

Technological Tools and Strategies for Teaching Research-Based Writing

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Abstract

To teach research-based writing effectively in today's multimedia learning environments, teachers need to be prepared to walk students through the process of locating, evaluating, and incorporating sources into their writing that come from a variety of media. Multimodal resources and Web-based applications for facilitating research encourage teachers to rethink how they prepare students to find research sources and to assess the methods they use to teach them to evaluate their findings. In this hands-on session, the presenter will demonstrate several Web 2.0 tools for facilitating the research process, including social bookmarking applications and research organization tools that help students engage in collaborative research. Participants will discuss possible models for teaching the evaluation of multimodal resources, and the presenter will share an innovative method that encourages students to develop and apply evaluative criteria for the selection of multimodal sources.

Outline/ Presentation Notes

The Dilemma

When you teach research-based writing to your students, how do you respond to these kinds of questions?

- How many print sources do I need to have?
- Does a journal article found in an online database count as a print source or an online source?
- Is an article from the *New York Times* online a print source or an online source?
- Is an online article that is also published in a journal, but printed from the online database rather than being photocopied, a print or online source?
- Are self-published books considered research sources?
- Can I use *Wikipedia* as one of the sources in my paper?

The Print vs. Online Dichotomy

A big part of the problem is that the print/online dichotomy doesn't work anymore. Some complications are as follows:

- A proliferation of various kinds of information is available to students when they are engaging in research-based writing
- The criteria presented in most popular textbooks for the evaluation and incorporation of sources falls short (i.e., Is the source a book? Is it a Web site? What is the extension on the URL?)

So...how do we teach our students to evaluate and select appropriate multimodal resources to use in their research-based writing?

A Potential Solution: An Evaluation Matrix

Encourage students to consider the nature of the source and the publication process:

	STATIC Published once and does not generally change	SYNDICATED Released, or syndicated, over time under the same general title (e.g., magazines, newspapers, journals)	DYNAMIC Continuously changeable through repeat performances or revisions
EDITED Reviewed by someone with authority or certification prior to publication			
PEER REVIEWED Reviewed by others in the same profession			
SELF-PUBLISHED Published and revised by the author			

- What kinds of resources could you imagine fitting into different areas in this matrix?
- Are there resources you can think of that don't fit?
- What are the advantages and disadvantages of adopting an evaluation matrix like the one described above? What challenges does it address? What new challenges might it raise?
- If you included a third dimension of time, how might that affect the evaluation? For example, at what point in the publication process did the editing or peer review occur?

URLs

Blogs

Applications:

- Edublogs (<http://www.edublogs.org>)
- Blogger (<http://www.blogger.com/start>)
- LiveJournal (<http://www.livejournal.com/>)

Resources:

- Instructional Blogging on Campus: Identifying Best Practices (http://www.campus-technology.com/news_article.asp?id=11311&typeid=155)
- Educational Blogging (<http://www.educause.edu/pub/er/ermo4/ermo450.asp?bhcp=1>.)
- Blogging as a Course Management Tool ([http://technologysource.org/article/blogging as a course management tool/](http://technologysource.org/article/blogging_as_a_course_management_tool/))

Wikis

Applications:

- Wetpaint (<http://www.wetpaint.com>)
- PB wiki (<http://pbwiki.com/>)
- Wikispaces (<http://www.wikispaces.com/>)

Resources:

- Wikis in Plain English, YouTube: v=-dnLooTdmLY
- Wetpaint in Plain English, YouTube: v=F7BAU2XX5Ws
- Exploration Guide: Educational Uses of Blogs, Wikis, RSS Feeds, etc. (<http://www.tltgroup.org/blogs.htm>)
- Wild About Wikis (<http://www.techlearning.com/showArticle.jhtml?articleID=191801354>)

Document Sharing

Applications:

- Google Documents (<http://docs.google.com/>)
- Zoho Writer (<http://www.zohowriter.com/>)
- Think Free (<http://www.thinkfree.com/>)

Resources:

- Google Docs in Plain English, YouTube: v=eRqUE6IHTEA
- Teaching Collaborative Revision with Google Docs: <http://www.google.com/educators/weeklyreader.html>
- Zoho Show and the Changing Face of Education: <http://blogs.zoho.com/show/zoho-show-and-the-changing-face-of-education/>

Social Bookmarking

Applications:

- Del.icio.us (<http://del.icio.us/>)
- Diigo (<http://www.diigo.com/>) has a built-in social element that makes sharing easier.
- Fleck (<http://www.fleck.com/>) allows users to annotate specific Web pages.
- Digg (<http://www.digg.com/>) allows for more detailed annotation and has a ranking system.

Resources:

- Social Bookmarking in Plain English, YouTube: v=x66lV7GOcNU
- Sites to See: Social Bookmarking (http://www.education-world.com/a_tech/sites/sites080.shtml)
- Towards a Managed Social Bookmarking Environment in Higher Education(<http://blogs.open.ac.uk/Maths/ajh59/005107.html>)
- Criteria for Evaluating Social Bookmarking Tools (<http://www.iddblog.org/?p=5>)

RSS Feeds

Aggregators:

- Google Reader (<http://www.google.com/reader/>)
- Newsgator (<http://www.newsgator.com/>)

Resources:

- RSS in Plain English, YouTube: v=oklgLsSxGsU

Project Management

Applications:

- Zotero: (<http://www.zotero.org>)
- Basecamp: (<http://www.basecamp.com>)
- Backpack: (<http://www.backpackit.com>)
- Foldera: (<http://www.foldera.com>)

Resources:

- Zotero Quick Start guide (<http://www.stanford.edu/group/cubberley/services/zotero>)
- “Mark of Zotero” in *Inside Higher Ed* (<http://insidehighered.com/views/2007/09/26/mclemee>)

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