Course Abstract

This course provides an introduction to online opportunities for crowdsourcing curricular development, relating each to the quickly-changing world of speech-language pathology. Perfect for experienced speech-language pathologists looking for a larger pool of information, it orients learners to trending social media platforms, blogs, and Teachers Pay Teachers, discussing tactics for using them to meet curricular needs.

NOTE: Links and images provided within the course material are for informational purposes only. No endorsement of processes or products is intended or implied.

Learning Objectives

By the end of this course, learners will be able to:

- List ways in which social media is professionally relevant
- Define crowdsourcing and relate its utility to speech-language pathologists
- Recognize crowdsourcing procedures on Facebook, relating each to personal pages, groups, and business pages
- Recognize crowdsourcing procedures on Pinterest and Instagram, differentiating each from Facebook
- Recognize crowdsourcing procedures that apply to blogs
- Recognize crowdsourcing procedures that impact Teachers Pay Teachers
- Consider tactics relevant to each platform as related to specific topics of interest, using the Common Core State Standards as an example
- Identify potential issues that may arise during crowdsourcing, and address responses to each
Introduction

The field of speech-language pathology has changed significantly since schoolteachers became self-proclaimed “speech correctionists” in the early 1900s. Our current scope of practice can sometimes seem to be a moving target: with such a broad range of topics in which we are expected to be an expert, it’s an increasingly difficult task to “know it all.” And even for those who have a niche, taking time out of practice to stay current with research can be a challenge.

To compound the issue, while many SLPs work in a setting with similarly-trained colleagues with whom they can brainstorm, share advice, and work through challenging cases and issues, others may be the only SLP in their district or county.

Certainly, there are resources at our disposal to help guide us through our careers, including several traditional methods of gaining new knowledge and insights, such as:

- Peer-Reviewed Journals and Articles
- Textbooks and Other Related Reading
- State and National Conventions
- Staff Meetings
- Teacher In-Services

However, these traditional methods have a variety of limitations, including time and travel considerations, the relevance of available information to our immediate concerns, and the relatively low number of number of people that even the most outgoing SLP is able to relate to in real time.

Here’s where the internet comes in!

In a world that is becoming more interconnected by the day, and where information is often useless unless it is accessible now, becoming familiar with career-relevant online communities can provide SLPs with an invaluable resource: access to an immense amount of information about even the most specific queries almost instantaneously.

(Of course, this access comes with its share of issues, from validity to security, many of which are discussed in Considerations and Precautions beginning on page 20.)

I. Crowdsourcing and Social Media: What Are They and How Can They Help Me?

**social media:** noun
forms of electronic communication through which users create online communities to share information, ideas, personal messages, and other content.

**social networking:** noun
the creation and maintenance of personal and business relationships especially online.

*Social media* refers specifically to online communities where there is social interaction, or *social networking*, between users.

A *platform* is the name given to the different methods, or sites, through which you can gain access to social media.

In this course, we’ll be taking a look at several platforms, including:

**Facebook**
Contains pages for both people and businesses where they can share photos, status updates, and videos, as well as comment on or “like” the posts of others.

**Pinterest**
A visual, electronic “bulletin board” of ideas curated by the user, who can “pin” websites, photos, and other “pins” to their boards for later reference.

**Instagram**
Users post photos, rather than text, on their pages, and interact with each other by “liking” or commenting on the photos of others.

**Blogs**
Blogs are online “journals” or websites run by individuals or small groups (“bloggers”), containing article-style topical posts. They tend to have a personal, casual, feel to them, and while readers can comment on individual posts, there is little expectation of direct interaction with either the blogger(s) or with other readers.

**Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT)**
TpT is a website where teachers (or, for our purposes, SLPs) can browse and download digital versions of materials created by other teachers (and/or SLPs). (Note: TpT is only borderline social media, due to the limited options for interactivity available; learners should also be aware that the majority of the material available on TpT must be purchased before it can be accessed. That said, TpT is included in our discussion due to the speed at which its users respond to newly-identified curricular needs, making it vastly useful as a crowdsourcing tool.)

**A Few Others**
While the above resources make up the bulk of social media in our field, it’s also worth briefly mentioning Twitter, YouTube, Periscope, DonorsChoose, ASHAsphere, and LinkedIn.

**But how is social media relevant professionally? Isn’t it just for wasting time online?**
In a word: NO! There are multiple work-related reasons social media is worth your attention, including:

**Research**
Social media savvy can substantially boost your access to current research – no more waiting for the hard copies of every journal in your field! Not only are your colleagues sharing new research and new ideas across social media platforms, associations and business are increasingly doing so as well: for example, in 2014, ASHA launched “Research Tuesday,” featuring a recently-published journal article on some of their social media pages weekly.

**Learning**
In addition to increasing your access to research, you can expand your knowledge base through social media like never possible before. Advice about new or difficult cases, questions about standardized testing, guidance on available resources, and therapy ideas are all things that someone “out there” is happy to help you with.

**Staying Current**
One of the big challenges of a broad field like ours is related to both research and learning: keeping up with policy changes from local to global. For example, as the Common Core State Standards were adopted in schools across the country, many SLPs needed to make adjustments to the ways they approached therapy – and going back to school to learn how to implement therapy with Common Core in mind was rarely the most practical option! Social media can help you gain ready access to resources, experts, and updated materials, allowing you to stay abreast of new policies while continuing to provide the best therapy possible to your students.

**Access to Materials**
Even when policies aren’t changing, there are only so many books, DVDs, and printouts your file cabinets can hold. Browse other professionals’ libraries by getting to know websites and blogs dedicated to providing cost-effective (or FREE!) materials and resources to SLPs.

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3 Ibid

Networking

As with traditional networking, there are many benefits to expanding your support system, both professionally and personally. With social media you are now able to go beyond face-to-face networking and reach a whole new world of people outside your geographic area.

Staying Connected

Retired? On sabbatical? Taking a health-related leave? Through social media, you have the ability to stay connected with the SLP world even while “away.”

Navigating Events

Any SLP who has attended a national conference knows how overwhelming it can be. You can use tools available through social media – like hashtags, which we’ll discuss in more detail below – to help you navigate these events and connect with other attendees.

Marketing

Whether you are trying to build a business, look for job opportunities, fill positions, or find research subjects, social media can be one of the best forms of spreading the word... and in many cases is completely free!

crowdsourcing: noun

the practice of obtaining needed services, ideas, or content by soliciting contributions from a large group of people and especially from the online community rather than from traditional employers or suppliers. 5

For our purposes, social media closely relates to crowdsourcing.

What is crowdsourcing? Well, in short, crowdsourcing is reaching out to a large group of people to get help. As it relates to us as SLPs and its utility to our work, crowdsourcing would be utilizing the large online community of SLPs (and related professions) nation and world-wide to locate ideas, tips, materials, help with difficult cases... the list goes on.

We’ll look at several different methods of crowdsourcing using social media, and consider the areas in which each may be most useful.

We’ll primarily be considering the functional utility of gaining access to resources and ideas through social media outlets, but bear in mind that social media can also be an ongoing source of support: it has been shown to be a valuable resource for those who may not have access to a more traditional face-to-face professional network. 6

HINT: While a detailed discussion of the possibilities is beyond the scope of this course, research increasingly suggests that social media, in addition to benefiting us as SLPs, is also something to keep in mind as a resource for those with whom we work. To take a single example, social media might serve as a valuable tool in increasing communication opportunities, support networks, and quality of life for those with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) who use augmentative and alternative communication (AAC) devices. 7

II. Facebook

The content below assumes a basic level of familiarity and proficiency with Facebook.

Should you require additional assistance, many online resources exist; one is listed on the Resources page at the end of the course.

Facebook was originally created in 2004 as a social network for students at Harvard. It quickly expanded to other universities, then in 2006 was eventually available to the general population worldwide. 8

Free to access, Facebook is one of the more widely-used social media sites, with over 1.28 billion monthly active users. 9 This reach is one of the reasons Facebook is an extremely effective crowdsourcing tool; in addition, it offers multiple ways of reaching the people, and finding the answers, you need, from personal pages, to groups, to business pages.

