

## **MLC Libraries – a school library’s journey with students, staff and Web 2.0 technologies : blogs, wikis and e-Books – where are we going next?**

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### **Abstract**

This workshop paper explores the Web 2.0 journey of the MLC Libraries’ teacher-librarians, librarian, library and audio visual technicians. Our journey was initially inspired by Will Richardson and supported by the School Library Association of Victoria (SLAV) Web 2.0 professional development program. The 12 week technological skills program ‘23 things’ assisted in motivating the MLC Libraries’ team to adopt Web 2.0 technologies into their daily work with students and staff.

### **Summary**

Originally in 2008 staff developed blogs as a communication tool between each other and then between students and staff. During 2008 Methodist Ladies' College supported the use of internal blogs by students and staff. Blogs were the initial Web 2.0 technologies adopted by the library staff. The use of wikis followed in 2009 when the College provided a wiki platform for learning and teaching tools within the intranet. The library team members with initial blog experience seized the opportunity to expand their knowledge. Professional development support from MLC and the SLAV program assisted library staff with this educational journey. As confidence with Web 2.0 technologies increased, staff were empowered to broaden their communication experience with colleagues, teachers, students and the school community.

In 2010 blogs and wikis are being used to communicate with different groups within the MLC community. Literature Club students enjoy communicating via a blog and Year 11 International Baccalaureate Diploma Extended Essay students have information delivered via a wiki. Year 7 Information Networker students have shared their ideas via a class blog which has now developed into a wiki. The original MLC Libraries’ staff blog was used to share minutes, ideas, curriculum and photos of library based activities to assist with developing each person’s skills. It is now used for discussion topics. Meeting minutes and professional development reports are now being communicated via a wiki. A co-curricular wiki has recently been developed for lunch time craft students to which students and staff may contribute. In addition some teacher librarians have collaborated with classroom teachers and added information about resources to subject based wikis developed outside the library.

E-Books are another delivery method for information and literature that is being promoted and integrated into the library collection. They form part of the escalating collection of online resources and are changing the face of the school library's collection.

According to Karen Li “E-Learning is most effective where:

- technology tools and connectivity are deeply integrated into the classroom and used across the curriculum
- teachers are skilled and comfortable using digital resources to enhance teaching and learning” (Li, 2009, p. 31).

In our experience the most effective use of Web 2.0 technologies are when they are linked to a specific purpose and audience.

## Introduction

The development of Web 2.0 technologies, such as wikis and blogs, and the integration of these into the curriculum, has led to a new form of interaction, research skills and access between teacher-librarians, students and teachers. Along with the introduction of these burgeoning technologies, teacher-librarians are also instrumental in providing education, insight and support into the areas of students' online safety and cyber bullying, privacy and copyright, issues of plagiarism and how we are going to assimilate these emerging technologies into our new national Curriculum (Hay 2009).

To initially outline the Web 2.0 journey of the MLC Libraries' team over the last few years the following questions have been answered - Why? When? What? Where? Who? How?

### Why did we as a team begin this Web 2.0 technological journey?

- Integrate Web 2.0 technologies into daily work practices
- Improve delivery of library information programs and services
- Encourage staff and students with the benefits of Web 2.0 technologies
- Empower all team members with knowledge and skill of Web 2.0 technologies
- Improve communication with staff and students
- Ensure the combined professional development activity had dual benefits for all team members

### When did the Web 2.0 journey begin?

Timeline summary	Technologies
2008	Initial PD, Blogs PD, Blogs
2009	Wikis PD, Wikis
2010	Wikis
2011	Web 3.0

#### 2008

- Web 2.0 technologies – awareness and development
- Director hears Will Richardson in May at Syba Signs conference, Sydney, “The Why 2 of Web 2.0 : How it transforms everything”
- Director inspired to encourage team to become involved with Web 2.0
- Discussion between director and librarian to establish best way forward
- MLC Professional Development supported staff in SLAV ‘23 things’ program
- ‘23 things’ program for first group of team
- Initial development of blogs by individual staff
- Blogs introduced as main online means of communication between team members
- Second group of staff under the guidance of librarian start ‘23 things’ program
- Presentations of staff Web 2.0 experiences at department meetings

