edublogs

TEACHER CHALLENGE

WORKBOOK

BUILDING YOUR PLN for teachers

TeacherChallenge.edublogs.org

WELCOME

This free self-paced course guides you step-by-step through the process of building your own personal/professional learning network (PLN).

There are seven steps in this series and each one focuses on a different topic. A short task at the end of each step offers you a choice of activities to demonstrate your learning while connecting with others.

The activities can be completed at your own pace and there are links to extra videos and resources if you want to dive deeper into certain topics.

WHO IS THE PLN COURSE FOR?

This PLN Teacher Challenge course can help you whether you:

- Are a classroom teacher, a specialist teacher, a school leader, or work in any area of education.
- Have students of your own or are not currently teaching.
- Are very tech savvy or only have basic computer skills.
- Are a pre-service teacher, qualified teacher, or even a retired teacher.

This optional workbook will help to keep you on track and focused as you work through the 7 steps.

COURSE DELIVERY

This course is published on a blog at teacherchallenge.edublogs.org

Each step has its own separate blog post.

For each step, you'll be invited to complete a task that develops and demonstrates your learning. When your task is complete, you can leave a comment on the post and share your learning with others. The team at Edublogs monitors the comment section regularly.

You can use this workbook to keep track of your progress and document additional reflections and questions.

OUTCOMES

We've designed this course so you can build on your skills sequentially over the time frame that suits you. If you prefer, you can pick and choose the steps that you want to learn about.

By the end of the course you'll understand the benefits of building a PLN and how educators use their PLN. You'll be ready to start using a range of different tools that are popular with connected educators around the world. Your own PLN will be taking shape!

PD CREDIT

All participants who complete our PLN Teacher Challenge will have access to a certificate that outlines the topics covered. You'll find the link to request your certificate in the seventh step of the course.

We have bloggers from all over the world completing our Teacher Challenge courses. Different schools and districts have different criteria for awarding professional development credit. Therefore, we can't guarantee our certificate will comply with your school's specific PD criteria. We hope it does!

ADDITIONAL ASSISTANCE

This is a self paced course but you don't have to go it alone.

- If you have questions, you can leave a comment on the post you're working on. Our team monitors comments regularly.
- You're welcome to email our support team 24/7 for blogging help (support@edublogs.org).
- Why not ask a friend or colleague to complete the PLN Teacher Challenge course with you?

7 STEPS TO SUCCESS

We've broken this PLN Teacher Challenge course down into 7 steps.

If you've got the time, you can work through each step over a period of hours or days. Alternatively, you can work at a slower pace; perhaps completing one step each week while allowing time to fully digest each topic.

The following overview may help you pick and choose if you only want to complete certain parts of the course.

STEP 1: What is a PLN?
The first step unpacks the definition of a PLN and connected educator. You'll learn why educators create their own PLNs and how they use them.

STEP 2: Making connections
In this second step you'll explore tips and tools for becoming a networked teacher and making connections.

STEP 3: Using Twitter to build your PLN
Onto the specifics! We look at Twitter which is the number one service many teachers use to build their PLNs and connect with other educators around the world. You'll find out what the fuss around Twitter is all about!

7 STEPS TO SUCCESS

STEP 4: All about hashtags and Twitter chats
You'll dive deeper into Twitter, looking at how educators use Twitter chats and hashtags to learn and connect.

STEP 5: Using blogs as part of your PLN
This step explains how educators consume or create blogs to connect with their PLN.

STEP 6: Using curation tools as a connected educator
Next, you'll learn about a simple framework you can use to get started with content curation. You'll get the chance to explore a range of different tools that connected educators use for curation.

STEP 7: Making time to build your PLN
The final step brings all the learning together and looks at ways that you can find time to build your PLN. We leave you with 7 tips for success!

CHECKLIST

- [ ] **STEP 1:** What is a PLN?
- [ ] **STEP 2:** Making connections
- [ ] **STEP 3:** Using Twitter to build your PLN
- [ ] **STEP 5:** Using blogs as part of your PLN
- [ ] **STEP 6:** Using curation tools as a connected educator
- [ ] **STEP 7:** Making time to build your PLN

STEP 1: WHAT IS A PLN?

