Getting Started with GIS for Educators

Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technology allows users to make maps and analyze data. Savvy educators have been using GIS since the early 1990s, but online GIS makes it easy for educators to get started quickly, even just learning on their own, online. Here is a sequenced set of resources and activities with which to begin; they start fast and easy, scaffold ideas and skills, and generally take more time and require more background as one progresses, so items should be experienced in order.

I. Learning About GIS & ArcGIS Online (takes about an hour to complete)
1. LINK - What Is GIS (1-min video)
2. LINK - GIS and Schools (2-min video)
3. LINK - Learn About Esri (4-part webpage plus video)
4. LINK - GIS in Ed Intro (quick PDF slideshow)
5. LINK - GIS in Schools YouTube playlist (short videos by school groups; see at least #1[HI])
6. LINK - AGO5x5 (activity instructions; do at least parts 1-3)
7. LINK - AGO Skillbuilder (activity; do Level One, steps 1-17)

II. Intro to Teaching with ArcGIS Online (takes about 24 hours to complete)
8. LINK - GeoInquiries™ video (6-min video)
9. LINK - GeoInquiries classroom activities (explore one per set, ~30 min)
10. LINK - Teaching with GIS (~4-hour online course; "esri login" required)
11. LINK - Get to Know GIS for Secondary Students (5-activity Learning Plan, ~6 hrs total)
12. LINK - AGO Use Strategies (2-page reference doc)
13. LINK - AGO Orgs for Schools (36-page Org setup guidance and reference doc)
14. LINK - Request an ArcGIS School Bundle for the school/club
15. LINK - USK12GIS Map (software sites; numbers up top lead to example work by students and educators across USA, GeoMentors, educator communities, and teacher events)

III. Boosting ArcGIS Online Background & Skills Useful for Instruction (takes weeks)
16. LINK - Story Maps Classic Gallery (use search & filter tools at left; see also "Apps")
17. LINK - AGO Skillbuilder (do Level Two, steps 18-58)
18. LINK - K12 GIS Org (try buttons 01-08: resources, lessons, maps & apps, movies, etc)
19. LINK - Teach GIS (scenario-based software activities, on "Learn ArcGIS"; use filters & search tool)
20. LINK - Esri MOOCs (several excellent choices; "esri login" required)

IV. Professional Development options (after "Level I" above, engage for lifelong learning)
21. LINK - Participate in GeoNet Groups (read-only or, with "esri login," set up a profile, join at least the Education space and K12 Instruction group, add other relevant groups)
22. LINK - Attend Esri Education GIS Conference
23. LINK - Attend events on GIS Education Event calendar/map
24. LINK - Do Developing Project Based Instructional Units Utilizing ArcGIS Online
25. LINK - Participate in Esri Teachers Teaching Teachers GIS (T3G) Institute