#### 2009

- Transition to wikis for some blogs
- Some blogs disbanded
- Third group of staff start or finalise ‘23 things’ program
- International Baccalaureate Diploma Extended Essay wiki used for first time to deliver IB Diploma Extended Essay Library Support program

#### 2010

- Wikis the focus

- Online program ‘The PLN – Personal Learning Network program via SLAV in partnership with the State Library of Victoria started by new teacher-librarian
- New AV technician begins in-house ‘23 things’ program with librarian
- Wikis develop and become more complex
- Launch of MLC Libraries Resources wiki developed by librarian
- Establishment of IASL Conference paper wiki for 5 people
- Goal to upgrade library website in 2011 to allow integration of Web 2.0

2011

- Library website – integrate Web 2.0 technologies
- Launch of upgraded website
- Web 3.0 and beyond

**What type of Web 2.0 technologies have been part of the journey?**  
***Web 2.0 ‘23 things’***

Week 1: About Learning 2.0 and Starting a blog

Week 2 Flickr and photo sharing

Week 3: Play week – Image generator and Library Thing

Week 4: RSS feeds

Week 5: Get social – MySpace and Facebook

Week 6: Google Tools

Week 7: iGoogle home page

Week 8: Social bookmarking and Library 2.0 – del.icio.us and Library 2.0 movement

Week 9: Wikis and Rollyo

Week 10: Podcasts and Videos

Week 11: Second Life;

Week 12: e-Books and audio books

*Blogs developed by MLC Libraries staff 2008-2010*

- MLC Libraries Staff 2009
- TAB (Talk about Books) 2008
- MLC Literature Club 2008
- Networkers 2008

*Wikis developed by MLC Libraries staff 2008-2010*

- Communities and Citizenship Project 2008
- Craft 2010
- IASL Conference 2010
- IB Diploma Extended Essay 2009
- Library Meetings 2010
- LitNotes 2010
- Magazines 2010
- MLC Libraries Resources 2009
- Networkers Semester 1 2010
- PLP Goal 3 : Sharing classrooms 2010

## **Where are the Web 2.0 technologies used by MLC students and staff?**

- Library
- Classrooms
- Staff offices
- Home

## **Who has been involved in the Web 2.0 journey?**

- MLC Libraries' team: director, teacher-librarians, librarian, AV & library technicians
- Director of learning & curriculum
- Learning technology consultants
- Director of technology & curriculum services
- Director of computing & multi-media
- Computer & communications centre staff
- Director of professional development
- Students
- Classroom teachers

## **How have the Web 2.0 technologies been introduced to students and staff?**

### *Junior School Library (Primary)*

In the Junior School library, a large part of the program for Years 5 and 6 is to introduce these emerging Web 2.0 technologies and potential Web 3.0 technologies into sessions that support students understanding of the range and features of these technologies, along with their potential applications and pitfalls. As all students in Years 5 and 6 have their own notebooks, it is essential that they are given the opportunity to understand why and what the internet is, along with what students have access to on the Internet. It is surprising how many students think the Internet just 'exists', but have not actually thought about its origins. The library sessions are conducted through power point presentations, interactive activities both online and evaluative, using question and answer sessions through the actual application and use of various Web 2.0 tools and websites. In these sessions students discuss online safety, evaluate different websites and technologies focusing on their accuracy, reliability and merit, and students are referred to programs such as 'Super Club Plus', and online educational programs available through the Cybersmart website in order to build their knowledge of these applications in a safe environment. In 2010 we have set up an internal wiki for our Years 5 and 6 JS Book Bugs students to actively input their thoughts, recommendations and views on current books, emerging e-Book technologies and their readers.