TOPICS

- What Is A PLN?
- Are PLNs Exclusive To Education?
- Are PLNs Something New?
- Being A Connected Educator
- Why Create A PLN?
- Four Big Ideas Around The Connected Educator
- Building Your Own PLN

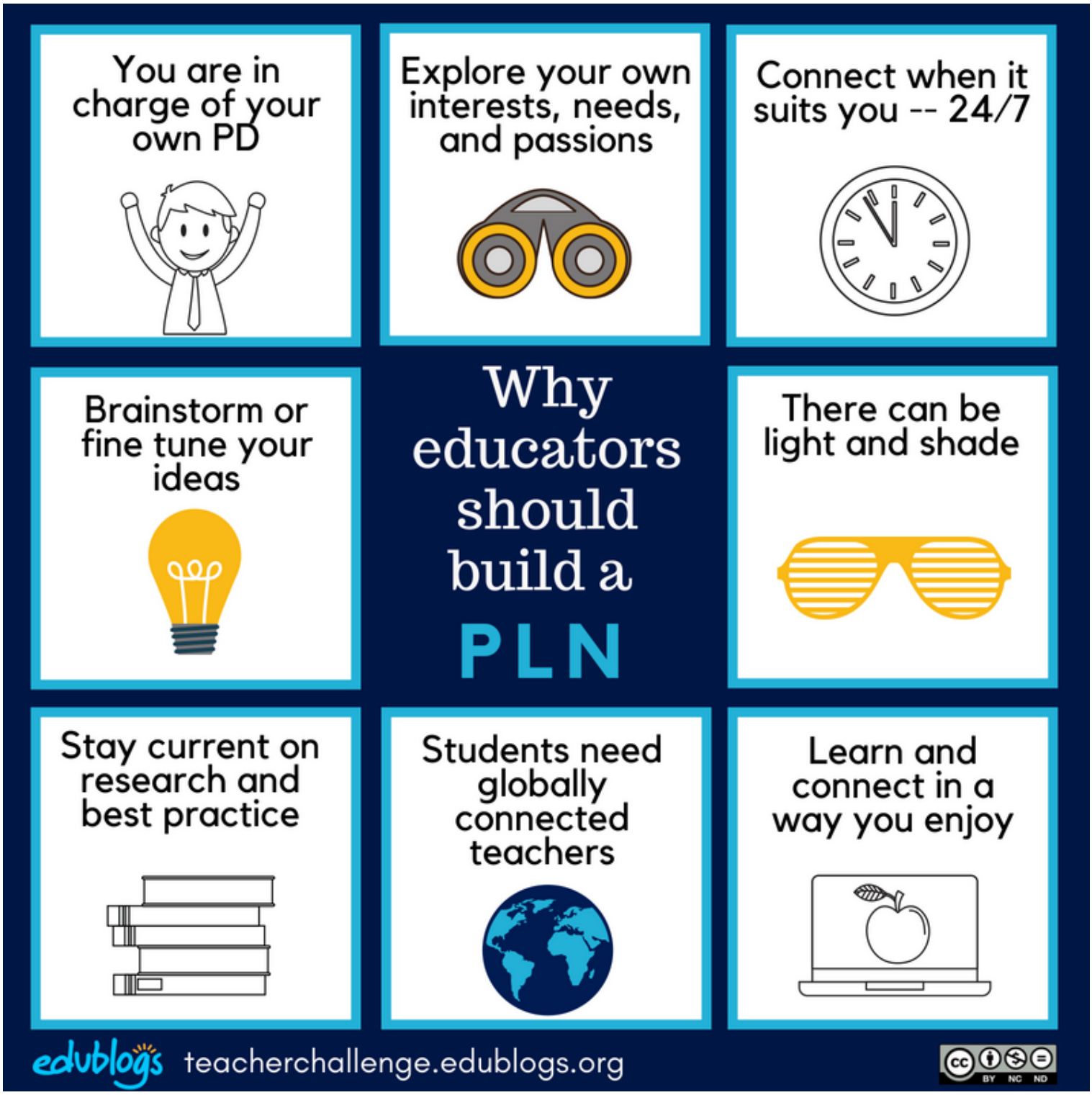
TASKS

Choose one or more:

- [ ] Define what the term PLN means to you.
- [ ] Explore one of the benefits of building a PLN.
- [ ] Share your thoughts on being a connected educator.
- [ ] Go deeper and write a blog post about PLNs.

NOTES

STEP 1: WHAT IS A PLN?



STEP 2: MAKING CONNECTIONS

TOPICS

- The Networked Teacher
- What Tools Are Used?
- How Are Teachers Connecting On Online Platforms?
- Tips For Developing Relationships
- Barriers To Creating A PLN

TASKS

Choose one or more:

- What sites or tools do you think you'd prefer to use to make connections. Why?
- Share your favorite ways for developing relationships with other educators.
- Share what the biggest barriers to building a PLN have been for you.

NOTES

STEP 2: MAKING CONNECTIONS

STEP 3: USING TWITTER

TOPICS

- Introduction To Twitter
- What Is Twitter?
- Anatomy Of A Tweet
- Interacting With Tweets
- Think You're Not Interested In Twitter? Think Again!
- Benefits Of Using Twitter
- Five Steps To Building Your PLN Via Twitter

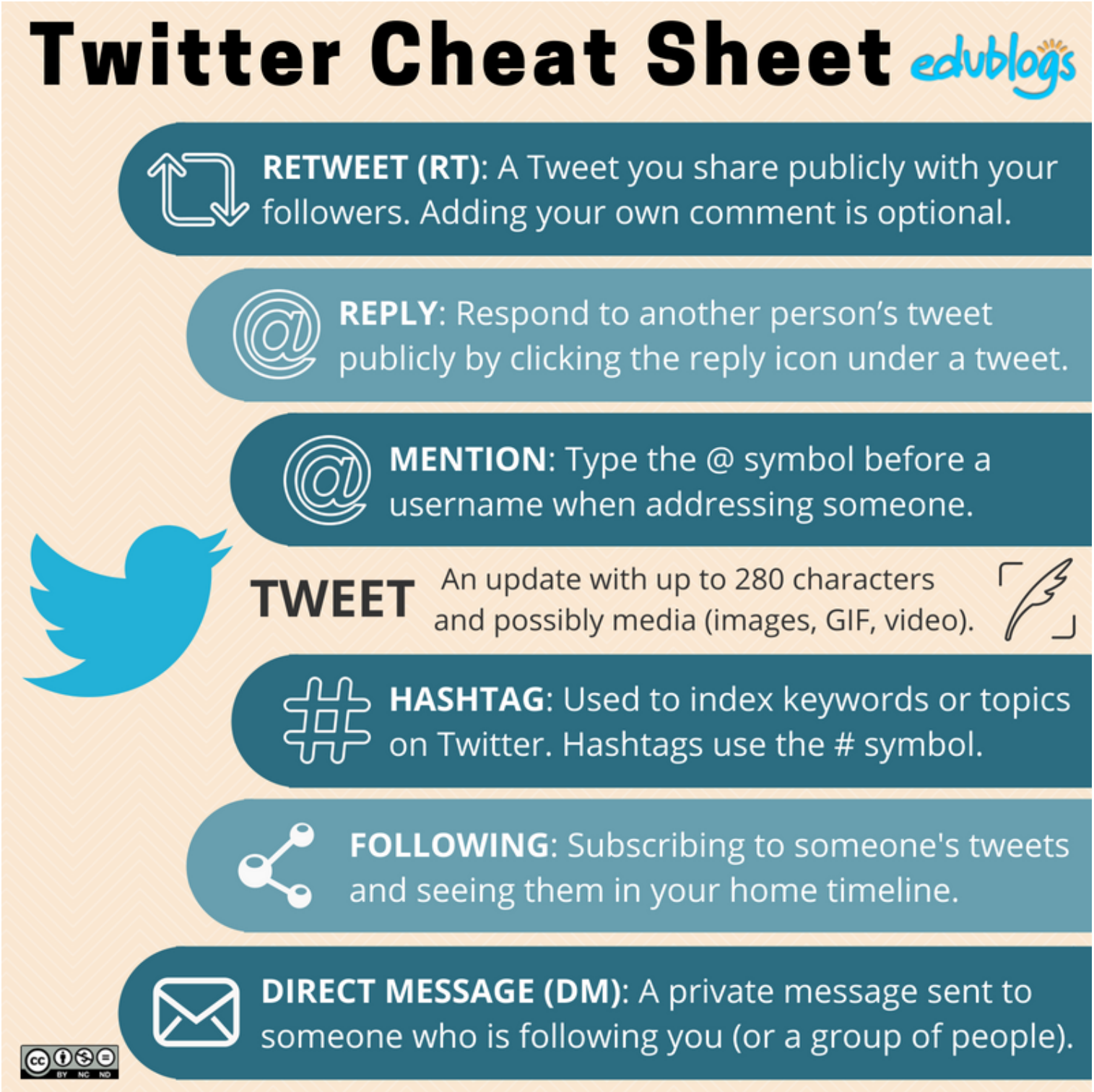
TASKS

Choose one or more:

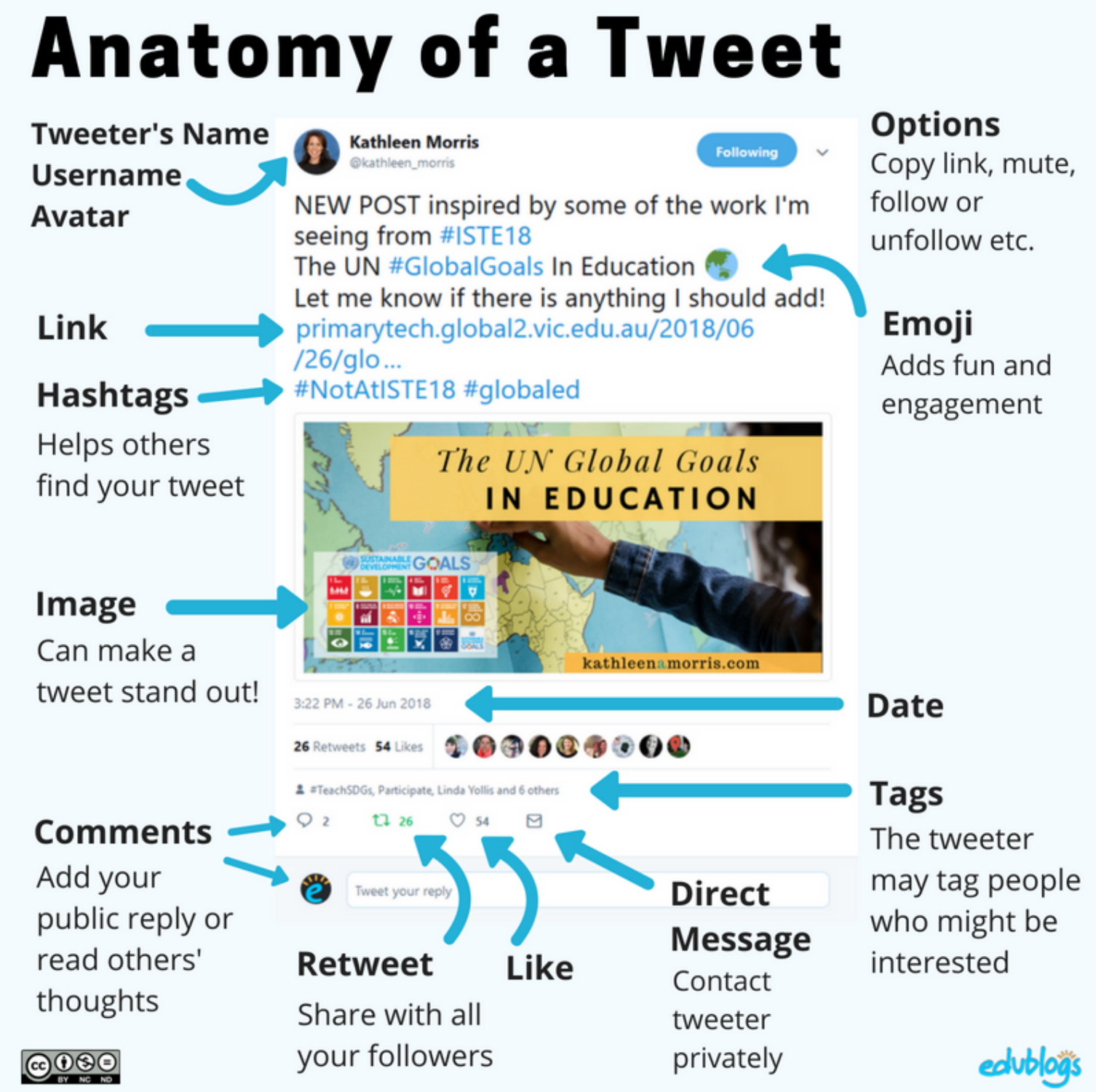
- Share how you might use Twitter to build your PLN.
- Join Twitter or update your account; share your username.
- Find someone who you're interested in following.
- Go deeper and write a blog post with your initial impressions of Twitter.

