

# Engaging the Google generation through Web 2.0: part 1



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## Where to with information literacy?

**I**nformation literacy is not just about finding information; it is a true catalyst for educational change. Effective competencies and strategies for information seeking make independent lifelong learning possible. The tools for information seeking and the spaces for information sharing are changing and developing. It is important for teacher-librarians to become familiar with these developments, and to respond to the changing learning landscape.

One space in this new Information and Communication Technology (ICT) landscape that has raised questions in the minds of many is the MySpace website. The social networking of MySpace, FaceBook, Second life and other online social spaces, alerts us to the fact that something is afoot. MySpace is busier than Google (Abram, 2006). It is reported that it gets about two to three times the

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traffic of Google daily. There are over 150 000 new MySpace accounts being created daily.

To learn is to engage and develop as a person within, and as part of, our social framework. Ultimately, it's not just about skills and competencies in isolation, but about skills and competencies within the greater context of our global society. The reality is that the web environments of these social networks are very empowering when utilised to develop ideas, share resources, hone knowledge, and empower creativity.

The MySpace generation is 'creating new forms of social behavior that blur the distinctions between online and real-world interactions' (Hemple, 2005). This is the difference between us and our students: most adults see the Internet as an adjunct to their lives, most students see the Internet as intrinsic to their lives.

What are we doing to support learner groups to connect in virtual environments, bearing in mind this is a natural extension of life for our millennial generation? How do we

create a learning framework that is real, physical, virtual, and even visceral? How can we help our students need to learn?

## Learning now

During the last 10 years, we have built school websites, developed school intranets, deployed content and learning management systems, engaged with each other through email and listservs such as OZTL\_NET, and worked out how to integrate various ICTs in the curriculum. Now we are rapidly moving into an era of connective technology and pervasive interactivity. There is possibly a new wave of innovation for teaching and learning through the emergence of social software and the personalisation of education.

*For educators, the potential changes in the ways our teachers teach and students learn are momentous. The tools of the new internet give us opportunities for collaboration and for constructivist learning, and allow students to become meaningful contributors to the vast body of knowledge that is the [social] internet. (Richardson, 2006)*

We need to look for new ideas and new ways of working with literacy, information literacy, and digital fluency for teaching and learning. Whether it's blogs or wikis or Really Simple Syndication (RSS), all roads now point to an Internet where little is done in isolation and all things are collaborative and social in nature.

Teaching and learning processes need to change because we have expansive access to a wide variety of ideas, can find and receive information in a way never before possible, and we create and share at a global level with transparent ease. It is a challenging time for teacher-librarians.

### What is Web 2.0?

Although the term Web 2.0 (pronounced 'web two point oh') was conceived in 2005 at a conference brainstorming session, and has had more than 9.5 million citations, there is still disagreement as to what Web 2.0 represents (O'Reilly, 2005). Contrasting sharply with the old Web 1.0 methodology, Web 2.0 describes a new breed of websites that revolutionise how users interact with information on the Internet. Web 2.0 sites use newer web authoring tools, feature low learning curves (for the user) and support a collaborative environment. Web 2.0 is fundamentally participative, and is about sharing code, content, and ideas. It is about communication and facilitating community. Ultimately, Web 2.0 is about remix and it is smart. How smart? Read *Introduction to Web 2.0* (Porter, [2005?]), and experience participative and collaborative Web 2.0.

### Participatory web: some developments

Web 2.0 is participative, and about sharing code and communication. According to Kronski (2006), 'community is the new consumption. With the emergence of new Web 2.0 tools, the non-technical person has been given a major voice online.' *Squidoo* and *Wiki* are examples of flexible, shared databases of knowledge and information (see Figure 1). Students can use a wiki to create projects or develop a class resource pool, while teacher-librarians could access the *Teacher librarian wiki* (Figure 1) and *The library wiki* (ANE, [2006?]), which is a training tool for

the circulation desk as well as being a knowledge management system for policies and protocols.

*Wikipedia* is a group-created and edited database of shared knowledge. Updated and refining its content is a huge participatory exercise, which gives it the authority it needs to get people to link to it. The value of *Wikipedia* is often debated by educators, but the fact remains that it is utilised by people around the world.

The value of a wiki is the ability to create a shared database of knowledge and information. Students can use a wiki to create projects or develop a class resource pool. It can also be used as a promotional or developmental tool. A good example is the *Teacher librarian wiki*. There are many wiki that have been created to be websites, to distribute information, to build community, to develop knowledge and participation. It demonstrates the productive and participatory value of a wiki in a professional library setting.