Walton Library (Secondary)

## Blogs

MLC Literature Club Blog

MLC Lit Club is a group of Year 7 – 12 students who meet weekly to share a love and appreciation of literature. The teacher-librarian coordinates weekly sessions, organises activities and encourages student participation and membership. Before establishing a blog for the MLC Literature Club in 2009, the teacher-librarian worked with a learning technology consultant teacher for two sessions. This was needed to understand the concept of blogging and learn how to set up and maintain a blog as part of the mymlc website. Previously the Lit Club members had access to a discussion forum which is part of EduKate, an online curriculum delivery software program. Lit Club students from Years 7 to 12 have posting rights on the blog and student posts have not so far needed to be edited. Bloggers review/discuss particular authors (Agatha Christie), titles (“Twilight”), favourite picture books (“The Very Hungry Caterpillar”), conduct polls. They document special events, author visits, book selection activities, excursions and joint meetings with other schools. Students are encouraged to continue discussions online about a topic of interest arising at the weekly meeting. Teacher librarians also form part of the Lit Club blog audience and there is a link from the Library homepage to the blog.

#### *TAB: Talk About Books blog*

Talk About Books (TAB) is a staff book club that meets twice a term. In 2008 a blog was created for this group with the aim of promoting collaboration outside our meeting times and encouraging reading conversations. The blog includes information about meeting dates, upcoming events and allows members to post reviews and comments. The main contributors to this blog are library staff, rather than other faculty members. We had hoped for a broader range of contributors; however, this has not been the case to date, and so the future of this blog is under review.

#### *2010 MLC Libraries Staff Blog*

The screenshot shows a WordPress-style blog interface. At the top, there are navigation links: 'Add Post | Change Template | Manage Categories | Settings'. The main header reads 'The 2010 MLC Libraries Staff Blog' with a subtitle 'A forum for the sharing, discussion and reflection of ideas and issues in school library environments.' On the left sidebar, there is a calendar for June 2010, a 'Categories' list with items like 'Communication', 'e books', 'e libraries', 'Professional development', and 'Technology', and a 'Recent Posts' section. The main content area displays two posts. The first post is dated 'WEDNESDAY, 19 MAY, 2010' and is titled 'e books; e libraries; e journals; e world - the 6 Ws - your response would be valuable in the 2011-2012 planning process!'. The post content includes several questions for discussion, such as 'What does the e library of MLC bring to mind for you?' and 'When will we be an e library or are we one already?'. It also includes a deadline: 'Please respond by May 31'. The second post is dated 'FRIDAY, 14 MAY, 2010' and is titled 'Communicating with colleagues'. The post content begins with 'COMMUNICATING WITH COLLEAGUES: As we approach a very busy time of the school year, please take the time to think of...'

In 2008 the MLC Libraries' staffs were introduced to a blog for communication about library issues, meeting agendas, minutes, social activities and sharing of information. This blog was a useful way to encourage all team members to use a new technology, increase their blog skills and interact with one another in an online environment different to email.

This blog has served its purpose and has now evolved into the Library Meetings wiki. In 2010 the blog has been used for discussion about a range of issues including e-Books, e-Learning and e-Libraries. A decision has been made by the staff to continue to use this blog as an online discussion forum.

## Wikis

MLC Libraries' staff members have developed a number of wikis since 2008. Each wiki has been created with a specific purpose and audience in mind. They include wikis where the primary audience is students, those directed at library staff, and others that cater for a combination of groups.

### *MLC Libraries Resources wiki*

In 2009 the College provided a wiki platform for learning and teaching tools within the intranet. The MLC Resources wiki was developed to provide supplementary information to the school library website. The platform of the current library website has made it difficult to accommodate information with a range of Web 2.0 features.



Library resources have been presented on various college intranet sites as well as the library website. Another aim of the wiki is to provide a space to collect those resources from internal sources and add useful resources available from external sources in one place.

The librarian initiated the development of the MLC Libraries Resources wiki. Once developed this wiki was launched to heads of department by the director and librarian in Term 1, 2010. In Term 2, 2010 this wiki was made available to all staff. Eventually the wiki will be integrated into the library website for staff and students.