NOTES

STEP 3: USING TWITTER



STEP 3: USING TWITTER



STEP 4: HASHTAGS & TWITTER CHATS

TOPICS

- What Are Hashtags?
- What Hashtag Should I Use?
- Following Hashtags
- Starting Your Own Hashtag
- Finding Popular Hashtags
- What Are Twitter Chats?
- Participating In A Twitter Chat
- Keeping Up With A Twitter Chat
- Popular Twitter Chats
- Examples Of Twitter Chats

TASKS

Choose one or more:

- Browse a Twitter chat and share your findings.
- Set up TweetDeck and share how you went.
- Join a Twitter chat and reflect on what you learned.
- Go deeper and write a blog post sharing your initial impressions of Twitter chats.

NOTES

STEP 5: USING BLOGS

TOPICS

- What Is A Blog?
- Reasons Why Educators Blog
- Blogs As Part Of Your PLN
- Tips For Building Your PLN
- Reading Blog Posts
- Commenting On Blogs
- Set Up Your Own Blog
- Why Blog When You Can Microblog?

TASKS

Choose one or more:

- Share a link to an educators' blog you enjoy reading.
- Set up Feedly or Flipboard and subscribe to some blogs.
- Go deeper and write a blog post with your own thoughts about using blogs as part of your PLN.

NOTES

STEP 6: CONTENT CURATION

TOPICS

- What Is Content Curation?
- 21st Century Content Curation
- The Benefits Of Content Curation
- The Curation Process
- Examples From Twitter
- Digital Curation Tools
- Curation Pitfalls
- Create Your Own Workflow

