

# TECH TOOLS FOR TEACHERS

## # 2

Last week we had some technical difficulties sending out our first newsletter about Wallwisher due to the very large number of subscribers. If you didn't receive last week's email, [click here](#) to find it on Kathleen's blog.

Through this newsletter we aim to cater for teachers of all levels and experiences. If you have any ideas on how we can do this better or make improvements to the newsletter, please email us at [techtoolsforteachers@gmail.com](mailto:techtoolsforteachers@gmail.com) (or hit the reply button).

## WORDLE

This week we review the site, [Wordle](http://www.wordle.net) (<http://www.wordle.net>).

Wordle is a tool for generating "word clouds" from your chosen text. You can edit your clouds with different fonts, layouts, and color schemes. The images you create with Wordle can be printed, saved as a screen capture or you can save them to the Wordle gallery to share.

Essentially Wordle has two functions. You can input text from a website or document to create a visual representation of the most prominent words in the text or you can create a Wordle by inputting your own words. The more times you input a word, the larger it is in your word cloud.

We like this site because it:

- is free
- is suitable for all year levels from Prep to Year 12
- is really easy to use
- doesn't require any login
- is great for visual learners
- has many applications in the classroom in all curriculum areas.



## HOW TO...

To get started with Wordle

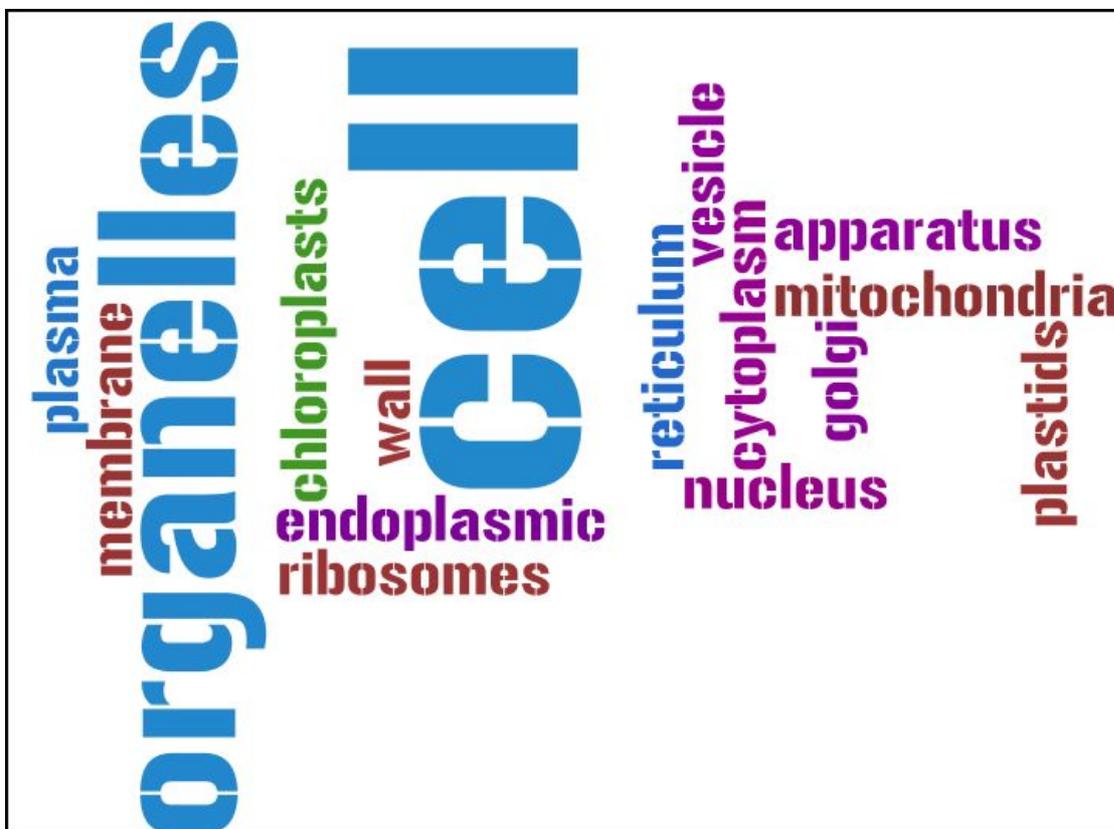
1. Go to <http://www.wordle.net>
2. Click on "[create](#)". Here you can add your own text, copy and paste from a document or add a url address.
3. Once you have your text ready, click "go". Your text will now be displayed as a word splash. (Note: if a word is repeated it will show up larger)
4. You can choose to randomize your wordle design or you can edit using the tool bar along the top. Here you can change the font, colour and layout of your Wordle.
5. When your Wordle is complete you can print or save it.
6. If you want to save an image of your Wordle simply press the *prtsc* button on your keyboard, paste it in *Paint* and save it as an image. If you have Windows 7 you can use the *snipping tool* to create a screen capture. Alternatively there are programs such as [MWSnap](#) and [Jing](#) to create screencaptures.

## USES IN THE CLASSROOM

**Kathleen** used Wordle with her Grade Two students as a way to brainstorm and assess what the students knew about the term "healthy food". They created this Wordle as a class on the Interactive Whiteboard. All the students suggested words to input into the Wordle. The Wordle shows a relationship between the size of the words and the number of students who nominated that word. When the Wordle was complete, Kathleen took a screen capture using the *prtsc-Paint* method and saved the image as a JPEG to embed onto her [class blog](#).



**Simon** has also used Wordle as a brainstorming task with his Year 11 Biology students. Students used their prior knowledge of the various organelles found in cells to design their own Wordle which was then printed out. A homework task was then set to choose 5 of the organelles and identify location and function within the cell. At the completion of the topic, the Wordle will be used as an assessment tool. Students will be required to see how many more organelles they can add to their Wordle.



Wordle could also be used...

- as a **vocabulary development** tool (eg how many synonyms can you think of for "big" or "said")
- as a **summary tool** (eg. paste in an article, story or essay and see what words are the largest)
- as a way to **brainstorm** new and reviewed topics
- as a tool to **conclude** a topic and assess learned knowledge
- as a **getting to know you** tool. Students could create a Wordle about themselves to share with new classmates.
- as a **presentation** tool for classroom or book work
- for creating **word list posters** outlining misspelled words or words on a spelling list
- a **guessing game**. The website [Guess the Wordle](#) has a new Wordle every day for students to guess the topic. Or you could make your own!

## A NOTE ON SAFETY

While Wordle is a great classroom tool, students could view inappropriate content by viewing the gallery of Wordles made by others. Apparently if you have your network administrator block the following base URLs it will stop students from being able to view the galleries while still being able to make the most of this excellent tool.

- <http://www.wordle.net/gallery>
- <http://www.wordle.net/next>
- <http://www.wordle.net/random>

Have a go at using Wordle with your class! Let us know how you went using this tool in your classroom by leaving a comment on [Kathleen's blog](#).

Look out for the third edition of "Tech Tools for Teachers" next week.

Simon and Kathleen

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