

Integrated Media Literacy Project

Healthy Living Wikis (Intermediate Grades)

Project Description

The purpose of the project is to show the students the educational capacity of technology and to use different tools to discuss topics surrounding the theme of healthy living. Popplet (<http://www.popplet.com>) can be used to create a mind map about what it means to live in a healthy way, while Wikispaces (<http://www.wikispaces.com/content/teacher>) can be used as a platform to collaboratively write about healthy living and its impacts on our everyday lives. Students are introduced to new ways of learning while developing research, interaction and communication skills.

Before the Project

- Research and learning: Teachers should review the teaching and learning points they wish to cover in the unit, and should choose a set of questions to pose students that engage in these topics. For example, they could ask students:
 - What elements would be important in developing a physically active lifestyle?
 - What impact does healthy eating have on a person in the short and long term?
 - How does an emotionally healthy lifestyle benefit a person in everyday life?Students should have discussed or reviewed some answers or information related to the above questions before any web 2.0 tools are introduced.
- Technical and Media Setup:
 - Teachers should explore Popplet and Wikispaces to become familiar with the tools before introducing them to the class, signing up for accounts in the process. Teachers should be sure to sign up for a teacher account on Wikispaces and can invite students to become members of the class wiki. (<http://www.wikispaces.com/content/teacher>)
 - Should schools or districts not provide them, teachers should also create an email account for each student so they will have an address to sign-up for any web accounts for each site. Personal email addresses are not recommended due to privacy and safety concerns.
 - The teacher should arrange for computer equipment and group accordingly to availability. It is a good idea to warn the students in advance about bandwidth and other unexpected technological limitations to avoid frustration later on.

First Online Session

- To generate discussion, teachers can ask students how technology can be used for learning, and create a Popplet to compile the ideas from students and display it on the screen so the class can follow along. The class can discuss what online tools they currently use for

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learning, and the teacher can use this opportunity to share the project details, and the basics of Wikispaces and Voicethread.

- Teachers should discuss responsible use and copyright, reminding students to cite information and image sources by indicating the website address and name, along with the author or organization who created the site. We recommend that teachers also demonstrate (and have students practice) how to rephrase information from various sources into their own words.
- Teachers can then divide the class into groups, and evenly distribute the assignment questions among the students.
- After demonstrating the basic features of Popplet (how to add a popple, change its color, add text, and reorganize the Popplet) students login with a pseudonym and their provided email addresses, and can work in their groups for the remaining class time to create a preliminary mind map to respond to their assigned Healthy Living question.

Second Online Session

- Teachers can start this session by returning students to their groups, and asking them to open their mind maps from the previous session.
- Teachers can then Introduce Wikispaces and the purpose of using the platform: to collaboratively create an online web-space that answers the assigned questions. Rules and guidelines for peer editing and contributing ideas should be reviewed and collaboratively agreed upon; these rules can be created on a page to allow the full class to test run the process of collaborative writing. Rules may include:
 - Keep safe and private – never write your personal information, other than your first name, on the wiki;
 - Be truthful and honest – ensure that everything you add is accurate and true to the best of your knowledge;
 - Don't delete someone else's work without discussing it with them and ensuring that the information is unnecessary in answering your question;
 - Feel free to add information whenever you see incomplete facts or ideas;
 - Communicate as much as possible! Talk to each other and assign each contributing writer a task to ensure that questions are fully answered;
 - Don't leave inappropriate, thoughtless or silly comments as they will be deleted.
- Teachers can invite students to their wiki, and can show students how to accept their invitation and become a member of the wiki. Please note that upon joining, students will be prompted to create their own wiki; remind them that for the purposes of this project, this is unnecessary and may cause confusion.
- Teachers can ask one member of each student group to create a page within the wiki by using the "Pages and Files" tab, naming it with their question and group members' first

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names. In this way, everyone working on the same question can comment and edit each other's content, knowing they are on the right page.

- Students can spend the rest of class compiling information from their Popplets into their wiki pages, writing now in full sentences, in paragraphs or point form as necessary, answering the questions and adding references to online information at the bottom of their page.

Third Online Session

- Students can resume work on their wikis, adding links to useful websites for local healthy living supports (e.g. recreation and parks departments in government, local gyms and recreation centers, wellness and counseling centers, etc.) and adding pictures, videos and references.
- Once wikis are complete, or are nearly complete, students can also invite another student group to check spelling, grammar, coherence and to suggest ideas to keep improving the site;
- When ready, the students should present their final project, either to one or two other groups, or in a round-robin site-visit (rotating around the computer lab to visit each others' sites online). If time permits, teachers can also have students share their wikis with the whole class, and reflect on the process of its creation.
- To engage students in reflecting about their online learning, ask students:
 - How does using different information sources enhance our understanding of the healthy living activities and resources in our community?
 - How does using a wiki change the process of undertaking a project as a group? Is it easier or harder, and in what ways?
 - How can you use the class wiki pages as a resource to encourage your own healthy living practices?

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