

WMnet Update

News from the West Midlands Regional Broadband Consortium
Issue 11: Summer 2006



CLIMATE CHANGE

Special Edition - <http://climatechange.wmnet.org.uk>

New resources on floods

Dealing with something as big and uncertain as climate change poses a significant challenge for teachers. It also provides good opportunities for promoting debate and enquiry-based learning, as can be seen in the Floods project. The resources for this new Key Stage 2 project have been developed for WMnet by Caroline Matthews and her pupils at Welland Primary School and Jon Cree of the Bishops Wood Centre, both in Worcestershire. The resources are available from the WMnet Climate Change site and include teacher guidance, lesson plans, video clips and photographs.



Ask the Expert resources

Following the successful series of Ask the Expert webcasts, during which experts answered questions from GCSE and A-level students about climate change, a range of resources is now available on the Climate Change site to further support your work on each of the five topics:

- Weather
- Food production and the countryside
- Oceans
- Transport
- UK Impacts

For each topic there is an activity sheet, video recording and transcript of the event. A sixth activity sheet focuses on some of the positive actions being taken around the world to reduce or mitigate the negative effects of climate change.



Ask a question

Have your questions about climate change been answered? Check the Ask a Question section on the site and if you can't find the answers you are looking for, submit a question to our resident experts.

Monitoring climate change

WMnet has linked up with The GLOBE programme to produce a series of short video guides to help teachers and pupils monitor changes in the climate. The guides will show children carrying out GLOBE activities related to climate change measurements and will focus on Green-up, Green-down, Temperature and Contrails (aircraft trails) activities. The resources will be available towards the end of the summer term.



Climate Change Pledge



Has your school pledged to take action on climate change yet? Even simple actions can have an impact on reducing the negative impact of climate change. It can help to save you money, too, and ensure that you have a head start on the

DfES' Sustainable Schools Strategy. Find out how your school can make a difference by visiting the Climate Change Pledge site now (www.climatepledge.wmnet.org.uk). We have made some changes to the site to make it easier for schools to swap ideas and learn from each other. See who else is tackling the actions that you would like to take.

New activities for geography, science and citizenship

Activities for Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils on 'Thinking Through Climate Change' have been developed for WMnet by TIDE~ (Teachers In Development Education). Draft versions will shortly be available for trialling and comment. Details of how to access them will be posted on the Climate Change portal.



protection issues. A service which filters internet and email traffic is but one part of the measures that need be in place. It is imperative that schools have suitable policies on internet literacy and sound practice for staff and learners. WMnet has on order copies of the Becta E-safety guidance document for all schools and these will be distributed shortly. Publications are also available from the Becta website

<http://schools.becta.org.uk/index.php?section=is>

Funding for ICT in Schools

Now that earmarked funds like NGfL are no longer available, some schools are finding it difficult to sustain their ICT networks and facilities. We are advised that the calculation of schools' Devolved Formula Capital allocations involves those very same earmarked ICT funds so that there is a sense in which approximately one third of DFC is what used to be funding for ICT. The situation in voluntary schools is more complex.

It is a decision for schools, how to allocate their funds, but there are no plans to provide further designated funds to sustain schools' ICT spending and the expectation is that schools will sustain their ICT facilities through the application of devolved and delegated funds. Local authority funding for broadband infrastructure has also been reduced substantially.

Other News

Learning Platforms support materials

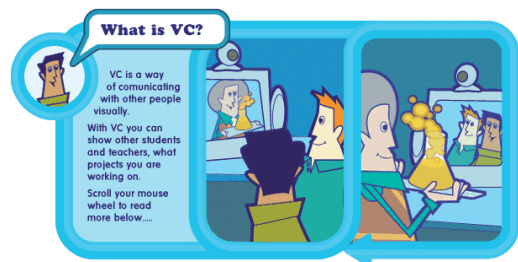
The government's e-strategy expressed through Harnessing Technology provides us with an expectation that schools will make available a personalised learning space that can support e-portfolios within the next two years. Key sections of the regional conference held on 22nd February at the Motorcycle Museum, Solihull were recorded on video and will be made available shortly both online and as a DVD. It is anticipated that these will be mailed to schools in June. PowerPoint presentations from the conference can be found at <http://www.wmnet.org.uk/go/elearning>.



E-safety

Use of the internet and on-line resources in schools brings a host of new dangers, risks and child

Video-conferencing in the classroom



WMnet is producing exciting new material to extend the online guide to video conferencing that is available online at <http://www.wmnet.org.uk/vc>. Building on the materials that introduce concepts, the new material will help teachers plan lesson delivery and make best use of VC in their teaching.

Rock Idol 2006



Now in its second year and running nationwide all schools with a band and access to VC facilities can enter the competition. There is still time to prepare for the autumn. Enter now via the website at www.rockidol.org.uk