

Download apps to help students

Website names top programs to turn smartphones, tablets into school tools

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www.RetailMeNot.com

If your kid has a smartphone, you probably know that it can be used for more than just sending text messages, taking photos and playing “Angry Birds.” When it comes to studying, the iPhone or Android can be turned into a useful learning tool just by downloading a few apps. MindMeister.com (www.mindmeister.com) mapped out the top 100 apps by category for high school and college-age students. Here are a few favorites:

MATH: The Graphing Calculator app (\$1.99) will help your math whiz double-check her homework. (Bonus: It’ll also save you about \$100, as it’ll allow you to avoid purchasing a scientific calculator.) With the app, she can graph multiple equations, export graphs as e-mails and find the exact coordinates for roots, intersections or minimums and maximums by using the trace mode. Graphing Calculator is available for the iPhone and iPad, and Time magazine names it as one of its top 10 back-to-school apps.

SCIENCE: Redfox’s Periodic Table of Elements is free for iPhone and Android and will be of great help to any chemistry student. Instead of flipping through a textbook, your kid can access information for 117 different elements with the click of a button. Aside from getting the atomic number, family name and chemical symbol for each element, the app also retrieves data from a wiki to dive further into the element’s chemistry.

ENGLISH: To be or not to be, that is the question. Actually, to download or not to download — well, there’s no question that you should download the totally free Shakespeare app (alas, it’s only for the iPad and iPhone). It has the complete works of the Bard locked and loaded for easy reference and reading and includes scene breakdowns to give your English student a refresher course on what happened (think of them like recaps, except for really good literature instead of TV shows). You can also get Shakespeare Pro for \$9.99.

ORGANIZATION: With course loads getting heavier and heavier, it’s getting harder to keep track of what homework is due when. Enter Wunderlist, a free task manager for the iPhone and Android that has gotten rave reviews. It’s very easy to use and also has a website that can be accessed from a computer for easy adding and subtracting of due dates and to-do lists. The website syncs with the app and vice versa.