### Tagging and social bookmarking

The notion of sharing and collaborating in a global framework has produced Web 2.0 developments that make participation fast, efficient, and shareable. Social bookmarking, using such tools as *Del.icio.us* make it possible to track websites, annotate websites, and add keywords (tags) to categorise information. Forget the confusion of bookmarking websites on your own computer, ordered only by folders. While I can keep my professional bookmarks private, and then be able to access them from any computer in the world, I choose to make my *Del.icio.us* bookmarks public, so that others working on the same topics can share my finds. In addition, it is possible to download and install a widget in your internet browser that allows you to add sites directly to your bookmarks. My bookmark at <http://del.icio.us/heyjude> provides sites with annotations on

Web 2.0 topics. Just click on the Web 2.0 tag and the bookmarks will be sorted to show just Web 2.0 sites.

Sharing and tagging has a leading place in the world of *Flickr* (Figure 3), demonstrating the best way to store, search and share your photographs. It is also an excellent personal and professional tool. Many educators have used *Flickr* to store their images from workshops and presentations, and present them as a slideshow.

*Folksonomy* is a style of community tagging in which like-minded people sort and classify information. While less accurate than other styles of organising a site, it is appealing because it involves the entire user population in the categorisation process to produce a dynamic, live navigation scheme. For example, as Hurricane Katrina started on its path of destruction in Louisiana in 2005, pictures began arriving at *Flickr*. As the days progressed, the pictures told a fascinating story that was not matched by traditional news services.

### Collaborative Internet for schools

Two prominent collaborative tools being used in education are wiki and blogs. *Weblogs* (blogs) are a very popular Web 2.0 tool. Authoring, maintaining or adding an article to an existing blog is called *blogging*. The social aspect of weblogs is the ability for readers to comment on postings, to post links to, and to keep track of, other blogs.

Blogs have many uses in education as a way of sharing or managing information and promoting literacy and learning. Using online tools like *Blogger* or *Edublogs*, a blog can have various forms and functions such as a journal, a diary, a publication tool, an administrative tool or a research source. *Edublogs* provide the ability to link directly to a wiki which can be established by the blog owner, merging the two collaborative tools into one functional whole.

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Web 2.0</b>  <b>connective technology – pervasive interactivity – the future</b>  <b>Blogs – Wikis – Social Bookmarking</b></p>		
<p><b>Blogs</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually single author</li> <li>• Sequential entries in reverse chronological order</li> <li>• Personal. Reflect the thinking of the blogger, whether it is professional or personal.</li> <li>• External links</li> <li>• RSS feeds</li> </ul> <p>The result supersedes the personal website, providing individuals with a very easy and quick way to post to the Internet.</p>	<p><b>Wikis</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually many authors</li> <li>• Structure determined by content and users</li> <li>• Usually objective</li> <li>• Internal and external links</li> <li>• Reflects the interests of the contributors.</li> <li>• Has immediacy not usually present in credentialed services.</li> </ul> <p>The result is very simple editable database of shared knowledge.</p> <p>Try the <b>TeacherLibrarianWiki</b> at <a href="http://teacherlibrarianwiki.pbwiki.com/">http://teacherlibrarianwiki.pbwiki.com/</a></p>	<p><b>Social bookmarking</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Many contributors</li> <li>• Provides contributors with full access to their bookmarks from any computer on the Internet</li> <li>• Links are shared (public) for all to see</li> <li>• Structure defined by tags defined by the contributors.</li> <li>• "Folksonomy" rather than taxonomy.</li> </ul> <p>Save your bookmarks to an online service and "tag" them with keywords you create instead of saving the bookmarks in your browser's favorite's list. Your collection of bookmarks is viewable and shareable with others.</p>
<p><b>SQUIDOO</b></p> <p>And now there is <i>SQUIDOO</i> not a blog, not a wiki, not social bookmarking. Providing 'lenses' on any topic you can name.</p> <p><b>Squidoo</b> provides a <b>communal space</b> where members create information compilations. Maybe you could call them research portfolios. Maybe you could call them research topics. Maybe just your personal interest. These topics are searchable and sharable at <a href="http://www.squidoo.com/introtoweb20">www.squidoo.com/introtoweb20</a></p>		
<p><b>BLOG LINKS</b></p> <p>An <b>explanation from</b> Alice Yucht, a TL from the US: <a href="http://www.bloglines.com/blog/Aliceinfoshow2rss">http://www.bloglines.com/blog/Aliceinfoshow2rss</a>            Personal blog using the <b>Serendipity</b> blogging tool: <a href="http://www.misrule.com.au/serendipity">http://www.misrule.com.au/serendipity</a>  <b>Group blogs</b> Judy's recent creation for Parra TLs; <a href="http://parra-bib-blog.blogspot.com/">http://parra-bib-blog.blogspot.com/</a>  <b>Marita's Book Bites:</b> <a href="http://www.bookbite.blogspot.com/">http://www.bookbite.blogspot.com/</a></p> <p style="text-align: center;">A school system where all teachers are required to have personal blogs.            These are links to the TL and 4 teachers and how they are being used.</p> <p><a href="http://www.gln.d.k12.va.us/weblog/dcross/">http://www.gln.d.k12.va.us/weblog/dcross/</a>      <a href="http://www.gln.d.k12.va.us/weblog/clong/">http://www.gln.d.k12.va.us/weblog/clong/</a> (Art blog)  <a href="http://www.gln.d.k12.va.us/weblog/vpinner/">http://www.gln.d.k12.va.us/weblog/vpinner/</a>      <a href="http://www.gln.d.k12.va.us/weblog/jtruscott/">http://www.gln.d.k12.va.us/weblog/jtruscott/</a></p>		
<p><b>WIKI LINKS</b></p> <p>From the Education Learning Initiative (Tertiary support): <a href="http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI7004.pdf">http://www.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/ELI7004.pdf</a>            TLs in the US are trialling the technology themselves: <a href="http://www.teacherlibrarianwiki.pbwiki.com">http://www.teacherlibrarianwiki.pbwiki.com</a>  <b>Wiki</b> source: <a href="http://www.seedwiki.com/page.cfm?doc=seedwiki&amp;wikiid=1">http://www.seedwiki.com/page.cfm?doc=seedwiki&amp;wikiid=1</a></p>		
<p><b>SOCIAL BOOKMARKING</b></p> <p><b>Del.icio.us:</b> <a href="http://del.icio.us">http://del.icio.us</a> <b>Judy's Del.icio.us bookmark</b> <a href="http://del.icio.us/heyjude">http://del.icio.us/heyjude</a></p>		