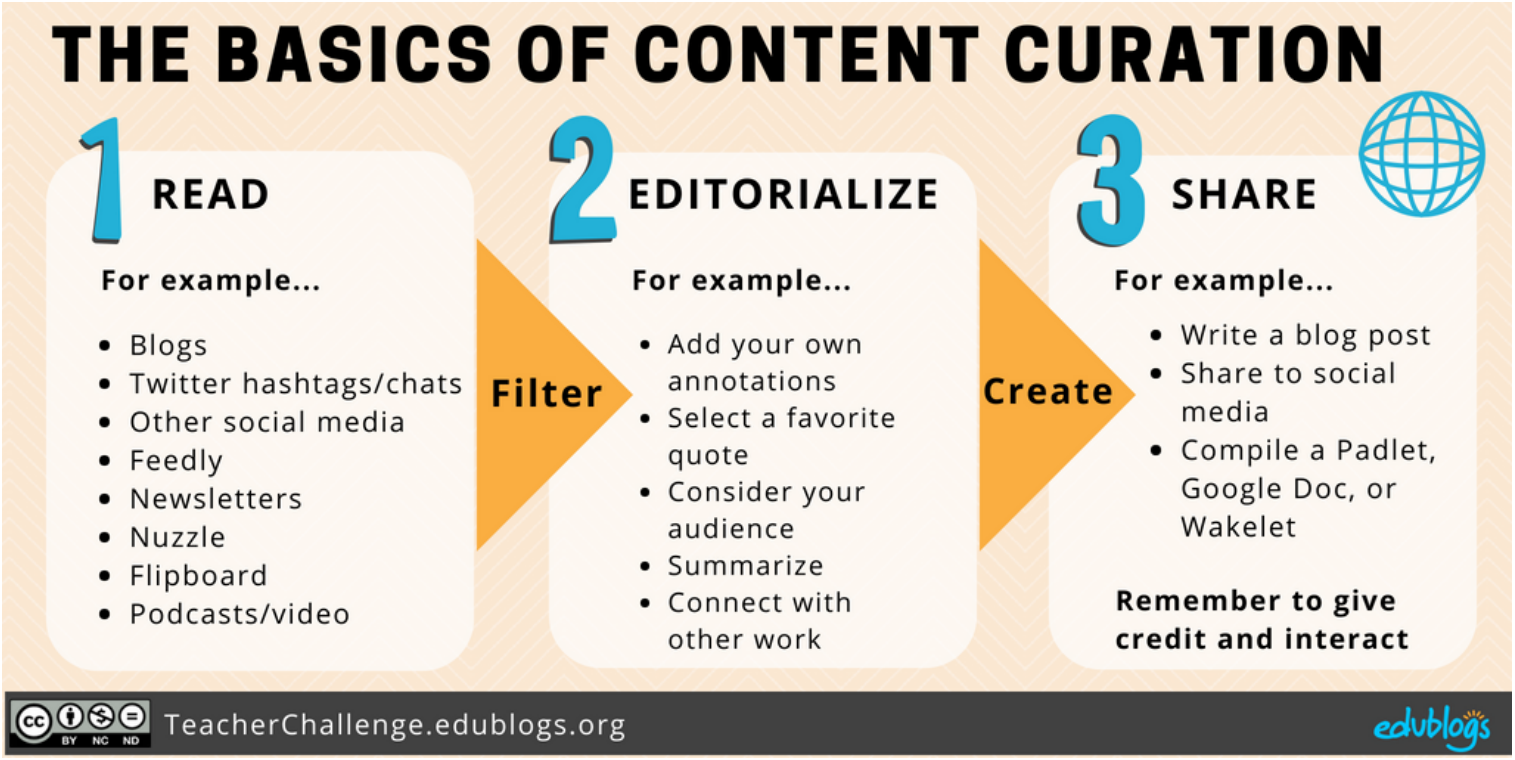
TASKS

Choose one or more:

- ☐ Share the curation tools you plan to try.
- ☐ Set up an account with a popular curation service.
- ☐ Find a tweet where someone has curated some information.
- ☐ Go deeper and write a blog post with your own thoughts about content curation.

NOTES

STEP 6: CONTENT CURATION



STEP 7: MAKING TIME FOR YOUR PLN

TOPICS

Tips For Building Your PLN:

- Do what works best for you
- Start small
- Set a goal and commit
- Set a routine
- Consider becoming more productive
- Don't be shy
- Don't give up

TASKS

Choose one or more:

- Share your goals.
- Share your ideas on how you will make time for your PLN.
- Share your top tip for others.
- Pay it forward and tell someone else about the PLN course.
- Sum up your thoughts about building a PLN in a blog post.

NOTES

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