

Whynotchemeng.com website

By the Institution of Chemical Engineers, UK

Reviewed by Tim Harrison, Bristol, UK

Whynotchemeng.com is an excellent website designed for students who are considering a career in chemical or biochemical engineering. The website has two particular strengths: careers information, and a resource of practical demonstrations designed to inspire potential young physical scientists and chemical engineers.

After logging on according to region – the UK and Ireland, Australia or the rest of the world – students, parents and teachers can find out about the various fields in which chemical engineers are involved, and hear about the lives and work of practicing engineers in the *Time of Our Lives* section. The website also lists university courses and explains the application procedure in several parts of the world, and provides the contact details of companies that offer employment opportunities to graduates in the field. Specifically for teachers, there are lesson plans on how to use the careers resources in class.

The *Future Life* section informs students about four key working areas for chemical engineers: health, energy, food and water, and the environment. Each of these sections presents four or five easy-to-understand descriptions of the work that chemical engineers do to help address the particular problems of each field; under health, for example, users will find information about stem cell research and tissue engineering.

The Institution of Chemical Engineers' *Top Ten Flash Bang Demos* can be found in the teachers' section of the site, and provides instruction sheets and videos to help teachers recreate the fun, safe and inspiring demonstrations – which include *Flying Cake Cases* and *Screaming Jelly Babies* – in their own classrooms.

While designed to fit the UK's Key Stage 4 curriculum (students aged 14-16), the demonstrations are so engaging that I'm sure teachers will find ample opportunity to present them to other ages too.

The only criticism I have of some of the well-made videos is that the demonstrator sometimes doesn't follow safety procedures by tying her hair back or wearing safety glasses. For teachers new to such demonstrations, I strongly suggest practicing the performance several times without the presence of students and also to consider the space required for some of the demos.

