

# Introducing Wiki

As an instructional tool  
ICoP workshop – 10/21  
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# What is a wiki?

- Hawaiian Word – meaning ‘quick’
- A website or a Word document
- Real strength lies in its collaborative nature
  - Multiple people can edit and contribute to the same document
  - History is kept as document is revised
  - Easy to use

*Q. How many Wiki people does it take to change a lightbulb?*

*A. One, but anyone can change it back. -[langreiter.com](http://langreiter.com)*

# Wikipedia

- The most famous wiki that puts the technology on the Internet map
- A collaborative website updated daily by thousands of people
- Interesting and useful information
  - Accuracy and validity is in constant debate
  - Nevertheless illustrates the power of collaboration
- You are always reading the final/most current version of the document
- [Heavy Metal Umlaut – evolution of a wikipedia page](#)
  - John Udell

# How does it work?

- A wiki page is basically a web page
  - With Simple navigation structure
- Simple user interface
  - Like the D2L HTML editor
  - Need to know a few formatting codes
  - Easy to spawn off new pages
  - Can handle complex HTML formatting if needed
- Authorized persons can edit the page or add new pages
  - All can read content
- Everyone is editing the same page
  - Add new information or comments, edit existing information
- All revisions are tracked in the History area
  - Can keep multiple versions
  - Can roll back if needed

# Two Main Wiki Styles

- Document Mode
  - Collaborative writing by contributors
  - Usually unsigned to make one coherent document
  - Represents the shared knowledge of beliefs of the contributors
- Threaded Mode
  - Contributors post and sign
  - Normally leave original content intact, just add
  - The reader can look at the whole thread of argument at one glance

(Leif & Cunningham, 2001)

# Using Wiki in Instruction

- Ice –breaker exercise
- Easy tool for creating websites as class projects
- Idea development with peer review
- Group authoring tool
- Project Tracking – from brainstorming to final product
- Data Collection
- Review Classes & Teachers
- Presentations – in place of ppt & keynotes

It is just up to your creativity.....

# Wikis are versatile

Wiki is easy to use, simple to format, yet

- Wiki is very versatile in handling
  - Languages – Japanese, Russian, Arabic...
  - Math equations and symbols – TeX extension
  - Chemical Formulae
  - Musical notations

# Who hosts Wiki systems

- Hosting services available
  - Some are free, some cost
- Some are more limited than others
- Each system has a different 'dialect'
  - Formatting codes are not standard
  - Not difficult to learn, but can be annoying
- Some campuses host their own
  - Easier to deal with user authorization
  - Better support when needed

# Some hosting services

- PBwiki <http://www.pbwiki.com/>
- JotSpot Live <http://www.jotspot.com/>
- seedwiki <http://www.seedwiki.com/>
- Writeboard <http://www.Writeboard.com/>
- Writely <http://www.writely.com/>
- StikiPad <http://www.StikiPad.com/>
- SocialText <http://www.SocialText.com/>
- Wikispaces <http://www.wikispaces.com/>
- Wetpaint <http://www.wetpaint.com/>

**Comparing wiki services**

<http://www.wikimatrix.org/>

# Some Example Sites

- A course on Blogs & Wikis at Bemidji State University
  - Creative Writing
- Rhetoric Course at Penn State
  - Use as blogs, class announcement, syllabus
- Collaborative Writing Project – SUNY Geneseo
  - Annotated Text “visit to St. Nick”
- OpenSpectrum – Emerson College
  - content management tool for Spectroscopy

# Getting to a good start

- Wiki starts as a blank page
  - Example
- Provide a structure to get started
  - Organize by students or groups
  - Organize by assignments
- Provide easy to access instructions
  - For the assignment
  - For editing the system
- Give your students some orientation
  - Formatting codes and references

# How about Wiki as a Resource

- Wikis directories do exist
  - Wikiindex -<http://www.wikiindex.com/>
  - SiteList <http://www.usemod.com/cgi-bin/wiki.pl?SiteList>
- Just like any website or blog, you need to identify the source and verify its validity
- Interesting information on many topics
  - [Davis CA guide](#)
- An easy to read reference for Wiki/Blog/Feeds/Podcast use in Education from TLT group-

<http://www.tltgroup.org/blogs.htm#Resources%20for%20Dev%20Blogs%20Wikis>

# To Blog or Wiki or not?

## First Questions

- Who should be able to create chunks of text/images?
  - Who should be able to edit chunks of text/images?
  - Who should be able to add comments about chunks of text/images?
  - Who should be able to edit comments?
  - Who should be able to organize, re-organize, delete items/chunks?
  - Who should be able to control access to the assembled materials?
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- What goals and characteristics of this situation require something other than D2L discussion forum or in class discussion?