

10 Ways to Use Instagram in the Classroom

Move over, Facebook—if you teach, you know that Instagram is one of the most popular social media channels for teens and tweens today. And while it may not seem like it at first, there are many applications for Instagram in the classroom.

Of course, it's important to protect students' privacy, especially when using a public channel like Instagram. If you're interested in trying any of the ideas below, we recommend creating a classroom account that you set to "private" and carefully vetting any potential followers. You might also try adapting our suggestions to an educational social media platform such as Edmodo. Finally, be sure to check your school's technology policies before you begin.

Okay, disclaimer over! Here are 10 awesome ways you can use Instagram in the classroom.

1. **Showcase students' work.** Snap pictures of students' artwork and other special projects to share on a private Instagram account only accessible to families and others in your school community.
2. **Feature a student of the week.** Invite students to alternate "taking over" your classroom Instagram account and sharing photos from their daily lives. Then have the featured student share his or her photos with the class.
3. **Capture field trip memories.** Invite a student volunteer "archivist" to take photos on your field trips or during class parties and share them on your Instagram account.
4. **Imagine how a famous person in history would use Instagram.** Have students browse historical photos and create a bulletin board or poster display showing Abraham Lincoln's or Buzz Aldrin's Instagram feed.
5. **Imagine what a favorite character would post.** Challenge students to find photos that would appear in Harry Potter's or Katniss Everdeen's Instagram.
6. **Share reading recommendations.** Invite students to snap photos of their favorite books and then browse the photos in your feed for more ideas on what to read.
7. **Record steps in a science experiment.** Watch as a plant unfurls or a chemical compound slowly changes colors—and keep the changes preserved on Instagram.
8. **Go on an ABC scavenger hunt.** Challenge kids to find print in the world around them—on signs, packaging and in the mail.
9. **Discover ideas for writing.** Tap an "inspiration fairy" to take ten photos that could serve as a prompt for writing—an empty bird's nest, a For Sale sign and a broken doll, for instance.
10. **Document student progress.** Snap photos of student's writing at the beginning and end of the year. Order inexpensive prints from sites such as Prinstagr.am to show students how far they have come!

What do you think, teachers? Would you or have you used Instagram in the classroom? How so?