Toilet Tech Talk

Got a second...?
Might as well learn something.

Dive In

Welcome back to the second issue of the Toilet Tech Talk (T3 for short). In the last issue we learned about word clouds. Word clouds can be handy for many things. On some websites a word cloud or tag cloud is used for navigation. Topics that appear on the webpage more often appear larger than topics that appear less often. In the last issue we challenged you to think of some ways to use a word cloud in your class. This time, think about some ways that students in your class can use a word cloud. What are some objectives or projects that might be enhanced by creating a word cloud?

Take the Plunge

You and your students can easily create your own word clouds. There are three websites that are free tools that will quickly generate a word cloud for you. The first is http://www.wordle.net Wordle is probably the first site created that allows you create high quality word clouds. There are a few disadvantages to Wordle however: it doesn't work at school and it does not allow you to easily create an image, you have to take a screen capture (see http://toilettechtalk.wikispaces.com/ for instructions on how to make a screen shot). Another great tool is http://www.tagxedo.com and it works in much the same way but it will work at school and it will easily create images plus there are a few more bells and whistles. When using Tagxedo for the first time, you may need to install Silverlight. Finally there is the student friendly generator at http://abcya.com/word_clouds.htm. All these tools work in a similar way. Copy the text you would like to put into a word cloud and then paste it into the website. Click generate and voilà! Word cloud! You can then change fonts, colors and shapes if you don't like the default.

Spare a Square

Here is this issue's challenge: go to one of these sites and create your own word cloud. E-mail it to your tech contact and you might see your artwork brightening up our bathroom! You could put poems, speeches,

stories, essays, songs, etc. into your word cloud. The possibilities are endless!

Cleaning Up
For those of you curious about the answers to last issue's challenge, take a look:

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

Shel Silverstein's Poem "For Sale"

Air Freshener
Sites and Tools to remember:
- ✓ http://www.wordle.net
- ✓ http://www.tagxedo.com
- ✓ http://abcya.com/word_clouds.htm

The Final Flush
The authors of T3 hope that you will be able to use this information in a way that will help enrich your life and/or the lives of your students. If you have questions or topic suggestions for future issues of T3, please e-mail your building tech contact.

Don't forget to wash your hands and try out your new tech skill!

http://toilettechtalk.wikispaces.com/