HINT: In Facebook’s specific terminology, individual users have “profiles” and businesses have “pages.” However, in common parlance, “page” is often used to refer to both individuals and businesses. To address this issue, we’ll refer to the “personal page” for individuals vs. the “business page” for businesses in the text below. 10

Personal Pages

The most basic way of crowdsourcing through Facebook is simply by using your personal page to ask your friends for help – just as you would in real life, but with a vastly improved reach.

6 McNiece, Caleb. “One Is the Loneliest Number, So Go OnlineThe Only Educational Audiologist in a Four-county School System Relies on a Combination of Social Media—Twitter, Listservs and Discussion Forums—to Network with Colleagues.” The ASHA Leader 21.1 (January 1, 2016): online only-online only. Print. http://dx.doi.org/10.1044/leader.GS.21012016.mp
7 Caron, Jessica, and Janice Light. ““My World Has Expanded Even Though I’m Stuck at Home”: Experiences of Individuals with Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Who Use Augmentative and Alternative Communication and
A personal page is the way most individual people represent themselves on Facebook. It consists of two main elements, represented by two tabs at the very top of your screen.

[Your Name]: If you click on your own name, you will be taken to your profile. It contains, at a minimum, your name and a photo; after that, you dictate the presence/absence of most other information.

Home: If you click on Home, you'll access the two main interactive features of the Facebook interface.

The first is your newsfeed, which is where you can see what others on Facebook are posting, from individuals (your friends) to organizations (which are discussed in more detail in Groups and Business Pages below).

The second is a menu, visible along the left side of the screen. By changing your menu settings, you can adjust the content that appears in your newsfeed.

You can post from either tab, as often as you'd like; your posts (also known as status updates) will then appear on your profile, as well as in others’ newsfeeds (you can adjust your privacy settings to dictate who can see each individual post). Posts typically include text you’ve composed, photos you’ve taken, and/or things you’ve seen elsewhere on the internet that you want to share.

Your friends are the specific people you’re connected to on Facebook. There are several ways to add to your friends, from name searches to viewing comments on other users’ posts; Facebook even makes it easy by suggesting people you may know based on friends you have already added.

The most straightforward way of crowdsourcing, then, would be simply to write a post asking your question: “Hey, all my SLP friends out there! Does anyone know where I can find Velcro for my interactive books for the best price?”

This user, for example, was looking for a contact at a particular clinic and reached out to friends for help.

As you can see, this user’s attempt at crowdsourcing was quite effective: a variety of friends responded with their various connections to the clinic in question.

When using personal pages for crowdsourcing, it’s important to keep in mind that you’re not only limited in your reach by the number of friends you have – you may also be limited by who your friends are. For example, if you’re considering a move to Alaska and want to get some locals’ opinions on your transfer options, but all your Facebook friends live near you in Pennsylvania, the likelihood of finding someone to help you with your Alaska-related questions answered is lower than if you’d spread your friend net wide. (While posts do have the potential to reach outside your immediate group, ultimately, the more – and the more varied – friends you have, the more likely you are to get responses to your questions.)

HINT: While privacy settings give you some control over who has direct access to your posts and/or information, please be aware that the privacy of anything posted online cannot be guaranteed. For example, even if you’ve limited the audience for a post to a specific group of friends, any one of those people could take a photo of it and repost… or even simply spread the word verbally.

It is therefore extremely important to be aware of the potential for violating not only your privacy, but that of your patients. This topic will be expanded upon in Considerations and Precautions beginning on page 20.)

Groups

For situations in which your Facebook friends may not be able to help, another great option for professional crowdsourcing is through groups.

Facebook groups are typically geared toward a specific interest or population, providing a forum for people to ask/answer questions, share knowledge, and connect with one another – even if they are not personally connected on Facebook. In other words, by connecting with other users through groups, you can significantly expand your network in a focused way, without having to “know” thousands of new people and add them as friends.

Groups can be public, private, or secret, and larger groups typically have one or more moderators that establish rules for the group and approve (or deny) requests to be added to the group. 11

So what groups should you join?

As mentioned before, our scope as SLPs is very broad; additionally, groups are constantly changing – opening, closing, operating under new names or altered security settings. These factors make it impossible to provide a comprehensive list of all the groups that may be valuable to an SLP. Fortunately, it’s very easy to find them!

**SEARCHES**

You can search for groups right on your personal page – click on the Home tab and simply start typing in the search box on the top left of the screen. This will bring up a combination of groups, pages, and topics – then just look for ones where “group” is indicated.

Search terms that may be helpful in finding groups that fit your interests include:

- SLP
- SLPs in ____ (schools, private practice, SNFs, Early Intervention, etc.)
- Speech Language Pathology
- Specific Disorders (Down Syndrome, 22q deletion, Fragile X, Autism, etc.)
- Specific Topics (IEPs, dysphagia, stuttering, etc.)

…but the list is limited only by your imagination. This user, for example, began a search by typing “22q.”

Now, keep in mind that each user’s search may deliver different groups – Facebook often filters your search results based on what it perceives to be your interests. Also, be aware that many of the groups you will find will be private, or closed, which means that your search will show you the group name and description, but you will not be able to join the group or see posts without having a request approved by the moderator. Always read the description of each private group fully to ensure that it is appropriate for you to request to be a member of the group.

Once you have found a group you would like to join, you can click “Join Group.” If the group is public, you will automatically be a member of the group – it’s that easy! If the group is private, as mentioned above, your request will be sent to a moderator and you will be notified when your request is approved.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Another way to find groups that may be of interest to you is by looking at the recommendations Facebook has for you.

From the Home tab of your personal page, look for GROUPS on the left column of your screen. Click on New Groups and you will be taken to the Groups page.

On this page, you are provided with four tabs:

1. **Suggested Groups**: This tab will recommend groups based a combination of pages you’ve liked, groups your friends are members of, groups that are similar to those you’re already a member of, and groups that are near you geographically.
2. **Friends’ Groups**: If some of your friends already belong to the same groups, these will show up on this tab.
3. **Local Groups**: This tab displays groups that are in your neighborhood or nearby.
4. **Your Groups**: This tab will show you all the groups you are already a member of. It is a great place to manage your settings for each group and/or leave a group if it no longer interests you.

**SECRET GROUPS**

All groups function in the same way once you are a member – but, as discussed above, the way you join a group varies depending on its security settings. Security settings can also impact your ability to find a group – while public and private groups are searchable, secret groups are not. In order to see them, you have to be invited to them.

The best way to find or belong to secret groups is
simply through word of mouth: often, discussions in a public or private group might prompt a member to invite you to a secret group based on shared interests.

For example, “Sarah” has started a Facebook group targeted toward SLPs who own their own private practices. She knows that insurance and billing concerns will be discussed, as well as some ethical issues, and it is important to her that all the members are certified SLPs working in the same setting as she is. As a result, she has set the group set to secret – no one is able to search for or see that this group exists except those members who she has already invited – so she is able to ensure that only people who fit the target are in the group.

Sarah is also part of a more general SLP page (set to private) where members work in many settings. She observes that Kimberley consistently asks questions related to private practice in this group, as well as contributes to discussion threads posted by others. She is able to see that Kimberley is a certified SLP and that she owns her own private practice. So, Sarah may choose to invite Kimberley to the secret group so that she has a place where her questions can be addressed by people with similar experience – and so that Kimberley’s experience can help support the others in the group.

You’ve found – and joined – groups that fit your interests and your needs. Now… how can they be used for crowdsourcing?

Well, consider a scenario where the large majority of your caseload has always been articulation and phonological disorders; however, your school has recently referred many students your way for concerns about their written language. Unfortunately, you don’t feel that any of your current assessments allow you to effectively assess the written language skills of these students. So, you have requested some money to purchase new tests in order to provide the best services for these students, and administration has approved enough money to purchase one assessment only. Of course, you want to be sure that the assessment you purchase is the most appropriate one, so you’ve done your research – but you wish you could get additional ideas and unbiased feedback from people that are in a role similar to yours.

