

# Web 2.0 Tools and Literacy Skills

---

**Question:** Is the use of Web 2.0 tools in an elementary classroom setting effective in improving student literacy skills?

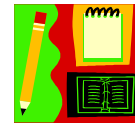
**Abstract:** Since each team member teaches in an elementary classroom, the goal was for each of us to choose a variety of Web 2.0 tools to use with our students, focusing specifically on tools that best fit with our own curricular objectives. It was important for both the students and teachers to keep in mind that the purpose of this particular use of technology was to monitor the development of student reading and writing skills.

## **Objectives:**

- 1) Use a variety of Web 2.0 tools with our students in ways that relate to our curriculum
- 2) Monitor students' reading and writing skills with the hope of seeing a definite improvement over the course of the project
- 3) Document using surveys, interviews, videos, samples of student work, anecdotal notes
- 4) Engage students and ensure that they have an audience to share their work with, such as classmates, friends and family, pen pals, school division, and the world

## **Web 2.0 Tools:**

- Kidblog and Wordpress – student and teacher blogging
- Glogster – demonstrating knowledge in a glog using text, pictures, video, audio, etc.
- Gmail – email pen pals, communicate with teachers and classmates
- Google Docs – student collaboration in small and large groups
- Google Sites – build websites to show learning
- Instant chat – communicate with people
- Voice Thread – demonstrate learning using both audio and visuals
- YouTube – student-filmed tutorials to post online
- Wikispaces – student and teacher-created wikis, online student portfolios
- Fakebook – create online profiles for historical figures



## **Conclusions:**

- Based on the results of our mini implementation, we can conclude that the use of Web 2.0 tools in an elementary classroom setting can lead to an improvement in student literacy skills.
- Knowing that they had an audience played a huge role in how much effort and time the students spent on their work. The bigger the audience, the more they wanted to ensure their work was well done. Bigger audience = better work. Limited audience = not as much focus on demonstrating strong literacy skills.
- Smaller and shorter time-framed projects were more well received by the students and kept them focused on their reading and writing skills, whereas more complex and longer time-framed projects were found to be overwhelming and thus, focus on literacy skills seemed to be lost.
- It is crucial that a wide variety of Web 2.0 tools are used in the classroom so that students with a variety of learning styles can be accommodated.
- Overall, students enjoyed using the computers and experimenting with Web 2.0 tools. Many said that, "Technology makes learning more fun." When asked, the students communicated that they would like to use computers even more in their learning.

**Documentation:** In order to reach our conclusions, we used the following methods of documentation

- Reading and writing skills rubrics – completed by both students and teachers at the beginning, middle, and end of the project
- Google Docs Form – online survey completed by students to gather information about literacy skills and engagement reached through the use of Web 2.0 tools, pre- and post-survey
- Student interviews – chose specific students to interview throughout the project
- Recording videos and taking pictures – showing students working with Web 2.0 tools
- Anecdotal notes – teacher observations and impressions
- Samples of student work – compare student work from before and after the project, analyze literacy skills in particular

**URLs to Share:** The following URLs include links to our rubrics, survey, Google Docs, and videos

~ PLP Wiki – includes project details, <http://plpcanadian10.wikispaces.com/Chinook%27s+Edge+Team+7>

~ Reading and writing skills rubrics – analyze students' literacy skills, <http://tinyurl.com/424ar65>

~ Google Docs Form – pre-and post-survey used with students, <http://tinyurl.com/446rmah>

~ Team 7 Google Docs – used by our team to collaborate, <http://tinyurl.com/3fqpwps>

~ Student interview – completed at the end of the project, <http://youtu.be/vnhSOELXKug>

~ Students using Web 2.0 tools – Grade 6s working on projects, <http://youtu.be/XXEfiriiWZc>

**Student Work Samples:** Below is a list of URLs that will lead you to examples of students using Web 2.0 tools in the classroom

~ Kidblog – poetry blogs written by Grade 6 students, <http://kidblog.org/MsPattersonsClass/>

~ WordPress – blog used by students and teacher in a Grade 8 class, <http://tinyurl.com/3ztebb4>

~ YouTube – video tutorial created by a student, [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxHR12x\\_efw](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UxHR12x_efw)

~ Wikispaces – online student portfolios, <http://cremonagrade8.wikispaces.com/>

~ Google Sites – website created by Grade 6 students, <http://tinyurl.com/4xh3eb9>

~ Glogster – assignment given to Grade 6 students, <http://spruceview6.edu.glogster.com/glogster-assignment/>

As a teacher, if you are interested in doing further research on the connection between the use of Web 2.0 tools in the classroom and student literacy skills, please feel free to use our project materials and examples as a starting point. Contact us if you would like any further information!

**CESD Team 7**

Teri Patterson, Jody Watson, Cherra-Lynne Olthof, and Kim Gramlich