

There's an App for That: Utilizing iPod Touch Applications for College Level Biology Instruction

Marilee Ramesh¹, Rachel Collins, Christopher Lassiter, Dorothy Belle Poli, and Mark Poore

¹Roanoke College, 221 College Ln, Salem VA 24153-3794 USA

(ramesh@roanoke.edu)

Expanded Abstract

The Roanoke Touch Project was initiated for the 2009-2010 Academic Year at Roanoke College. This program was a result of a grant from Arthur Vining Davis to Information Technology with the purpose of expanding the use of technology in teaching. The grant supplied each of the 35 faculty participants with an iPod Touch. Each faculty member was tasked with identifying those applications that could be used in the classroom. In addition, they were asked to search for ways the iPod Touch could be used for productivity purposes, such as email, scheduling, etc. Four members of the Biology Department, a molecular geneticist (Marilee Ramesh), an ecologist (Rachel Collins), a developmental biologist (Christopher Lassiter), and a plant biologist (DB Poli) participated in this project. As a group, we decided to combine our exploration of biology-related iPod Touch applications. Table 1 contains the applications that were presented during the mini-workshop.

We developed a central database to list those applications that we have identified along with our evaluation of their usefulness to teach biology. This resource is intended to be accessible to our students and our colleagues, serving as a resource for other biologists who may want to use this technology in teaching. This database can be accessed from our departmental website at http://roanoke.edu/Academics/Academic_Departments/Biology.htm. Our database provides the name of the application, its cost, the discipline and our four star rating (**** excellent, * not so much). We also have included comments about why we liked or disliked the application. This resource is intended to be available to our students and our colleagues, to serve as a resource for others who may want to use this technology in learning or teaching. We plan to continue to add to our database as we find more biology-related applications.

We invite our students and colleagues to suggest applications that might be appropriate for inclusion to this list. If you have found an application you think we might like to know about, please visit our website for instructions to have your app added to our list.

Table 1. iPod Touch Applications for Biologists

Factoids	Field Guides	Tools	More Tools	Tutorials	Games
Science Facts	Phyto	Sun Compass	PubSearch	Mitosis	Artificial Life
BioFacts	FlowerPedia	Iapetus	BioGene	iCell	DNA Blocks
Odd Genetic Diseases	Peterson Field Guide to Backyard Birds	TASA geotimescale Molecules	Promega Biorad		Codons
	Seafood Watch	iBabyBT	NE BioLabs		
	What's on my Food?	Baby Eyes			

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