But wait! You’ve recently joined a Facebook group geared toward SLPs working in the schools, so this is now a resource – a collection of 5,000+ SLPs all working in a similar setting to you. Some people who have used the test you’re considering, or a similar one, and will be more than happy to tell you what they loved or hated about it. Others may be able to provide you with links to research showing which assessments are considered most reliable.

Crowdsourcing within a group is actually pretty similar to posting questions on your own personal page, with a few additions.

First of all, before posting a question in a group you’ve joined, it’s best practice to review the group description and thoroughly read any group rules. Many professionally-related groups have over 10,000 members (which is why they’re such effective crowdsourcing tools!), so in order to keep the scope of the group focused (and keep out promotional or other unwanted posts), they have rules about what posts are permitted. In addition, the ASHA Code of Ethics should always be considered.

Then, prior to simply posting your query (as you might on a personal page), you should search within the group to see if a similar question has already been discussed. To do this, open the group, and type keywords in the search box on the right:

You can then scroll though the results to see if your question has already been answered.

If it hasn’t, you can ask a new question by writing a new post. This is sometimes also referred to as “starting a new thread.”

From the main page of the group, you will type your question in the main text box, and click Post, as below:

Unless you have changed your settings, Facebook will automatically notify you every time someone comments on your post. This means you will get real-time updates on the answers to your question.

Going back to our opening scenario, in a group of over 5,000 people, it will likely not take long for you to get some ideas about what assessment you want (or don’t want) to purchase.

**Business Pages**

In some ways an amalgam of the [Your Name] and Home tabs of your personal page, a business page – designed for the purposes of promotion – features posts from a specific business, and may also offer you opportunities to interact with that business.

From a crowdsourcing perspective, think of interacting
with each business page as expressing your interest in a particular product or service – after which new information pertaining to that interest is regularly delivered to you.

The process of connecting with business pages will feel quite familiar to the average Facebook user! Just as you did to find groups, you can search for specific businesses using the search bar.

In the example below, a user has searched to see if Super Duper Publications has a Facebook page, which of course, they do:

Likewise, just as you requested updates from individual people by becoming friends with them, you can request updates from business pages by choosing to like them. (This is also referred to as following a page.)

Having found a business’s page, you have a couple options to help you decide whether or not to like the business. On the left side of the screen, you can see how many other people (including how many of your friends) have already liked the page. You can also scroll through past posts on the page in order to determine if they interest you and are relevant to your needs. If everything looks good, you click the “Like” button, and voila – you’ll now receive posts from that business!

So which businesses should you like?

Well, just as with groups, there’s no way to provide a comprehensive list of every business that might interest every SLP. That said, here are some pointers!

Business pages range in their size and purpose and can include, among other things:

1. Large companies (Super Duper Inc., Pearson, etc.)
2. Organizations (ASHA, American Academy of Pediatrics, etc.)
3. Universities and schools (University of Pittsburgh, Chicago Public Schools, etc.)
4. Government Entities
5. Local businesses and restaurants
6. Specific high-profile people (President Obama, Jay Leno)
7. Pages with a specific focus (nutrition, parenthood, Speech-Language Pathology) that may or may not also have a commercial interest

For the crowdsourcing speech-language pathologist, there are multiple reasons that business pages can be beneficial.

Businesses often look to social media to raise their profile and advance their commercial interests, in ways that also reward their followers. They may promote new items and/or offer sales via their business pages – in fact, some sales are exclusive deals available only to those users already following a page. They may also encourage interaction with their page by providing free resources or ideas.

In this example, Smarty Symbols (a company which provides a library of educational clipart to subscribers) is offering their Facebook followers a link to a communication board, which they can then download for free:

By doing so, they are encouraging users to interact with their page and showcasing the use of their symbols... and their users are rewarded with a free resource.

Similarly, business pages will often highlight non-commercial information (research studies, news articles, etc.), which may be of interest to their followers.

In this post, the ASHA Facebook page is providing followers with a link to an article in The Atlantic about tinnitus.
Depending on your specific areas of focus – and even your geographical location! – business pages that provide more general information may also be of benefit. Are you working in the schools? School pages often post information about closings or delays on their Facebook pages before it’s accessible on the local news. Is your work dependant in part on government funding? The relevant agencies most likely have a Facebook presence.

Additionally, because it is in the best interest of business pages to keep followers engaged with their posts, most will post tips, ideas, and related material in addition to their more specialized posts. On a good Facebook business page you might find videos, links, inspirational quotes, and news articles – all in addition to the deals, sales, and updates that may be offered in direct relation to the company itself.

And finally, if you find that a particular business page is no longer relevant to your needs, you are able to unlike it at the literal click of a button.

III. Pinterest

The content below assumes a basic level of familiarity and proficiency with Pinterest.

Should you require additional assistance, many online resources exist; one is listed on the Resources page at the end of the course.

Pinterest is a website (and app) offering users the ability to create online “bulletin boards” of ideas in a visual format. It is the digital equivalent of cutting pictures out magazines and gluing them in albums as you dream about your wedding, new house, or articulation therapy ideas. You are essentially saving websites and ideas for later personal reference, and often to share with others.

In order to get started on Pinterest, you will need to create an account (as you go through the sign-up process, Pinterest will actually help you get started by asking you identify topics you are interested in).

Once you have signed up, you will be taken to your home feed. Here is where you can create boards, which are typically organized by topic. Then, as you spend time either on Pinterest itself, or elsewhere on the Internet, you’re able to pin webpages, ideas, photos, or almost anything else to a board to save for later reference. Each pin is represented by an image, and links back to its original source. (Your home feed will already contain some suggested pins, based on the topics you’ve indicated that you’re interested in.)

Your home feed will always show you:

1. The number of total boards and pins you have
2. How many people have liked your pins
3. How many people are following you
4. How many people you are following

(We’ll discuss following and liking in more detail below.)

If you have ever spent time browsing the internet for inspiration and found yourself thinking “What a fantastic, original idea! I’ll be sure to come back to it!” …but haven’t, then you can appreciate what a visual bulletin board might be able to do for you, simply in terms of helping you track sources of information.

Sure, you can always bookmark a website in your browser, but bookmarks are hidden under tabs, are labeled with text only, and are typically presented in a long list of other websites. In contrast, each pin on a Pinterest board is an image – a visual reminder – representing the information that interested you, and linking back to its original source.

So the format makes sense to you – great! But...crowdsourcing? Via bulletin board?

Absolutely. Many SLPs and teachers are already using Pinterest regularly, and often their interests and discoveries will be relevant to you. And because Pinterest offers the capability to search within its own site, it is often not necessary to leave Pinterest to find new pins. Instead, you can collect ideas en masse by repinning pins, without actually having to visit each
and every website from which they came. With over 40 million monthly active users, and 158 average pins per female user (80% of Pinterest’s users are female), there is no shortage of pins to give you ideas. 13

In the example below, a user is looking for general ideas for articulation therapy. In order to find an idea that interests her and save it for later, she is going to:

1. Enter “articulation therapy” in the search bar.

![Search Bar with “articulation therapy” entered]

2. Browse the results for any pins that interest her.

![Pinterest Results for “articulation therapy”]

Hover over an interesting pin and click “Pin it”

3. Choose (or create) the board onto which she would like to save this idea.

![Board Creation]

And voila! After going through all of these steps, this user has pinned this pin about Sound-Loaded Books for Articulation. When she is done browsing for new ideas, or has time for more focused research, she can simply click on the pin to be taken to its original source: a blog post which lists books loaded with articulation sounds, from /r/ to initial /p/.

Another way to curate a collection of interests is to “like” individual pins by clicking on the heart that appears when you hover over a pin. All the pins you have “liked” are accessible through your main page.

In addition to searching Pinterest for ideas one by one, you can also follow users and/or specific boards with whom you share interests.

You can either click the “Follow” button on the top right to follow all of a user’s boards, or under a specific board to follow just that one.

