Tech for Learning

# Kathy Schrock's Tech Quest

What scanner should I buy for my classroom?

*by Kathy Schrock*

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● FEATURE: Kathy Schrock's Tech Quest

A reader recently received a gift certificate to a computer store. She wants to buy a scanner for her classroom and wrote to ask me, "What do you recommend?" To answer her question--one that you may also have--let's go on a **Tech Quest** together. Each letter in "quest" stands for a step we'll take. In addition, the quest is aligned with one of the standards from the International Society for Technology in Education's "ISTE Recommended Foundations in Technology for All Teachers." For more information, visit [www.iste.org/standards/ncate/found.html](http://www.iste.org/standards/ncate/found.html).

Kathy Schrock is a retired technology director and the creator of *Kathy Schrock's Guide for Educators.*

# The Quest: The Best Scanners

**Q** **Questioner: Who is going on the quest?** It may be you, an administrator, a parent, or the technology specialist at your school.

**U** **Understanding: What is the purpose of the quest?** What type of scanner is best for the classroom? Which work with my computer? What software do I need to buy with my scanner?
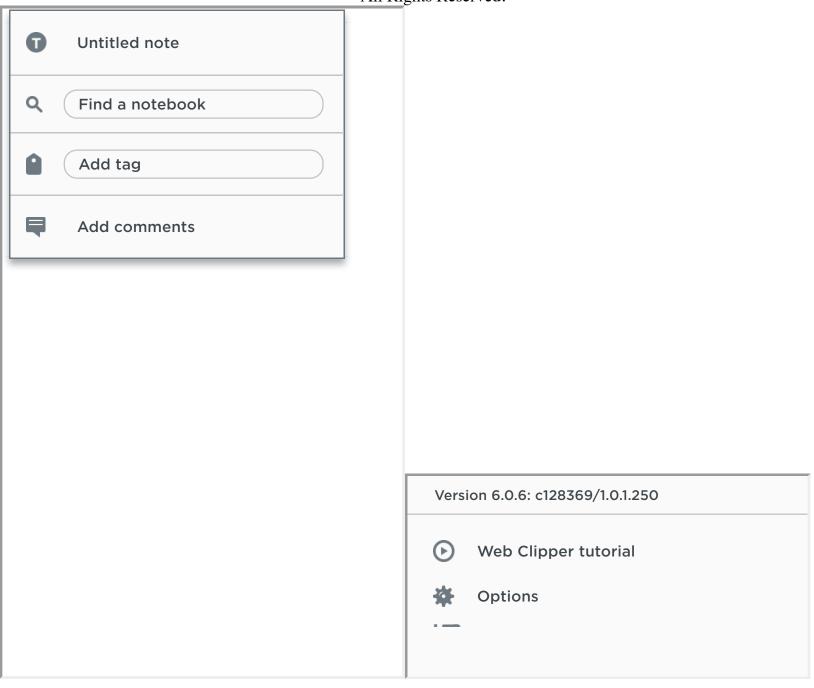
**E** **Explanation: Exploring options for finding an in-depth answer.** Your main goal is to buy the scanner that ✔ is easiest to use ✔ allows you to scan with the best quality ✔ is compatible with your hardware and software ✔ has software that will help you edit images ✔ allows you to put images into Web pages and other applications.

## Types of scanners

Scanners come in three flavors: handheld, sheet-fed and flatbed. A handheld scanner is portable, but because you need a steady hand and

patience to get consistent quality, it's less than ideal for the classroom. In a sheet-fed scanner, pages are fed in individually, so you won't be able to scan images from bound volumes. A flatbed scanner looks like a small photocopier and allows you to easily scan oddly shaped items as well as student work. For a classroom situation, I highly recommend a flatbed scanner.

**T** Untitled note

🔍 Find a notebook

🏷️ Add tag

💬 Add comments

Version 6.0.6: c128369/1.0.1.250

▶️ Web Clipper tutorial

⚙️ Options

## Kathy Schrock's Tech Quest

**The first thing** to think about is the computer's location. Of course, it would be nice to have it behind your desk for creating tests and checking e-mail, but then your students wouldn't get a chance to use it. The best scenario is to set it up as a learning center with workspace for three or four students.

