

Teach a Rock New Tricks), has his students write letters back home to imagined benefactors (uncles and aunts) who are to be kept informed of their wards' educational progress. The third-party writing exercise has proven extremely successful in encouraging students to synthesize course material and retain essential information. Historian Ronald Woodbury ("From the Traditional Lecture Toward Dialogical Learning: Changing Patterns in the Teaching of History") offers helpful advice for historians who have stuck to the lecture as the end-all and be-all of knowledge transfer: He encourages lecturers to stop and ask students to write down one question, or to have them write down the main point of one section. In asking lecturers to engage students in a dialogue, Woodbury encourages instructors to take the chance of being challenged by student's views. And professor of physics Lawrence Brehm ("At Home in the Universe") urges instructors to engage fully with students and get inside their heads. Ultimately, there might be nothing particularly novel about the approaches described here, but the book is a sign of the dedication of these teachers and evidence of the many ways that we can all hope to reach our students.

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Justin Reich and Thomas Daccord. *Best Ideas for Teaching with Technology: A Practical Guide for Teachers, by Teachers.* Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 2008. Pp. 312. Paper, \$34.95; ISBN 978-0-656-2132-0.

Part roundup of websites, part manual for the use of computer applications in the classroom, Justin Reich and Thomas Daccord's *Best Ideas for Teaching with Technology: A Practical Guide for Teachers, by Teachers* is, as the title acknowledges, a practical work. Coauthors Reich and Daccord co-direct the website www.EdTechTeacher.org. The two offer workshops for teachers and consulting services for schools. Their experience using computer applications in the classroom qualified them to write this book. Reich has taught world history and topics in modern history at Noble and Greenough School in Dedham, Massachusetts, and has designed courses with a computer-applications component. He is a doctoral candidate at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. Daccord is the author of *The Best History Web Sites*, and he taught seven years in a school where students and staff had laptops and wireless access to the Internet.

Despite the title, *Best Ideas for Teaching with Technology* is not a broad treatment of the use of technology in the classroom but rather a work that treats one aspect of technology, albeit an important one, the use of computer applications in the classroom. Its practicality makes the book ideal for instructors who are eager to incorporate computers in their classes but who might not have extensive experience in this area. Reich and Daccord do not assume that readers are familiar with computer applications. Rather they lead readers, mouse click by mouse click, through the use of

PowerPoint, for example, to augment a lecture. The authors urge instructors to mine websites for primary sources and illustrations. The unit on the Great Depression, for example, includes websites with photographs of migrant laborers, stories of teenage hobos, the recording of a Fireside Chat, and much more. Reich and Daccord know that websites vary in quality. One of the virtues of their book is that the authors have done the legwork of tracking down websites with excellent content on a variety of historical topics. Both instructors and students might read several sections of the book, notably "Taking Notes with Computers." Indeed an instructor might photocopy these sections for distribution to students.

The book is particularly valuable as a compilation of websites. The authors do not, however, provide a central listing of websites. Rather the reader must search the index for a topic. As the examples in the book reveal, much of the content is aimed at middle and high school teachers. The college and university instructor accordingly must choose material with care. The authors acknowledge that students who are ostensibly taking notes with their laptops might instead be emailing friends, checking sports scores, or playing games, but they offer few solutions to this problem beyond vigorous policing of students. The authors admit, as they should, that technology cannot substitute for inspired teaching. Good teachers will use technology not as an end but rather as a means to making the classroom experience richer. *Best Ideas for Teaching with Technology* succeeds to the degree that it helps instructors stimulate students to think.

Independent Scholar

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Ian Tattersall. *The World From Beginnings to 4000 BCE.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2008. Pp. 143. Paper, \$19.95; ISBN 978-0-19-533315-2.

Human evolution is defined as both the biological and cultural development of humans. Ever since the existence of scientific research, human evolution has been a central topic in the crossfire of scientific fields such as physical anthropology, linguistics, and genetics. Through the examinations done in paleoanthropology, we know today that human beings evolved from the homo sapiens species. Thanks to the results achieved in studying human origins and species, we are nowadays able to estimate that the history of human evolution began more than 4,000 years ago.

This complex history of human evolution is the topic of Ian Tattersall's *The World From Beginnings to 4000 BCE*. In an effort to provide a comprehensive, thoroughly readable overview of the "new world history," Tattersall's work is the first volume in the series *The New Oxford World History* published by Oxford University Press.

The World From Beginnings to 4000 BCE is clearly ambitious in providing the reader with an overview of the first 4,000 years of evolutionary history within 143