By following other users or others’ boards, you are able to see the things they pin in your home feed. In the same way that subscribing to a catalog of therapy materials or a magazine about autism means you will consistently receive things that interest you in the mail, following users and boards means you will consistently see ideas that interest you in your home feed.

Interestingly, in contrast to Facebook – where a user’s personal page is all about that person – Pinterest tends to offer more anonymity, even while crowdsourcing. As we’ve discussed, pins can be liked or repinned, and boards and users can be followed – but in general, users do not directly communicate, and very little personal information about each user is available.

IV. Instagram

The content below assumes a basic level of familiarity and proficiency with Instagram.

Should you require additional assistance, many online resources exist; one is listed on the Resources page at the end of the course.

Instagram is a social media platform on which users post photos or videos, rather than text-heavy status updates, on their accounts. Instagram is highly visual, like Pinterest, but does include interaction and communication between users, like Facebook.

As with all other social media platforms, in order to participate and see what content is offered, you must have an account. In order to create an account, you must have the app installed on your mobile device (Instagram is accessible through the computer as well, but currently you need the mobile app in order to sign up for an account).

HINT: While the technical details of downloading the app and installing it on your device are beyond the scope of this course, Instagram is available from both the Google Play store (for Android phones) and on iTunes (for iPhones and Apple devices).

Google Play
https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.instagram.android&referrer=utm_source%3Dinstagramweb%26utm_campaign%3DunifiedHome%26utm_medium%3Dbadge

iTunes
https://itunes.apple.com/app/instagram/id389801252?mt=8

Once you have downloaded the app and created an account, you will be able to see many of the 20+ billion photos that have been uploaded to Instagram to date. 14

Like other platforms, Instagram has a feed – a central place where content is presented to you based on things you have already chosen to follow or like (more on this process below). You can navigate there by clicking on the House icon at the bottom of the app.

Unlike Facebook or Pinterest, where you maximize your ability to crowdsource by updating your own personal profile or boards, Instagram offers users the ability to see what other people with similar interests are doing without having to actually post or share yourself. A user on Instagram can be almost completely an observer: while you do need to create an account, it is not necessary to continuously update it in order to make effective use of the site.

And whether or not you personally choose to post regularly, Instagram offers great crowdsourcing opportunities!

Through Instagram, users can see therapy in action – often more easily than through previously mentioned platforms. For example, users who are SLPs may post short videos demonstrating successful therapy techniques, or clips of therapy materials being used by students, in addition to photos of materials they were able to find on sale at local stores, therapy-related advice, inspirational quotes or sayings, etc.

And of course, like on other platforms, users that own a business may post on Instagram about release dates for new materials, upcoming promotions, etc.

You can sift through the billions of photos on Instagram in a few main ways:

NAVIGATING HASHTAGS

Hashtags, made popular by the social media platform Twitter, are simply words or phrases preceded by the “#” symbol. In Instagram, as well as many other social media platforms, the hashtags serve as tags or links, which are associated with the pictures they belong to.

In order for a hashtag to work, it must be immediately preceded with the pound sign (#), and contain no spaces or other punctuation. Of course, this can make

reading lengthy hashtags a test of your SLP expertise! While many hashtags are simple and obvious – a photo of a child singing the alphabet might be hashtagged (or tagged) #alphabet – many users also become more creative with their hashtags – a child crying might be hashtagged #isitbedtimeyet.

Hashtags can be associated with Instagram posts either in captions, added by the original user, or in the comments, added below the original post by other users.

Once a hashtag is attached to a photo or video, that post can now be found by other users – not only by knowing the original user as on other platforms, but also by searching for the hashtag.

Additionally, clicking on a hashtag takes you not to a source, as in other platforms, but rather to a database of all the posts on Instagram that have included that hashtag in the past.

Sound a little complicated? Let’s walk through a search using the hashtag #slplife:

To start, click the magnifying glass to search. In the textbox, type #slplife. (It is not necessary to click on “tags” to indicate that you are searching for a tag rather than a person, because the app automatically recognizes the # prefix.) You can now see both the top and most recent posts that have been tagged with #slplife.

In this example, you can see that this was a post by a user called @thepeachiespeechie, who was actually re-sharing a post by @pandaspeech. In addition to #slplife, the poster added the hashtag #slpstyle. All hashtags are clickable, and will link you to more posts with the same hashtags.

Additionally, you can also click on the users themselves (look for the @ symbols) in order to go to their profiles and see their other posts.

To take another example, an SLP searching for therapy ideas might begin by browsing posts tagged with #speechtherapy. From there, s/he comes across a user named @beautifulspeechlife, and clicks on her profile. The SLP can then scroll through @beautifulspeechlife’s photos and videos… and of course, many of these posts also have hashtags to explore!

Some commonly used SLP-related hashtags include:

#slpeeps
#slp
#slpsontpt (more about the “TpT” in a later section)
#slplife
#schoolslp
#slp2b
#slpbloggers
#speechtherapy
#speechpathology
#speechies
#instaslpl

…but that’s just a starting point; you’ll come across many others as you browse, and may create your own as well.
FOLLOWING USERS

If you click on the link for @thepeachiespeechie and find many of her photos and videos interesting or inspiring, you might choose to follow her.

Just as with Facebook and Pinterest, if you follow another Instagram user, you’ll see more of that user’s posts in your feed. Following users is a great way to curate the photos and videos you see, so that every time you log in and look at your feed you have a stream of ideas, updates, and inspirations that relate directly to you.

As mentioned above, you can find more users to follow by navigating via hashtags from idea to idea. Another great way to narrow your focus to users with interests similar to yours is to look at the posts you like, and see who else has liked and commented on them.

In the example below, Instagram user @nrallison has posted a photo about using candy hearts in therapy. By clicking on the comments below the picture, a viewer is able to see who else has liked and commented on the picture. By doing this, the viewer has now gained a new idea, and may choose to follow another user (@rockchalkspeechtalk) with similar interests.

MONITORING YOUR FEED

Once you have spent some time following user accounts, your feed will automatically present you with the content they have posted recently. Then you can just sit back and sift through all the new information!

V. Blogs

A blog, in today’s terms, is “…a frequently updated online personal journal or diary. It is a place to express yourself to the world. A place to share your thoughts and your passions. Really, it’s anything you want it to be. For our purposes we’ll say that a blog is your own website that you are going to update on an ongoing basis.”

The term “blog” comes from an adaptation of the phrase “web log” and was first used in 1999, but online diaries have been around since 1994. In 1999, there were approximately 2000 blogs hosted by what is now WordPress. By 2014, this number had increased to over 14.4 billion.

Like other social media platforms we’ve discussed, blogs are ways to connect with people that share the same interests as you. As mentioned, a blog can be almost anything, ranging from personal “diaries” to more professional websites focused on a particular topic – while the more personal type of blog may also be of interest to you, this section will focus on blogs that are likely to be useful to SLPs from a professional standpoint.

Unlike platforms where you may engage in back-and-forth communication with other users, blogs are more one-sided: the blogger writes and posts contest, and the readers, well, read it. While readers often can comment on specific posts, and bloggers have the option of answering those comments, there is significantly less expectation of reciprocity involved when reading a blog than on other platforms.

Thus, while the previously mentioned platforms are great ways to get ideas through quick updates,
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questions/answers, photos, short videos, etc., blogs typically provide significantly more in-depth information. Blog posts aren’t limited in terms of length (either word count or time), so the blogger can delve into as many different topics as they’d like, provide as much data for each as they’d like, and incorporate as many related photos or videos as they’d like – all in one post.

For example, an SLP looking for new ideas on how to target R might see a 15-second video clip of one idea on Instagram, find a photo of a tool they might use on Pinterest, and acquire a list of suggestions from other school SLPs on Facebook. On a blog, however, this SLP might find a post with a general list of ideas (http://www.thedabblingspeechie.com/2015/11/21/that-darn-r-10-tpt-speech-therapy-materials-to-treat-r/), or an article examining a specific technique (http://slpnataliesnyders.blogspot.com/2015/09/quick-tip-for-dreaded-r.html) – or both!

