH**: I find many things are cross-curricular.

**LynetteFS**: I am currently a pre-service teacher In Humble ISD. I want to teach kindergarten.

**LindseyD**: i am a preservice teacher in HISD and I too want to teach kindergarten

**RicharriaG**: I am also in Humble

**LynetteFS**: Sometimes I spend hours sorting through websites. Are there some sites specifically for kindergarten.

**JeffC** buys all his clothes and much of his lab equipment on ebay...

**LynetteFS**: How safe is that?

**RosemaryEH**: One great resource from last month is Reading A-Z. It is not totally free although there are some sample booklets. <http://www.readinga-z.com/> Great worksheets that correspond to the books you print out for each student.

**LynetteFS**: Thanks, Rosemary

**RosemaryEH**: It's sister site is <http://www.learningpage.com/> which has tons of free theme sheets. You just have to sign up as a member which is free.

**MaryVR**: I just did a google search for "free resources for kindergarten teachers" and a lot of pages came up

**LynetteFS**: Wow! terrific

**LynetteFS**: That was so simple I didn't think of it

**RosemaryEH**: Yes there are tons of things, however be aware that not all offers are true finds and many times you find that it is old information.

**LindseyD**: that is true

**LindseyD**: it's hard to believe everything you see...but yet so easy at the same time

**RosemaryEH**: Did you see the Starfall offer from earlier?

<http://order.starfall.org/k/order/new.html>

**MaryVR**: Fortunately the fastest way to tell is when they start asking for your credit card number

**LindseyD**: yep...bad idea to give that over the internet

**MaryVR**: I buy stuff online all the time - but not from just any site

**RosemaryEH**: I only put things up that are tried and true. I find that the person at <http://www.freethings4educators.com/#resources> does the same.

**LindseyD**: ya, you just have to be careful

**ShereeR**: Rosemary, I already put my order in starfall and got the confirmation that it is on the way!

**MaryVR:** That's good to know because that site looks really good

**LynetteFS:** So, you are saying that Starfall is not a questionable source?

**RosemaryEH:** Starfall is not a questionable source.

**RosemaryEH:** Do you know Blue Mountain Greetings?

**LindseyD:** great...thanks

**MaryVR:** no, what is that?

**ShereeR:** yes, been using it for years

**LynetteFS:** Never heard of it.

**LindseyD:** I thought they started charging you for the cards

**RosemaryEH:** This is Susan Polis Schultz way of paying back as her son had a learning disability.

**JeffC:** BlueMountain now charges... Hallmark is still free.

**LindseyD:** oh.

**LindseyD:** is it just [www.hallmark.com](http://www.hallmark.com)?

**JeffC** nods

**LindseyD:** thanks

**RosemaryEH:** Starfall is totally free K-3. Great books and she also throws in free pencils.

**ShereeR:** No, there is still a "free" section on Blue Mountain.

**LynetteFS:** That is incredible. How do you receive things?

**LindseyD:** do you have to ask for the pencils, or does she just give them to you with any order?

**RosemaryEH:** NASA is also a great resource, however their offers are very scattered. I will list a few links <http://core.nasa.gov/> (NASA Core ? Central Operations of Resources for Educators)

**RosemaryEH:** <http://education.nasa.gov/> (NASA Education Program)

**RosemaryEH:** <http://spacelink.nasa.gov/> (track anything NASA related)

**RosemaryEH:** <http://quest.arc.nasa.gov/> (Ames Research Center is NASA's K-12 Internet Initiative, this is a highly interactive site that features chats with scientists, video feeds to the Space Shuttle and much more)

**RosemaryEH:** <http://education.jpl.nasa.gov/resources/> (NASA Education Gateway Jet Propulsion)

**RosemaryEH:** [http://education.jpl.nasa.gov/nasa\\_ed/centers.html](http://education.jpl.nasa.gov/nasa_ed/centers.html) (education centers for NASA)

**RosemaryEH:** <http://education.jpl.nasa.gov/resources/ercs.html> (educator resource centers by state)

**RosemaryEH:** At the educator resource centers you can get all kinds of freebies. Usually it is at a large county school district.

**BJ:** The next Frugal Educator will be on October 27.

**LindseyD:** alright

**LindseyD:** sounds great

**BJ:** Rosemary, the hour is almost up. Do you have any closing comments for the group?

**RosemaryEH:** You can also find some links at my office.

**JeffC:** Thanks for the info Sheree... truth is... I stopped going to BlueMountain after they started charging... they must have switched back to having free ecards again (because the hit counter must have gone way down I guess).

**LindseyD:** thank you so much for everything!

**LindseyD:** I look forward to all of my things coming in the mail

**RosemaryEH:** There are many FREE things on the Internet. Keep your eyes open!

**MollyMS:** yes, thank you so much for the great information

**LindseyD:** I definitely will

**MaryVR:** Yes, thank you - those are great places to start

**LynetteFS:** This has been terrific. Hope I can make good use of it.

**ArtieO:** Thanks Rosemary

**ShereeR:** Thank you Rosemary, you did a great job!

**RosemaryEH:** Come back next month! There is so much more!