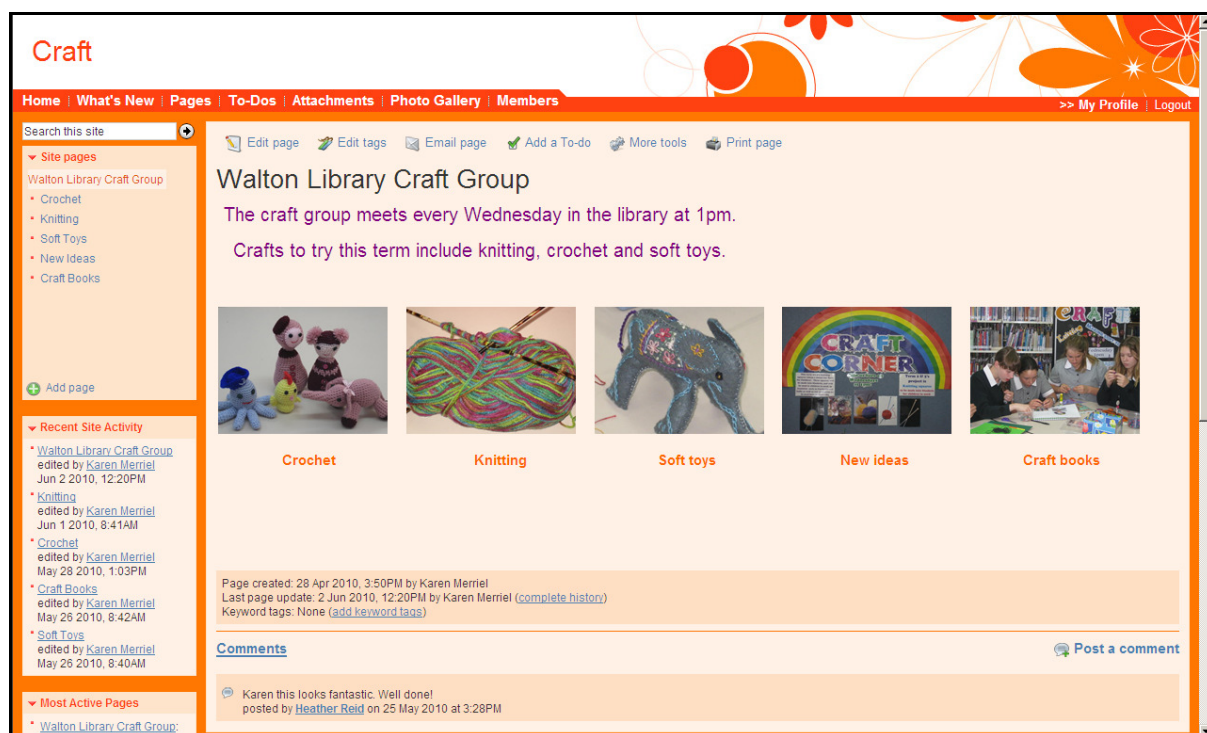


All teacher-librarians, librarian, library technicians and AV technicians, were given author rights and were able to contribute to the various sections of the wiki. Contents include promotional materials, database tutorials, equipment manuals and descriptions and new resources added to the library collection. Various Web 2.0 features were used for editing including photos, podcasting and video casting. During the development period, team members constantly exchanged tips and findings whilst working on the wiki. Great team work developed and it has helped the staff to embrace new technologies with ease.

## Co-curricular wikis

### *Craft wiki*

The Craft wiki developed in 2010 by a library technician was designed to support the Wednesday lunchtime library craft group. This group includes Year 7-12 students and library staff who meet weekly to work on craft projects. The wiki provides an opportunity for staff and students to contribute photographs, patterns and ideas for craft projects.



### *Curriculum wikis*

Three of the wikis created by teacher-librarians were designed to support curriculum programs.

#### *Year 9 Communities and Citizenship Project (CC Project)*

The Communities and Citizenship Project wiki was developed as a vehicle for sharing information about the CC Project, an independent research project that all Year 9 students undertake over a nine week period. This wiki was the first wiki developed by a member of the MLC Libraries' team. The teacher-librarian worked with a learning technology consultant during development.



Communities and Citizenship Project

Home | What's New | Pages | To-Dos | Attachments | Photo Gallery | Members >> My Profile | Styles | Settings | Logout

Search this site

Edit page Edit tags Email page Add a To-do More tools Print page

Welcome to our Wiki!