**Second,** you need to define computer expectations and rules at the start of the school year. Some tips are:

- Create separate folders for each student with shortcuts on the computer desktop where they can store their work.

- Place "how-to" sheets near the computer that list solutions to common problems and questions, such as "How do I lower the volume?"

- Have a way kids can "call for help" from the teacher without interrupting the class (e.g., a red cup placed on top of the monitor).

- Train a group of students as computer mentors for their classmates.

- Create a schedule that rotates students through the computer station, and place assignment task cards next to the computer.

- Using presentation software, such as *Microsoft PowerPoint* or *Hyperstudio,* to create an itinerary, overview, or lesson summary for the students

- Using concept-mapping software, such as *Inspiration* (see below) to create (or have kids create) story maps or webs, flowcharts, or time lines in a class brainstorming session

- Demonstrating how to use a new piece of software or other computer concept

- Teaching basic information literacy skills, such as keyword and Boolean searching using CD-ROM encyclopedias or Internet search engines

- Taking the class on a "virtual" field trip through predetermined sites that support your curriculum

- Teaching students how to evaluate Internet sites

**Learning tool** The most important use of your computer is as a learning tool. Because it's often difficult to create projects where the entire class can effectively use one computer at the same time, many teachers use their computer as a small part of a larger cooperative learning project. Whether groups of students are visiting Internet sites that support a unit or project, creating a spreadsheet and graph of data they collected from a survey or a science lab, or working

**Third,** you need to think about the different ways you can use the computer. In the classroom, a computer can be used in three ways: as an administrative tool, an instructional tool, and a learning tool.

**Administrative tool** The beginning of the school year is an ideal time to have a computer to help you with administrative duties. Once you learn how to use the software and set up some templates, it can streamline your administrative tasks throughout the year. Some ways you can use your computer include:

✔ Using desktop publishing/word processing software to make classroom signs and name tags for desks

✔ Creating a database of student information and merging it into documents to personalize letters, certificates, birthday cards, etc.

✔ Using desktop publishing/word processing software or interactive Internet sites to create worksheets, quizzes, and tests

✔ Making spreadsheets to track grades, book order monies, etc.

✔ Sending e-mail to communicate with busy administrators and parents

✔ Using presentation software to create a "Back-To-School Night" overview for parents

**Instructional tool** You can use your classroom's computer as a whole-class interactive teaching device by adding just a few simple tools. With an inexpensive scan converter, for example, you can use a TV as your monitor so that all students can easily

on an ongoing classroom yearbook, it is important that they are using the computer for a specific purpose.

Since time at the computer is limited, have paper planning sheets available so students can think about and write down their ideas and strategies before they sit down at the computer. It is also helpful to have task cards next to the computer to remind the groups of what they should be doing. And don't forget to post the cooperative learning "rules and regulations" nearby to help keep groups working well together.

As you become more comfortable with the computer in your classroom, you will come up with many more creative ideas. It's amazing what a difference just one computer can have on your teaching.

S **Sources: Finding out more information** These resources offer more suggestions for using one computer in your classroom.

*Great Teaching in the One Computer Classroom* _____ by David A. Dockterman (Tom Snyder, 1998). This book offers advice on how one computer can help with many teaching tasks.

*Managing Technology in the One-Computer Classroom* _____ by Susan L. Gimotty (Teacher Created Materials, 1999). Learn about management tips, learning center ideas, and activities you can do with one computer.

T **Thoughts: Afterward, reflect on your quest**
✔ How can you use your one computer to challenge gifted

see the screen at once. Some of the many things you can do when the whole class can view the monitor include:

students and help those who need more support? ✔ How can you use your computer to target the multiple intelligences and learning styles of all students in the classroom? ✔ How would your teaching differ with two classroom computers?

## MEETING THE STANDARDS

This month's Tech Quest addresses two ISTE standards: III.a. Facilitate technology-enhanced experiences that address content standards and student technology standards; and V.c. Apply technology to increase productivity.