Figure 1 Web 2.0 summary created by Judy O'Connell and Jan Radford

Blogs also provide an excellent opportunity for educators to advance literacy through storytelling and dialogue. They embrace literacy and digital fluency, both prerequisites for sociability and lifelong learning. As a particular technology application they

promote the types of literacy traditionally encouraged in learning, as well as the digital fluency needed to prosper in the digital age (Harris, 2006; Huffaker, 2006).

Blogs can also be used to communicate, showcase student work,

collaborate, promote and develop peer involvement (Figure 2).

I have found blogging as a professional tool to be particularly relevant, efficient, enjoyable and easy to manage. You can join me in this journey of discovery by dipping into

Examples of blogs used to communicate and showcase student work	
Library Weekly News <a href="http://parra.bib.blog.blogspot.com">http://parra.bib.blog.blogspot.com</a>	Thoughts of a particular teacher <a href="http://gwegner.edublogs.org/">http://gwegner.edublogs.org/</a>
Project-based blog ... <a href="http://research-project.blogspot.com">http://research-project.blogspot.com</a>	Student-project blog <a href="http://butterflydanceproject.blogspot.com/">http://butterflydanceproject.blogspot.com/</a>
Thoughts of a particular librarian <a href="http://joycevalenza.edublogs.org/">http://joycevalenza.edublogs.org/</a>	Student blogs feedback <a href="http://www.halcyon.com/arborhts/mahlness">http://www.halcyon.com/arborhts/mahlness</a>

Figure 2 Blogs to communicate and showcase student work

the *HeyJude* website (Figure 3). The purpose of this blog is to engage in professional reflection on Web 2.0 in the context of our schools, teaching and learning, technology and the read/write immediacy of working on the Internet. Read the blogs of those educators and information professionals listed in the blogroll (links). Follow the links in the various posts (messages) to important articles and sources of information. Use the documents provided in the Resources section at any time, including materials used in the Introduction to blogging workshops held for teachers and teacher-librarians. A less personal, more broadly focused blog for information

dissemination is *BiB blog – weekly news* (Figure 3), which I produce for teacher-librarians. Included in the links are blogs of other teacher librarians which focus on library activities and promotion. The *Max the monkey* blog (Figure 3) has been a real favourite of primary children and adults alike.

Educational blogging is positive, transformational technology that is often confused with social sites like *MySpace*. While there are similarities in the web technologies used for blogging and social networking sites, they serve different purposes. Learn more about blogging at the *SupportBlogging wiki*. To find blogs on a specific subject, use *Technorati*, a real-time search engine for

tagged blog postings (Figure 3). With more than 10 million blogs online, effective searching is important.

## RSS and RSS reader

Imagine having the latest headlines and updates from your favourite websites or blogs delivered to your desktop without having to visit all the blogs or websites individually. RSS is an acronym for *Really Simple Syndication*, an XML formatting language which allows users to subscribe to sites that offer feeds of new content. Teachers can use one program (a feed reader) to see any new content from web pages or services subscriptions.

An *RSS Reader* on the other hand acts as an *aggregator*. This is a software application or online service that pulls together and presents the feeds to which the user has subscribed.

