

# Learning Resources Showcased in Valerie Haven's Presentation

## Reducing Distraction

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### 1. The Zen Productivity Guide: Tools and Tips for Distraction-free Work

This web site has a number of resources for reducing distraction while studying or working. Resources include ways to use white noise to minimize sound to web site blockers that prohibit surfing on the internet.

<http://www.pcworld.com/article/2099744/the-zen-productivity-guide-tools-and-tips-for-distraction-free-work.html>

### 2. Focus at Will

*A web-based service that offers a selection of specially-curated tracks that are scientifically designed to help you concentrate on the task in hand without being overly intrusive. Music from several different genres is available. A subscription to Focus Will costs \$4 a month. But you can listen for up to 100 minutes at a time for free, with no registration required. And there are no ads either.*

<http://www.focusatwill.com>

### 3. Watching YouTube Videos

*View Pure is a web site that allows you to watch your chosen YouTube video on a blank screen. You can watch in either black or white with no distraction this also saves bandwidth which makes the images sharper. Just paste the URL to your video and begin watching.*

[www.viewpure.com](http://www.viewpure.com)

# Converting Course Content

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## ➤ Convertii

Convertii converts the text in PDF files into editable MS Word documents. This service is free. You can convert three documents before registering and the registration is free.

Upload your document and then provide an email address. You will be emailed either the converted document or a link to it if the file is large. You can also link the service to your Dropbox account, and then you can initiate a conversion simply by dropping the PDF file into the correct place in your Dropbox.

<http://convertii.com>

## ➤ Robo Braille

Web-based conversion resource from Denmark. Upload a file and follow the steps to select the conversion format you want. SensusAccess is the fee-based option for educational institutions.

<http://www.robobraille.org>

# Tools for Teaching

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## ➤ **Visual News: The Cure for Eye Ball Boredom**

Visual News is a web site that offers news stories on many topics and incorporates both video and still images in the stories. Excellent for illustrating a lecture or perking up a web-based course.

<http://www.visualnews.com>

## ➤ **Project Noah**

Project Noah is a web site started by two computer majors to share photos of flora and fauna from around the world. This site is an example of crowd sourcing. The pictures are not captioned.

<http://www.projectnoah.org>

## ➤ **VoiceThread**

Voice Thread is a great resource for constructing interactive lectures and other presentations. You create slides with information on them and then participants can respond to the presentations by writing text, or responding with an audio file or uploading a video.

<http://voicethread.com>

Here is a wonderful post on how to use VoiceThread to engage all learners:

<http://edcetera.rafter.com/humanizing-online-learning-with-voicethread/>

## ➤ **Humanizing Your On-line Course**

A new trend in distance education is to explore how to make an on-line course more personal and engaging. Here is an article to get you started:

<http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/tips-for-humanizing-your-online-course/>

# Recording Your Lectures

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This article discusses the advantages of recording your lectures and suggests some tools to do it:

<http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-with-technology-articles/multimedia-lectures->

## **Blog Entry: Tools-for-improving-accessibility-and-learning**

### **Having Students Make Recordings of Assignments**

This blog post has some interesting information on why learners can use recording as a resource for presenting assignments and other content:

<http://chronicle.com/blogs/profhacker/integrating-digital-audio-composition-into-humanities-courses/24266>

# Communicating With Students

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## ✓ *Telegram*

*(Free Mobile App of the Week)*

### **For Android**

Size: 9.5 MB

Download: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=org.telegram.messenger>

### **For iPhone**

Size: 10.3 MB

Download: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/telegram-messenger/id686449807?mt=8>

Telegram is a cloud-based app for the iPhone and the Android. It allows you to send private encrypted messages.

## ✓ *Hands-on Video Relay Service*

H.O.V.R.S. is a free video relay service for people who are deaf or hard of hearing. The individual has to use sign language (either ASL or signed English) to use the service.

This service can be used with a desktop, lap top, or smart telephone. The person signs up for the free account and then logs in with a web cam to communicate with a sign interpreter. The interpreter then calls the person who is hearing and has a voice conversation which is interpreted to the person who is deaf. This can be used over the phone, the internet, and face to face. Examples are face to face meetings, synchronous chat sessions or using a smart phone.

<https://www.purple.us/trvno>

## ✓ ***Accessible Event***

Accessible Event is an accessible synchronous chat platform that can be used by itself or as part of a synchronous chat platform. Have options for people who are blind, low vision, deafblind, and deaf. Service can be purchased at a low price for individual events or on a subscription basis.

<http://www.accessibleevent.com>

# Reading Resource

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## 1. Natural Reader

Digital reader with human voices. There is a free version. Paid version offers more services, but free option works very well.

Can be downloaded to Mac and PC. The smart phone app. Does not work well at this time.

<http://www.naturalreaders.com>

## 2. Note-taking Resources

- **Audio Note**

App. That records lectures while allowing learner to take notes. Recordings are time-stamped so the learner can review lecture by touching the stamp. Works much like a smart pen.

Also can download a PDF file to read while making notes. When you close the PDF file the notes you made in the file are saved with it.

Can be purchased from ITUNES and Play stores. PC version can be purchased at <http://www.luminantsoftware.com>. IOS apps. Are \$4.99 and PC version is \$19.95.

- **Note Pad in the Cloud**

Opens a blank page for note-taking. Saves all text automatically when file is closed. File can be password protected and shared with others. Great resource for group work.

[Notepad.cc](http://Notepad.cc)