SLP-related blogs may focus on a specific topic: Speech Room Style, for example, focuses primarily on school-based SLPs’ therapy rooms (http://speechroomstyle.com), while Hear Say LW is geared toward parents and professionals working with those who are deaf or hard of hearing (http://www.hearsaylw.com).

Others, like ASHASphere (http://community.asha.org/orphans/ashasphereblog), cover a broader range of topics applicable to SLPs.

This blog post provides lists of top SLP-focused websites and blogs, and may serve as a good starting point if you are looking for some blogs that fit your niche: http://kidmunicate.com/best-speech-pathology-websites-and-blogs-2016

“Using” blogs is a lot more straightforward than other social media platforms. To find them, you can do a simple web search for the information you need, and related blogs will be included within the search results. Alternately, if you are looking for information on a particular topic, Pinterest is a great place to start – many of the pins you find will link you to an appropriate blog. Once you’ve found a blog that interests you, to check out its content, you simply need to go to the website; you can either return as often as you’d like to see what’s new – most blogs automatically feature most recent posts right at the top of the page. Additionally, posts are listed with a quick preview of the content so you can decide if something may be of interest to you.

On the main blog page of Beautiful Speech Life (beautifulspeechlife.com/blog) you can see her two most recent posts, as well as a preview of what you will find if you choose to “Read More…”

Once you have found a blog that consistently features content you enjoy, you might consider subscribing – usually this is as easy as providing your email address. Subscribers typically receive notifications each time there is a new post; some blogs also give incentives to subscribers like freebies or special announcements.

HINT: Of course, in order for a blog to continue to attract readers, it must provide good-quality, relevant, valuable content…but something to keep in mind when perusing them is that many of them are, at the end of the day, a business. As such, they may receive money for allowing ads to be placed on the pages or for advertising products within posts (called “affiliate links”) – as you visit blogs, you’ll certainly notice more ads on some than others.

Therefore, it is always important to consider the source of a blog post as you read it. For example, a blog post on ways to use a specific product in therapy, written by the company that sells the product, may have a different level of impartiality than one written by a school-based SLP who has no incentive to “sell” the product. This doesn’t necessarily mean the first blog post is useless – simply that it is wise to read with caution.

VI. Teachers Pay Teachers

One of the most direct ways to crowd source for both materials and ideas online is a relatively new website called Teachers Pay Teachers (TpT). Founded in 2006, TpT currently boasts over 3.6 million active users and over 1.8 million resources. 17

It is an online marketplace where teachers (and SLPs!) can buy and sell their own original resources.

While likely not considered social media in its strictest sense, Teachers Pay Teachers is an extremely valuable crowdsourcing resource nonetheless.

Imagine that all over the country, high school teachers are creating materials targeting SAT vocabulary for their students – from flashcards, to quizzes, to

17 (www.teacherspayteachers.com)
worksheets. A teacher in Detroit, Michigan might be typing out a quiz with vocabulary for her students, while another teacher just on the other side of town is doing the same thing. Using TpT, either of these teachers could post their original teaching materials online in an electronic format, and any other teacher in the world could pay a couple of dollars to get a copy, rather than spending valuable time creating the same thing themselves.

Of course, this applies to SLPs not working in the schools as well – any SLP thinking of creating their own materials can log onto TpT and see if something similar has already been made. If so, in a matter of minutes they could have it on their own computer, ready to print out for use with their own students.

While you can browse TpT anonymously, in order to download anything (including the many freebies that are offered) you will need to become a member.

The “Standard” membership, which allows users to download free resources, buy products, and rate and comment on products, is completely free; other membership levels also exist.

So now you’re a member – how do you find the things you’re looking for?

With over 35,000 products listed in the Speech Therapy category alone, TpT can be an overwhelming resource. There are two main ways to navigate through the speech therapy-related resources available: using the search bar and browsing using the filters. (In addition, once you’ve gotten your feet wet and made a few purchases, you can further simplify your TpT browsing by choosing to follow the sellers you’ve come to trust. This tactic is further addressed on page 17.)

**SEARCH BAR**

Similarly to other websites (like amazon.com, for example), TpT has a search bar at the top of the page in which you can type key words or titles that you might be looking for. This is an excellent way to find specific items you already know exist, or products meeting a specific need.

For example, an SLP who has recently started seeing a child targeting the /ŋ/ sound might not already have the relevant materials on hand. After typing “final ng flashcards” in the search box on TpT, this particular SLP would be happy to see that there are 21 different results for this search! Now it’s simply a matter of scrolling through the choices to learn more about each.

Like searches on other websites, you are able to sort the results in a variety of ways including relevance, best seller, rating, and price.

**HINT:** As you are searching, since there is some degree of variation within speech language pathology in terminology, it is wise to keep an open mind and maybe try a few different options when searching. For example, a seller may name a product targeting R in the beginning of words with the keywords “prevocalic R,” they might also call it “initial R.” So if you are having trouble finding what you’re looking for, take a minute to brainstorm some alternate searches.

**BROWSING/FILTERS**

Another way to find the resources you need is to browse through the products – but with well over a million products offered, narrowing the field using filters is extremely useful.

Filters can (and often should) be used in combination with the search bar at the top. Simply searching for “vocalic R,” for example, returns over 900 results; filters will be necessary to help you find exactly what you’re looking for.

Filters are located in the column on the left side of the main screen.
As you can see, TpT allows users to filter by grade and price, and also offers some “featured” categories, which are typically popular or trending categories and may include some seasonal offerings. While all of these are helpful to further narrow down results, keep in mind that TpT is largely geared toward teachers in general – further filtering is necessary to reach the speech therapy resources.

To find the Speech Therapy category, you must first find “Specialty” under “SUBJECT.” Speech Therapy (as well as Special Education, Early Intervention, and Oral Communication, for example) are listed as subcategories of Specialty.

In addition to Subject, it may be useful to filter by Resource Type. To see the many different resource types that TpT has to offer, you must first hover over the “See All Resource Types” link at the bottom of the “TOP RESOURCE TYPES” header: an entire array of options, from DVDs to posters to transparencies, will appear. What resource types you include in your filter will depend on what, specifically, you are looking for – again, many will apply to teachers in general, as well as SLPs.

Once you have entered in your search and/or used the filters to narrow down the list of products, you will likely still have a long display of items from which to choose. The next question is: “How do I know which item to buy?”

Like many purchases you make online (or in person), your decision will be based on relevance, quality, and/or price.

**RELEVANCE**

If you have used both the search box and the filters already, and have your results sorted by relevance, the products listed first should, in theory, be the closest to what you are looking for.

Looking at products’ titles and cover details, and scanning the previews of the product descriptions, should give you a preliminary idea of whether a specific product might be what you need. If you want more information on a specific product, you can click on either cover or title to go to the product page, which lists the subjects and grade levels the product targets, a page count, and a full description. This page will also tell you are what type of file the product is: TpT supports a variety of different file types, among them PDFs, Microsoft Powerpoint, and Zip files.

*Hint: You should make sure that you have the appropriate software for, and know how to work with, the relevant file before you purchase a product. Zip files, in particular, catch purchasers unaware.*


**QUALITY**

There are multiple ways TpT allows a seller to show you the quality of a product. By utilizing all the tools available, sellers are able to give you the most complete information about what they are selling, helping you make an informed decision about where to spend your money.

TpT allows sellers to load up to 4 small photos (called *thumbnails*) to each product page (including the cover). These thumbnails can range from the product’s cover, collage-style pictures showing a variety of pages, or photos of the product in action. The first way to evaluate the quality of an item, then, is to browse the thumbnails.

Sellers are also able to load a *preview* of their product. This is a larger picture than the thumbnails, and clicking on it will allow a more in-depth look at a product. Like the thumbnails, a product preview can be used to feature the product in different ways, ranging from additional written information to examples of pages. This feature can be especially useful when evaluating larger or more complicated products.

