How do we read in a Web

How do we teach rea

In a breakout period during an online session of Exploration of Web 2.0 for Teaching and Learning, Jessica Levitt (Teacher-Librarian, K-12, Southpointe Academy, Delta, B.C.) and I (Leslie Holwerda, Teacher-Librarian, Lougheed Middle School, Brampton, Ontario) had an online discussion of topics related to our graduate studies course in the University of Alberta's Master of Education Teacher-Librarianship Distance Learning Program (www.quasar.ualberta.ca/tl-dl/). New to the profession of Teacher-Librarianship, Jessica shared some of her thoughts about the concepts of reading for learning and reading for understanding with traditional and digital media.

Personal Web 2.0 Reading

Online reading behaviour is similar to hard copy reading although readers do link from one page to another to locate more information about topics of interest. Occasionally this completely distracts the reader from finishing the text, but in the end, understanding is better and perhaps more complete. However, if the reading is more personal, some readers rely on the internal links rather than external search engines such as Google.

Readers will admit that when reading on a screen, if it is not for pleasure, as with a novel or other traditional text, they usually read non-linearly. With hyperlinks begging to be followed, this style of reading is generally quick, but still feels like learning.

Personal learning on the web can be facilitated using Diigo.

com, a downloadable social bookmarking tool, to keep track of text online. To remember details, the reader may highlight text, capture a part of the page or the whole page, and bookmark it using tags to ease locating the pertinent information later. Readers may copy and paste larger chunks to a Word document to use immediately and include the site address for citation. Additional benefits of this tool include the community of readers who are also saving, bookmarking, as well as tagging relevant text. As a member of a Diigo group, the reader receives emails daily with lists of bookmarked sites. Instant PD!

Reading for understanding can be much slower and more linear. To truly understand and synthesize what is read, one has to discipline one's eyes to ignore distractions. It is another entirely separate skill to slow down and make sense of what is being read, to process it, visualize it, question it, connect with it, and infer from it.

Teaching Web 2.0 Reading

This is when we travel back in time to our Reading Additional Qualifications (AQ) course and to all the PD in reading strategies. Students need to be instructed that the way we read isn't just saying the words on the page, but also involves:

1. What we already know about the topic and text

Background knowledge comes into play with any reading or