

The Technology, Entertainment and Design (TED) website

Reviewed by Colin Johnson

TED (Technology, Entertainment and Design) is a non-profit organisation that began as a conference to share “ideas worth spreading”. The first of its annual conferences was held in 1984 and since then, the programme has spread to include regional and local events across the world (see the website’s ‘TEDx Events’ section for local events).

There are now two major conferences held each year: the TED Conference in Long Beach and Palm Springs, both California, USA, and the TED Global conference in Edinburgh, UK. The registration fees are very hefty, yet the conferences are so popular that they are sold out up to a year in advance.

TEDTalks is the name given to speeches from the conferences that were released online and it now forms the focus of the TED website. With the headline ‘Riveting talks by remarkable people, free to the world’, the talks from the past five years have been openly available under a Creative Commons licence. There are now more than 700, covering a wide range of disciplines, making this an amazingly rich resource. To take just a few of the big-name speakers: mathematician Marcus du Sautoy (on symmetry), neurologist Oliver Sacks (on hallucinations), architect Frank Gehry (on how he went from blowing up his house to being a world-renowned architect) and virtuoso percussionist

Evelyn Glennie (on listening to music with your whole body). The site has a good search facility and the videos play smoothly.

Thanks to the TED Open Translation Project, which, like *Science in School*^{w1}, is supported by volunteer translators worldwide, talks are now available with subtitles in 89 languages.

In addition, a TEDPrize is awarded annually to an exceptional individual with a “wish to change the world”, leading to collaborative initiatives with far-reaching impact. You can also apply for the TED Fellows programme, supporting young innovators from across the globe who form a diverse and fascinating community. Interaction with them via the website is encouraged.

The TED site is not intended to support curriculum needs directly. Instead, it is about opening your own mind (as a teacher) and those of your students to the boundless excitement of science and technology. These are some of the world’s most eloquent advocates for the world of science. The knowledge and inspiration you gain from them will be invaluable to your teaching, as well as to your students.

Details

URL: www.ted.com

Web reference

w1 – For more information on becoming a volunteer translator for *Science in School*, to help teachers in your mother tongue read our articles, see: www.scienceinschool.org/submissions/translators

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