As you’re evaluating a single product, you may also wish to assess that seller’s entire range of products. Conveniently, every seller on TpT is required to feature a *freebie* (and many sellers offer more than one) to demonstrate the quality of their work. To find a seller’s
featured freebie, go to their main store page by clicking on their name wherever you see it. On the top right of that page, you will find a link to their featured freebie. Downloading this product may give you some insight into whether you’d like to purchase more of the seller’s items.

Finally, as on many other sites, TpT allows buyers to leave feedback on both sellers and individual products – in fact, it actually provides an incentive to do so (see “Leaving Feedback” below). Users can see each seller’s rating out of 4.0, along with the number of users who have rated them, right under their logo on their main store page; additional feedback is available on the “Ratings & Comments” tab. Overall rating out of 4.0 and number of ratings is also listed on each specific product pages; comments left by buyers are available at the bottom of each page.

**PRICE**

The final way of determining which product you purchase can also include an evaluation of price – beginning with the price of the product itself, and factoring in anything you will have to do to it to get it ready to use.

Remember, these products are electronic files that you will download to your computer (while TpT sellers do actually have the capability to sell physical items, the overwhelming majority are digital downloads). As such, while some can be loaded to an iPad and are good to go, others may need to be printed, cut, laminated, and/or assembled, all of which takes time and money.

**HINT:** Many products include printer-friendly black and white versions of high-color pages for those SLPs who may not have easy access to color printing.

You will also want to consider how many uses you will get out of a product. Can it be used for a wide range of ages? Can it only be used one week a year, due to a seasonal theme? Can you adapt it for use with many different speech and language goals? Etc.

So you’ve made some purchases, and you’re getting the hang of this site. Great! Now let’s talk about ways to maximize your TpT experience.

**FOLLOWING SELLERS**

One way you can help simplify your TpT browsing is by following trusted sellers. Perhaps you’ve bought a few products from one seller, found them to work well for your needs, and want to see more. Perhaps you’ve been searching within a certain niche – for example, you work primarily with preschoolers – and are seeing the same sellers’ names pop up over and over again in your results. Save yourself some time and energy – follow these sellers!

Under the store name at the top of a store page, click on “Follow Me” – now you’ll get alerts when this seller posts new products, and you’ll receive messages in your TpT inbox with important announcements from them. It is a great way to keep track of sellers and products you already know you can trust, without having to search and filter through millions of other products to get to them.

**HINT:** In addition to following a store on TpT, don’t forget about all the other social media platforms we’ve looked at in this course. Many TpT sellers have active accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest. Take a look through their TpT profile, do a quick search on any of these platforms, or scan the credits pages on the products you’ve purchased from them to find and/or follow them on their social media accounts too.

**LEAVING FEEDBACK**

As mentioned above, one way to evaluate the merit of a product is to look at the feedback left by previous buyers. Now that you’re buying products, you too can leave feedback – and TpT provides a small incentive to do so. Every time you review a product, TpT will give you credits, based on the dollar amount of purchase, to use toward future purchases on TpT. Incentives aside, though, every time you rate a product or review a seller, you’re making TpT a better crowdsourcing tool for all its users.

**STICKING TO THE TERMS OF USE**

Electronic files are, by nature, easy to share. This is part of what makes TpT so successful – the fact that any SLP, anywhere, can share their material with others. However, as a buyer, it is important to adhere to the Terms of Use provided by the sellers when you purchase their products.

Most purchases will include a Terms of Use page or document in the download, and while the wording may change, almost all will explain that a single
purchase from TpT gives you the right to use the product for your own personal use only. You are not able to share the file or product with others, but instead should direct interested friends or colleagues back to the site so that they can also purchase a copy if need be.

Make sure to take the time to read each seller’s Terms of Use so you understand what is permitted and what isn’t.

**VII. Getting Specific: Crowdsourcing at Work for You**

As we’ve discussed, two of the major benefits of crowdsourcing are the immediate availability of information and resources, as well as the ability to share ideas and knowledge with others.

**Let’s look at a concrete example, using the Common Core State Standards (CCSS).**

With the adoption of the CCSS in most states, teachers and SLPs have had to adapt the way they teach and do therapy to align with them – and while common core materials and ideas may be readily available to those teaching the standard curriculums in a regular education environment, for those teaching special education and providing specially designed instruction, things may not be as straightforward.

A question that arose for many SLPs with the implementation of CCSS is: “How can we provide specially designed instruction and implement individualized education plans (IEPs) while still aligning with CCSS, which are, by definition, standardized?” That is, how can we use a common set of standards, yet continue to provide non-standard education to those who need it?

One way we can approach this issue from the standpoint of an SLP providing individualized intervention is by looking at a specific common core standard as a long-term goal. As with any goal we design for our students, or ourselves, we then use short-term goals targeting prerequisite skills in order to work our way toward the long-term goal.

Let’s take, for example, one of the English Language Arts CCSS for second grade:

**LANGUAGE**

L.2.1b  Form and use frequently occurring irregular plural nouns (e.g., feet, children, teeth, mice, fish.

This CCSS does not look all that different from a goal that may be written for a child with an IEP targeting a weakness in morphology:

When presented with a structured prompt (asked to describe a picture scene, retell a story, etc.), Bill will correctly use irregular plural nouns in 9/10 opportunities.

So, in order to target this CCSS-aligned goal, an SLP is likely to develop one or more short-term goals. For example:

When presented with a picture of two or more items, Bill will correctly label the items using irregular plurals with 80% accuracy.

This short-term goal can be considered a building block toward the long-term goal, which is aligned to the state standard.

By breaking down the Common Core State Standards in a way that we would break down long term goals, we are able to provide specially designed instruction in those areas identified as needing intervention, while still adhering to the standards themselves.

While this may not be as applicable for some of our students with the greatest needs, for those students who are receiving speech and language therapy but are still educated within the regular education environment for the rest of the day, we are absolutely able to provide them with the adaptive education they need without disregarding the standards that have been outlined. Our job as speech language pathologists in the schools is not necessarily to teach our students different skills from their peers, but rather to teach them the same skills as their peers, differently. We are able to use our expertise in order to break down the standards into the prerequisite skills and use these to help our students eventually reach the benchmark.

Recognizing the relationship between our IEP goals and the Common Core State Standards is important in seeing how we can optimize the social media and crowdsourcing platforms available to us.

First and foremost, we can hopefully recognize that there is a lot in common between what regular education teachers may be targeting in their classrooms and what we, as SLPs, are working on in our sessions. (Yes, the way in which the materials are used by an SLP with a single child may look different from the way they’d be used in a regular education class of 25 – but that is exactly where our expertise as SLPs comes in.) This opens up a lot of options and possibilities about where we might look for resources and ideas.

With that in mind – let’s crowdsource for materials that target your goals and align with CCSS!

**TEACHERS PAY TEACHERS**

If you know the specific target CCSS for which you might be looking for resources, you can simply use the search box on Teachers Pay Teachers to find resources targeting this standard.

Here is an example of one of the results found when “L2.1b” is typed in to the search field.
Sellers on TpT also have the option of “tagging” products with associated CCSS, and this particular seller has chosen to take advantage of this option. You can see the CCSS corresponding to this product listed at the bottom of the listing. By clicking on the standard itself, you can find other items tagged with the same standard.

Additionally, Teachers Pay Teachers currently has a new search feature currently in Beta (meaning it is still being tested), which may appear when you click on a Common Core Standard link.

You may be able to use this search feature to help you filter the products you are looking for.

While more and more teachers and SLPs are intentionally aligning their products and the way they are listed to the Common Core State Standards, there are still many products available that will not come up through searches of the CCSS standard code itself, but can be found by searching for (taking the above example) “irregular verbs.” It may be best to search in both ways in order to find the listings that best suit your needs.

In terms of filters, as we’ve discussed, you can go directly to “Speech Therapy” category to narrow the field of options; in a search of this type, however – depending on the level at which a student is working toward their long term/CCSS-aligned goal, there may also be some utility in removing that filter and considering CCSS resources designed by regular education teachers. If you do so, it is important that you read the product descriptions and listings carefully to be sure they have the built-in adaptations you might need as an SLP.