*Bloglines* is an example of such readers. *Bloglines* can track RSS feeds from *Google* or *Yahoo* news on particular search terms; *Del.icio.us* feeds for resources related to your work; or news feeds for major publications in your field. *Bloglines* is also an online tool that allows feeds to be shared.

Another area that has grown greatly due to RSS is podcasting. This tool for audio broadcasting over the Internet has tremendous potential in education. The name comes from the combination of *iPod* and broadcasting and, while the technology has been around for some years, the delivery mechanism of RSS has made it possible to broadcast audio both to a wider and more specialised interest groups. Podcasts are available for download to personal computers or mp3 players for entertainment or information. Students are now producing podcasts to share their work, and display their knowledge and enthusiasm to their peers.

Web 2.0 Resources mentioned in the article	
<i>BiB blog – weekly news:</i> <a href="http://parra-bib-blog.blogspot.com/">http://parra-bib-blog.blogspot.com/</a>	<i>HeyJude:</i> <a href="http://heyjude.wordpress.com">http://heyjude.wordpress.com</a>
<i>Blogger:</i> <a href="http://www.blogger.com">http://www.blogger.com</a>	<i>LearnerBlogs:</i> <a href="http://learnerblogs.org/">http://learnerblogs.org/</a>
<i>Bloglines:</i> <a href="http://www.bloglines.com/">http://www.bloglines.com/</a>	<i>Max the monkey:</i> <a href="http://maxthemonkey.blogspot.com/">http://maxthemonkey.blogspot.com/</a>
<i>Del.icio.us:</i> <a href="http://del.icio.us">http://del.icio.us</a>	<i>MySpace:</i> <a href="http://www.myspace.com">http://www.myspace.com</a>
<i>Edublogs:</i> <a href="http://www.edublogs.org/">http://www.edublogs.org/</a>	<i>PBwiki:</i> <a href="http://pbwiki.com">http://pbwiki.com</a>
<i>Facebook:</i> <a href="http://www.facebook.com">http://www.facebook.com</a>	<i>SupportBlogging wiki:</i> <a href="http://supportblogging.wikispaces.com/">http://supportblogging.wikispaces.com/</a>
<i>Flickr:</i> <a href="http://www.flickr.com">http://www.flickr.com</a>	<i>Technoratic:</i> <a href="http://www.technorati.com/">http://www.technorati.com/</a>

Figure 3 Web 2.0 resources

## What does this all mean for teacher-librarians?

Individuals and organisations are finding new and increasingly effective ways of connecting through Web 2.0 technology. Our students are living that connection. This is the human side of this Web 2.0 transformation.

According to Richardson (2006), the read/write flexibility of Web 2.0 threatens to make the difference between teachers and learners more acute than ever. On the other hand, the good news is that the tools discussed in this article have just as much chance of closing the gap as widening it.

I think it is time to engage with Web 2.0 with a view to finding Library 2.0. [Editor's note: Part 2 of this article, with a focus on implementing Web 2.0

technology in teaching and learning, will be published in the next issue of *Scan*.] ■

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# SCIS records for COGs units of work

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One of the Special order files of SCIS records (accessed in Create orders) is a file of SCIS numbers for the units of work for the NSW Department of Education and Training Connected Outcomes Groups (COGs). These units are available at <http://www.curriculum-support.education.nsw.gov.au/timetoteach/cogs/unitintro.htm>

Each web page for the *Word* and pdf versions of the COGs units has been catalogued with the url for the *Word* document and the url for the pdf included in the SCIS record. By opening the special order file and downloading

the 30 records, a permanent link to the units of work is established in the *OASIS Library* catalogue.

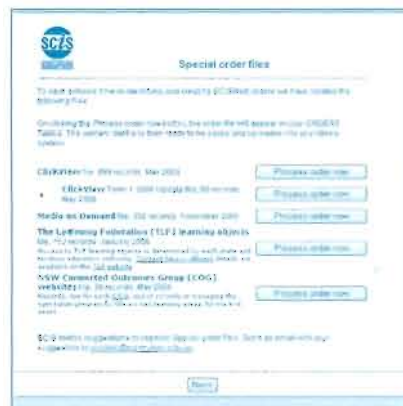
A virtual resource box can be created in *OASIS Library* for each unit, from the resources listed in the unit of work, that are held by the library, and from resources that are not on the COGs list but found to support the teaching of the COGs unit.

How to create a resource box is the subject of an FAQ on the *School Libraries and Information Literacy* website at <http://www.curriculum-support.education.nsw.gov.au/schoollibraries/faqs/faqsrbx.htm>

A virtual resource box can be created by following these steps, but not actually physically adding the resource to a box. A list of the resources can be printed and shown to the teachers. Providing records of such resources in



SCIS Create orders page



SCIS Special order files page

the library catalogue, maintains the integrity of *OASIS Library* as the entry point for the full range of resources that support teaching and learning. ■