

ent Learning – Why Not?

separate page for each of the topics, a list of who was in which group, and a rubric for assessment. In less than an hour, using the instructions given on the pbwiki site, we had our wiki up and running. It really was almost as easy as making a peanut butter sandwich!

As the students worked together on building the site, they practised literacy skills. Writing was made more dynamic with the incorporation of hyperlinks and multimedia. They developed a deeper understanding of themes and ideas in the novel as they built upon what others had posted and as they reflected on connections between themselves and the world around them.

When asked to reflect on their first wiki experience, our students provided almost entirely positive feedback, and reinforced what we had expected:

“You can always edit and add more. It can be done on your own time.”

“This makes it so it isn’t just a single person effort and you can work off of other’s thoughts.”

“It gives us the chance to let our opinions be heard by everyone in the class”


“It was a creative idea and much better than doing something like writing an essay.”

This first wiki can still be found at www.mygenerationtoo.pbwiki.com and Kate’s latest and much improved version is now posted at <http://mrsmcgregorscuckoo.pbwiki.com>.

Wikis can be used for a variety of purposes including collaborative research, writing, analysis and discussion of books and literature circles, exploration of local interests, creative writing, and mind-mapping/

word webs to generate and compare ideas. Indeed, the collaborative and supportive nature of the wiki provides an opportunity for all students to have their voices heard, particularly those who would not normally participate in a conventional face-to-face discussion. The interdependent and multi-threaded nature of the wiki is ideal for many types of learners.

Joyce Valenza, in her article “Something Wiki This Way Comes... Are You Ready?,” says that “wikis are perhaps best used as a tool for writing, especially when the project involves collaborative authoring. Their major advantage over the paper notebook... is that wikis prepare students to write collaboratively in an authentic networked environment.... Wikis are good vehicles for classes engaged in peer-reviewed projects; they function as archived portfolios for classes serious about the writing process.” (131) Obviously, the process of learning has a significant impact on the product. Allowing the



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