And, as mentioned previously, many TpT sellers have coordinating accounts across many of the social media platforms – once you have identified a few that you really like, you can also track them elsewhere online.

BLOGS

We touched briefly on how to use blogs, and the type of information that may be available on them (almost anything!). As such, they can serve a concrete purpose for us as SLPs when it comes to more defined topics, such as implementation of the CCSS. While pictures and video clips may provide us with inspiration, there are deeper issues surrounding our roles as SLPs that are worthy of sharing. With the format of blogging allowing for more in-depth explanation and discussion, bloggers have been able to address issues such as the CCSS, data-collection and progress monitoring, teacher evaluations, and our scope of practice in their blog posts. Chances are, if there is an issue you are inclined to discuss with an SLP friend or coworker, others have already begun the conversation on a blog, somewhere. All you need to do is find it and you may find support and resources for your position, or see another point of view. Either way, you will be sure to learn something.

OTHER SOCIAL MEDIA

In the section on Facebook, you learned how to use groups to get new ideas and ask questions: any group targeted toward school-based SLPs is likely to include members with CCSS-related questions and goals similar to yours. (This is especially true if you are able to find a group specific to your state.)

Being widely used by teachers, Pinterest includes many resources that are aligned to the CCSS – a simple search for “common core” will show you exactly how many! While a search term that general will likely not lead you directly to the results you want, you can always combine searches (i.e., “irregular plurals common core”) to help narrow the field. And again, as with Teachers Pay Teachers, not all pins are intentionally aligned to the common core, but they still may target the exact skill you need – there may be benefit to searching for the skill alone (i.e., “irregular plurals”) rather than including “common core” in every search.

It is more difficult to search for specific items on Instagram – the best way to get tips and ideas is by establishing a quality network. By following other SLPs who are incorporating the CCSS into their goals and sessions, you will be able to see their posts in your feed, and can focus on those that may apply to your needs. (While it is possible to search for specific ideas using hashtags, the process is complicated by the fact that many hashtags have multiple meanings: for example, #CCSS pulls up many photos, most of which are quite clearly not education-related!)

HINT: A resource that was mentioned briefly in the introduction, but which may lend itself well to ideas relating to implementation of the CCSS in therapy, is Periscope. This is a live video-based social media platform where users can stream live videos of themselves talking about specific (or not-so-specific) topics. Videos tend to be
brief, they usually provide a clear benefit for the viewers tuning in, and they even allow for viewers to ask questions!

Many of the SLPs that use Periscope to share videos include SLP tips and tricks (like working with CCSS) in their topics. Since it is not possible to search for a particular topic and pull up videos from an archive, the best way to use Periscope to gain ideas is similar to using Instagram – create a network by following accounts that coincide with your interests.

Now let’s consider an example that’s more micro.

“Jennifer” is the sole SLP working in a K-5 school. Each year she struggles to create a schedule where students are not missing specific classes. Often, when she goes to get students from their rooms, there is a scheduling conflict. Additionally, she finds it difficult to complete screenings and testing as they are requested throughout the year without missing sessions with her regularly scheduled groups. Many IEP meetings must be scheduled before or after school, or during lunch breaks in order to avoid missing sessions with other students.

Desperate for some ideas and suggestions as to how others in the same position handle this, Jennifer turns to crowdsourcing.

First, she logs onto various social media sites for inspiration: for example, she might search for “SLP Scheduling” on Pinterest and browse the blog posts of SLPs she knows work in similar settings. As she sifts through her results, two ideas consistently appear: “3:1 Service Delivery Model” and “5-Minute Articulation.”

Unfamiliar with these terms or concepts, she reaches out to her peers via several of the Facebook groups she’s joined, asking if anyone uses either with success – and, being the EBP-focused clinician that she is, she also asks for resources supporting or discrediting either approach.

Soon, through crowdsourcing and the resulting opportunities for self-directed research, Jennifer is able to construct a plan for the upcoming school year that she is optimistic will improve her workload management, as well as benefit the teachers, students, and families with whom she works.

VIII. Considerations and Precautions

Personal Privacy

Even assuming that you have carefully controlled which users have access to your information, posts, pins, photos, etc., you do not have much control over what they do with the information they see. While you can usually limit other users’ ability to share your content throughout a specific platform, it’s important to remember that computers, tablets, and smartphones can take screenshots – a “photo” of exactly what is on the screen – and you have no control over what happens to that screenshot. Also, understand that most devices keep histories of the activity that take place on them. Even if you swiftly remove a piece of information that you may have posted inadvertently, the content of that post has the potential to stick around.

Be cognizant that anything you post has the potential to be seen by anyone, anywhere… and even potentially long after you think it is gone.

Some precautions you can take include:

- Limit your audience to only those you trust.
- Post only content you are comfortable with anyone seeing, even many years from now.
- Periodically update your settings, friends/followers, and profile.

Others’ Privacy

When you ask for assistance and input via social media, you MUST take care to frame your questions in such a way that the subject of the inquiry cannot be identified.

It is not simply enough to omit names from your post; especially in unique cases, there may be other factors that make it possible to identify the subject of an inquiry, including diagnosis, age, or a specific behavior or characteristic. Additionally, depending on your security settings, it may be possible for someone to see your geographic location, consider the information you posted, and make an educated guess who your question is about.

Likewise, as your crowdsourcing experience increases, you may wish to become a source of information as
well as a recipient: from answering others’ questions in a Facebook group to posting Instagram photos showing a recent TpT purchase being used in therapy. Again, it is crucial to consider what, exactly, is being featured in your posts and/or photos, and how this risks the privacy of others.

Many business and schools are setting policies that take into account the growing interest in social media – reviewing those policies is an excellent place to start.

HINT: Schools, in particular, may have multi-tiered guidelines: for example, there are many valid accounts on social media that are actually student-run (with a teacher moderator), and feature photos of children in classrooms. The existence of these accounts doesn’t mean that yours will automatically be granted the same privileges. It is best to specifically discuss how to handle posts made in relation to your school, classroom, or therapy sessions with the relevant school or district.

More general guidelines include:

- Do not post the name of a school or district. If there are only a few (or the only) schools in a city or town, don’t post the city or town name either.
- Avoid pictures/videos where a school could be identified. Consider things in the background (posters, signs, etc.,) that could potentially identify your location.
- Avoid pictures with students unless you have specific permission, like a signed release, to use them.
  - Many people post photos that show only children’s hands, assuming there are no identifying marks. Again, be aware of any social media policies that may apply; if you are not sure, err on the side of caution and leave students out completely.
  - Always remember that as SLPs, working with students in special education, the issue of identifying a child can be an especially sensitive one.

OWNERSHIP and RIGHTS

Another important precaution to consider is the ownership of products and purchases: are resources identified via crowdsourcing owned by the school or organization for which the SLP works, or are they owned by the SLP? This issue is not black and white – there are a multitude of factors that must be taken into account.

The place to begin, of course, is your organization’s formal policies; however, given that online crowdsourcing as it relates to our field is relatively new and swiftly-changing, it is highly possible that existing contracts do not include specific policies on the attainment, production, or use of the resources identified thereby. If you are purchasing and/or downloading resources, it would be wise to consider the following factors in order to determine if you, as an SLP, would have the right to retain them should you separate from your current organization:

- Were the materials obtained during work hours, using work resources? (In other words, were you being paid to identify and acquire them? Did you use an organization-owned computer or software during the search process?)
- Did the materials require assembly, and were the resources used in assembly owned by the organization? (This could include resources such as a computer and internet, software, printer/ink, paper, laminator, etc.)
- If a fee was involved in obtaining the materials, who paid it – you, or your organization?

EVIDENCE-BASED PRACTICE

One of the great things about social media is its accessibility – however, this also means that it has significant capability to spread misinformation. Likewise, crowdsourcing has the potential to be a huge resource for you – but not every response you receive or resource you find is a legitimate one.

