

Educators Share Maker, STEM Tools

A panel of educators shared their go-to picks to enhance maker spaces and digital learning in “60 Tools in 60 Minutes,” one in a spring 2017 series of webcasts presented by *School Library Journal* and ISTE.

Moderated by *SLJ* executive editor Kathy Ishizuka, the rapid-fire session started with Monica Carbacas. In her first year as a librarian at Albemarle High School in Charlottesville, VA, Carbacas hosted a Spheropalooza, where students designed driving courses for the robotic device Sphero, using painters tape, ramps, and, of course, their coding skills.



Ollie by Sphero

As her students create and build with technology, Carbacas encourages them to take the extra step in licensing their work through Creative Commons so they can not only share their work but also control how it's shared.

Heidi Williams, head of school at Jefferson Lighthouse Elementary in Racine, WI, discussed Code.org and its Hour of Code, which aligns coding lessons—even those for nonreaders—with math and literacy standards. Another go-to with students is Scratch, the coding program developed at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology that lets children produce their own games.

Author of the upcoming book *No Fear Coding: Computational Thinking Across the K–5 Curriculum* (ISTE, July 2017), Williams also mentioned ARIS, an open-source augmented reality app that lets students create augmented maps and helps them think “computationally,” she says.

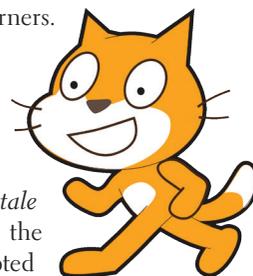
Kristina Holzweiss is certainly an enthusiastic advocate of tech. But the school library media specialist at Bay Shore (NY) Middle School likes to see children use yogurt containers, chip bags, and cardboard, too.

Indeed, for educators on a tight budget, Holzweiss points to recyclable materials as wonderful tools. One of her favorite freebies: paint chips from Lowe’s and Home Depot.

She also encourages trips to dollar stores for items such as paint, glue guns, pool noodles, and battery-operated toothbrushes. Her students used the last two, taped them together, and created a robot that could draw on its own.

Daryl Grabarek, *SLJ* senior editor, rounded out the hour-long webcast with a treasure trove of apps. She encouraged educators to learn how to use apps to build on a child’s interest and view them as “opportunities for learning,” particularly with pre-readers and visual and English-language learners.

Choice apps for elementary school students included Nosy Crow’s fairy tale apps, such as *The Complete Fairytale Play Theater*, and the “LumiKids” series, noted for its multilayered approach to math concepts.



Scratch

For older students, Grabarek recommends Theodore Gray’s *Molecules* and Coffee Stain Studio’s *The Westport Independent*, a multimedia approach to teaching about censorship.

The next *SLJ* ISTE webcast series launches in September (slj.com/webcasts; #SLJISTE)—Lauren Barack

In Memoriam

Patricia C. McKissack

1944-2017

*Groundbreaking,
beloved author and friend.*



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