**Welcome to the Year 9 Kew Term Communities and Citizenship Project Wiki!**



- The wiki will allow us to share information about the CC Project
- It will allow all Kew term students to access information about the Project schedule.
- It will publish information about communities and citizenship.
- A list of useful terms and definitions will be added to a glossary.
- Useful tips about successful and effective research will be provided.

Recent Site Activity

- Library Research Skills edited by Pauline Reeve Apr 30 2010, 3:21PM
- About the Communities and Citizenship Project edited by Pauline Reeve Apr 22 2010, 2:28PM
- Learning Commons added by Roxanne Ciddor Apr 19 2010, 3:08PM
- Day 8 Presentation Showcase support documents edited by Pauline Reeve Apr 14 2010, 12:29PM
- What do students think? edited by Clare Vella Feb 13 2010, 2:47PM

Most Active Pages

- Library Research Skills: 8 updates
- About the Communities and Citizenship Project

### Networkers Semester 1 2010 wiki

The Networkers Semester 1 2010 wiki supports the library Networkers course, an elective for Year 7 students. This class wiki was designed to assist Networker students with their elective. All course information is uploaded to the wiki enabling students to find relevant resources in one place.

Networkers Semester 1 2010

Home | What's New | Pages | Attachments | Photo Gallery Logout

Search this site

Welcome to Networkers!!

Email page Print page

**Our Networkers Wiki will be a fantastic place for you to share new learnings about digital story telling, multimedia software and visual literacy.**

**Stop here to find all your course information, lessons, timetable and more!!**






Recent Site Activity

- Lesson 10 - Presenting your Digital Photo Stories edited by Clare Vella May 25 2010, 9:32AM
- Lesson 9 - creating your Digital Photo Stories! edited by Clare Vella

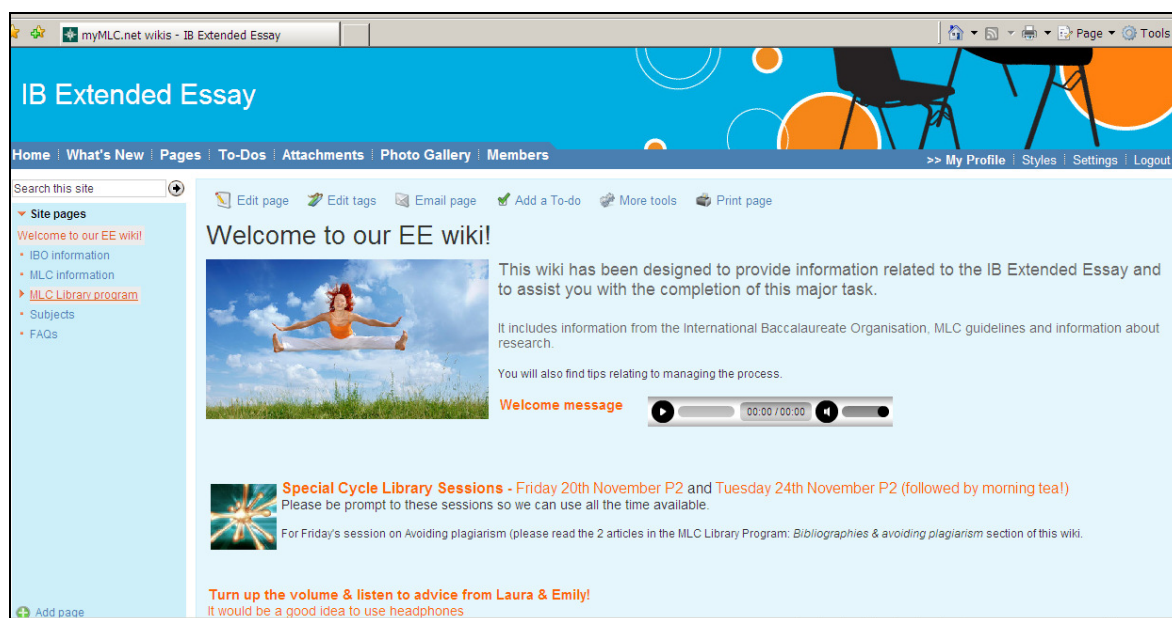
Page created: 6 Mar 2010, 7:24PM by Clare Vella

Students can also share their educational journey by adding comments to the wiki. A new wiki is set up each semester and the previous version is then archived.