Just because a product on TpT claims it is aligned with a CCSS, does not necessarily mean it is. Just because a seller on TpT has created a product targeting vocabulary, does not mean it is an effective intervention technique. Just because another member (or multiple members) in a Facebook group answers your questions does not mean they are correct. Just because the owner of an account you’re following on Instagram claims to be an expert in his or her field does not make that claim true.

It is your job and duty as a certified Speech Language Pathologist to weigh the information you acquire via crowdsourcing against the standards of evidence-based practice. Do your due diligence: filter through the resources, answers, and ideas available, look for backup, check references, read reviews, and otherwise use your professional expertise to determine what is and isn’t valid.
Conclusion

The many facets of our roles as SLPs can be difficult to navigate alone. From a broad scope of practice, to functioning as a sole SLP in an area, to accommodating changes in the educational and medical landscapes, we are forced to adapt and learn as we go – sometimes at a challenging pace!

While traditional resources such as textbooks and conferences continue to be relevant, we also now have a massive amount of information immediately available to us via more modern channels. Through the use of social media and other crowdsourcing sites like Teachers Pay Teachers, we can end the day with significantly more information, education, and even physical materials than we had when we started.

By combining these new resources with the old, and implementing our clinical expertise and judgment, we are able to become our best SLP-selves yet!

Resources

ASHAsphere
http://community.asha.org/orphans/ashasphereblog

DonorsChoose
http://www.donorschoose.org/

Facebook

Instagram
http://www.wikihow.com/Use-Instagram

LinkedIn
http://www.wikihow.com/Use-LinkedIn

Periscope
http://www.wikihow.com/Use-Periscope

Pinterest
http://www.wikihow.com/Use-Pinterest.

Twitter
http://www.wikihow.com/Use-Twitter

YouTube
http://www.wikihow.com/Category:YouTube
1. A ________ is the name given to the different methods, or sites, through which you can gain access to social media.
   a. Platform
   b. Template
   c. Community
   d. Gathering

2. “Social media can help you gain ready access to resources, experts, and updated materials, allowing you to stay abreast of new policies while continuing to provide the best therapy possible to your students,” is an example of using social media professionally in the service of ________.
   a. Staying Connected
   b. Marketing
   c. Networking
   d. Staying Current

3. “Not only are your colleagues sharing new research and new ideas across social media platforms, associations and business are increasingly doing so as well,” is an example of using social media professionally in the service of ________.
   a. Research
   b. Staying Connected
   c. Navigating Events
   d. Networking

4. As it relates to us as SLPs and its utility to our work, ________ would be utilizing the large online community of SLPs (and related professions) nation and world-wide to locate ideas, tips, materials, help with difficult cases... the list goes on.
   a. Marketing
   b. Crowdsourcing
   c. Networking
   d. Registering

5. The crowdsourcing reach of a Facebook personal page may be boosted by ________.
   a. Having many, varied friends
   b. Having a small, select group of friends
   c. Having many friends who work near you
   d. None of the above

6. Facebook ________ are typically geared toward a specific interest or population, providing a forum for people to ask/answer questions, share knowledge, and connect with one another.
   a. Personal pages
   b. Messages
   c. Groups
   d. Business pages

7. Prior to simply posting your query in a Facebook group (as you might on a personal page), you should ________.
   a. Search within the group to see if a similar question has already been discussed
   b. Friend the other group members
   c. Cite your credentials
   d. Update your notification settings

8. From a crowdsourcing perspective, think of interacting with each Facebook ________ as expressing your interest in a particular product or service – after which new information pertaining to that interest is regularly delivered to you.
   a. Group
   b. Business page
   c. Newsfeed
   d. Friend

9. Requesting updates from Facebook business pages by choosing to like them is also referred to as ________ a page.
   a. Following
   b. Bookmarking
   c. Tabbing
   d. Blocking

10. Each ________ is an image – a visual reminder representing the information that interested you, and linking back to its original source.
    a. Board
    b. Feed
    c. Pin
    d. Search
11. In the same way that subscribing to a catalog of therapy materials or a magazine about autism means you will consistently receive things that interest you in the mail, following Pinterest users and boards means you will consistently see ideas that interest you in your ________.
   a. Inbox
   b. Notification panel
   c. Bookmarks
   d. Home feed

12. In contrast to Facebook, Pinterest tends to offer more ________, even while crowdsourcing.
   a. Interaction
   b. Communication
   c. Anonymity
   d. Personal information

13. Unlike Facebook or Pinterest, where you maximize your ability to crowdsourced by updating your own personal profile or boards, a user on Instagram ________.
   a. Can be almost completely an observer
   b. Does not need to create an account
   c. Must actively curate an account by posting and sharing
   d. Should continually update his/her biography

14. On Instagram, clicking on a hashtag takes you to ________.
   a. A database of all the posts on Instagram that have included that hashtag in the past
   b. A source page or feed
   c. A list of relevant URLs
   d. Your home feed

15. Because posts aren’t limited in terms of length (either word count or time) ________ typically provide significantly more in-depth information than other social media platforms.
   a. Instagram videos
   b. Pinterest boards
   c. Blogs
   d. Twitter feeds

16. Once you have found a blog that consistently features content you enjoy, you might consider ________ in order to receive notifications each time there is a new post.
   a. Commenting
   b. Subscribing
   c. Following
   d. Liking

17. There are two main ways to navigate through the speech therapy-related resources available on Teachers Pay Teachers: using the search bar and browsing using the ________.
   a. Home feed
   b. Like button
   c. Product preview
   d. Filters

18. Every seller on Teachers Pay Teachers is required to feature ________ to demonstrate the quality of their work.
   a. A resume
   b. A bonus
   c. A freebie
   d. An endorsement

19. When you ask for assistance and input via social media, you MUST take care to frame your questions in such a way that ________.
   a. Your geographic location is relevant
   b. Diagnosis, age, or a specific behavior or characteristic are included
   c. The subject of the inquiry cannot be identified
   d. First and last names are included

20. It is your job and duty as a certified Speech Language Pathologist to weigh the information you acquire via crowdsourcing against ________.
   a. The standards of evidence-based practice
   b. Their cost and relative value
   c. Your personal preferences and experiences
   d. Accessibility
**Answer Sheet**

First Name: ______________________________ Last Name: ______________________________ Date: __________

Address: _____________________________________________________________ City: ____________________

State: ________________________________ ZIP: ____________________ Country: ______________________

Phone: ______________________________ Email: _________________________________________

ASHA membership #: __________________________________________________________________________________

Other: License/certification # and issuing state/organization __________________________________________

Clinical Fellow: Supervisor name and ASHA membership # __________________________________________

Graduate Student: University name and expected graduation date ______________________________________

** See instructions on the cover page to submit your exams and pay for your course.

By submitting this final exam for grading, I hereby certify that I have spent the required time to study this course material and that I have personally completed each module/session of instruction.

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**Crowdsourcing Curricular Development Online Final Exam**


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Accessibility and/or special needs concerns?
Contact customer service by phone at (888) 564-9098 or email at support@pdhacademy.com.

Refund and general policies are available online at http://pdhacademy.com/policies/
# COURSE EVALUATION

Learner Name: ____________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Agree</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 2 3 4 5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Orientation was thorough and clear 1 2 3 4 5
Instructional personnel disclosures were readily available and clearly stated 1 2 3 4 5
Learning objectives were clearly stated 1 2 3 4 5
Completion requirements were clearly stated 1 2 3 4 5
Content was well-organized 1 2 3 4 5
Content was informative 1 2 3 4 5
Content reflected stated learning objectives 1 2 3 4 5
Exam assessed stated learning objectives 1 2 3 4 5
Exam was graded promptly 1 2 3 4 5
Satisfied with learning experience 1 2 3 4 5
Satisfied with customer service (if applicable) 1 2 3 4 5 n/a

What suggestions do you have to improve this program, if any?
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What educational needs do you currently have?
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What other courses or topics are of interest to you?
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________