### *IB Diploma Extended Essay wiki*

The library plays an integral part in supporting students as they embark on their research for this major task. Each year between September and November the library provides a program targeted at Year 11 IB Diploma Extended Essay students. The program is underpinned by the Information Search Process. It provides an overview of information and about locating sources, avoiding plagiarism, referencing, and tips about managing the task.

When planning the library support program for these students in 2009, the question arose about how to gather the wide range of resources provided by the teacher-librarians to support these students. Would blog or wiki technology best suit the purpose of the IB Diploma Extended Essay Library Support Program and the needs of this particular group of students? The primary goal was to gather relevant information for students undertaking their International Baccalaureate Diploma Extended Essay and to provide a platform for relevant information from the International Baccalaureate Organisation, such as official guidelines; MLC information related to the Extended Essay; and library information in terms of research skills, management tips and sources of information. It was decided that a wiki, rather than a blog would best suit these aims.



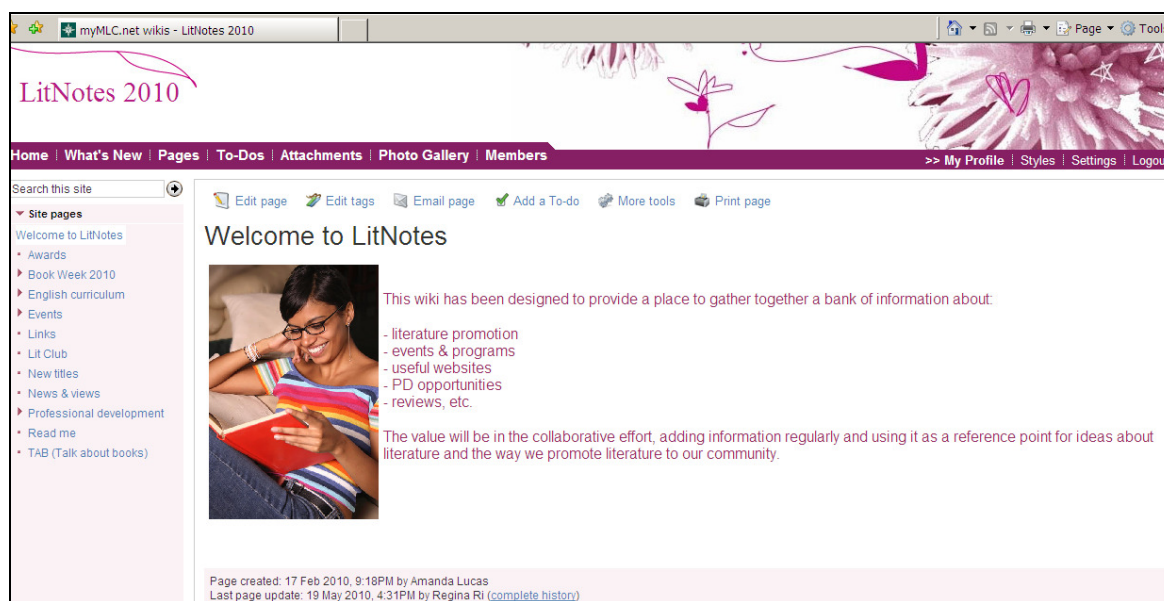
The audience members for the wiki are IB Diploma students and teachers, Extended Essay supervisors and the teacher-librarians. Author rights are granted to the teacher-librarians, relevant subject teachers and supervisors. The main benefit of this IB Extended Essay (EE) wiki has been the opportunity to gather information from a range of different sources and make it available to students and staff in the one location. The wiki has been easy to edit and manage compared to editing the library website, where some of the information was previously located, so that a range of people can edit the page with little user training. Feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with comments like “brilliant”, “a great example of how this new tool will be useful in the future”, and “fantastic, dynamic, informative and easy to find things”.

The success of this wiki quickly led to the development of several other wikis amongst the team. The IB EE wiki was the catalyst of inspiration for other MLC Libraries’ staff.

### *LitNotes wiki*

LitNotes is a wiki that is designed to keep the teacher-librarians up to date with current information related to

books and reading. It is divided into categories that include; Awards, Book Week, English curriculum, Events, Links, Lit Club, New titles, and Professional development opportunities.



### *Meetings wiki*

The Library Meetings wiki grew from the desire to gather all library meeting agendas and minutes together, along with other relevant reports and newsletters. The wiki has resulted in a more efficient way of disseminating information to a large team. As all library staff members have author rights it has increased the exposure of library staff to Web 2.0 technologies and enabled all library staff to develop their skills. Each of the three teams has a section for their agendas, minutes and professional development activities.

### *Subject wiki*

A recent development has been the inclusion of links to library resources on a class subject wiki. The Year 8 Age of Discovery wiki was created by a subject teacher as part of the history curriculum. The library was invited to contribute a list of suggested print resources and websites to the 'Helpful Resources' page of the wiki. At the suggestion of the teacher-librarian, direct links to the library catalogue and selected online databases were also added to the page. This meant that students could quickly navigate to relevant selected resources and usage statistics revealed an increase in database use.

Our wikis journey with has been an adventure. Lots of learning has taken place as ideas and skills have been shared and collaboration amongst team members has increased. At this stage we need to review the numbers of wikis we have created in terms of purpose, focus and time management.

### **e-Books**

The e-Book format was investigated to decide whether they would be suitable for the library collection. There are a couple of platforms which are used for e-Book delivery such as the e-Book Amazon Kindle. New platforms and readers continue to be released and will impact on decision making in school libraries.

There are several e-Book readers on the Australian market such as Amazon Kindle, Sony reader, and Apple iPad. In December 2009 the College purchased two Kindles and circulated them amongst library staff to find out their usability. The overall consensus was that the reader was good for personal use. Positive features included the change of fonts, no backlight, and mobility. Amazon Kindles were also lightweight, had a long battery life, a dictionary and note taking function as well as audio function. The positive features of the Kindle outweighed the negative aspects such as the absence of a touch screen and the presence of too many

buttons. Currently we are still evaluating the potential of this type of technology and suitability for our school learning environment.

The other delivery format of e-Books we are investigating is via the Internet. The library purchased some non-fiction e-Book titles for class use. E-Books are catalogued as individual items in the library catalogue as well as a collective entry in the library online resources collection. These e-Books are accessible with a username and password from the library website. The e-Books have a full search capability and function of citation, dictionary and note making. The e-Book format is especially valuable when multiple classes are engaged in the same topic for a project. The library is also considering adding some reference e-Books to the collection. E-Book resources enable students and staff to access online print resources at any time or place if connected to the college intranet.

### **Conclusion – Where are we going in the future?**

Students are never too young to be given insight into the *why* and *how* of using these technologies. We as adults often take for granted that students still need to be educated about the use of these platforms that they seem to be so familiar with using on a day to day basis. This is how they communicate. By teaching and promoting evaluative thinking and essential understandings of these emerging technologies, we are allowing our students to access these applications safely and with a sound knowledge. It is up to us to work with our students to further their knowledge in the area of Web 2.0 technologies and to ensure their safe access to the very powerful applications that they have before them. In the words of Sir Francis Bacon, “Knowledge is Power”.

Our school library team has used information communication technologies to improve student learning outcomes. These technologies have enhanced relationships between colleagues, with students and assisted with promotion of resources, literature and information literacy programs. Where we journey to next in this constantly changing and evolving communication and technological environment is part of the future direction of MLC Libraries.

*Three key learnings:*

- *When developing a blog or wiki, establishing the purpose and audience is essential*
- *Staff were both excited, inspired and challenged by Web 2.0 technologies*
- *A constantly evolving technological environment provides both empowerment and challenges for staff*

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This statement certifies that the paper above is based upon original research undertaken by the author and that the paper was conceived and written by the author(s) alone and has not been published elsewhere. All information and ideas from others is referenced.