Title of Session: Weblogs in English Language Teaching - Using Weblogs
Moderator: Bee Dieu and Aaron Campbell
Guest Speaker: Julie Lindsay
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Room: After School Online Room

AaronPC: Ok....everyone...

AaronPC: no word from Bee....

AaronPC: I hope she'll be along in a few min...

AaronPC: but we should go ahead and get started without her....

AaronPC: Our guest speaker today is Julie Lindsay...

AaronPC: For more than 20 years Julie has worked as an educator in Australia, Zambia and Kuwait.

JulieLi: Hello everyone

AaronPC: Her experience has been mainly with secondary age students (12-18) but she also has taught younger school students and lectured at University level to adults.

JaneAP: Hello Julie--how're things down under?

BettinaM: Hello Julie! welcome

AaronPC: Her initial subject area is music, in which she has a Master of Arts in jazz related research - a jazz pianist!

AaronPC: As well as jazz-based curriculum she has developed educational approaches to the integration of music technology into the curriculum.

JeanMC: Ouah!....

AaronPC: Over the past decade she has focused more on the emerging needs of technology within education and has completed study at the University of Melbourne to become a qualified ICT teacher.

AaronPC: Currently she is completing another Masters degree at the George Washington University in Educational Technology Leadership.

AaronPC: She comes to us today to speak about her work in using e-portfolios and blogs in education. Please give Julie a big welcome!

JaneAP: Very impressive, Julie

JulieLi: Thank you Aaron and hi everyone again

SusanneN and waves hello from Denmark to the rest of this blogger class

AaronPC

JulieLi: Just to update you, I am now Head of Technology

JulieLi: at the International School Dhaka in Bangladesh

JulieLi: OK, lets start...I have a URL
http://www.lindsayonline.net/Reaching_Out/Teacher_links/weblogs.htm

JulieLi: This gives an outline of the talk, the session handout will be useful for you

AzzamP . o O (got it)

JulieLi: Not sure if this is a good idea...but here is a section from it

JulieLi: Weblogs and Digital Portfolios

JulieLi: As an ICT focus and as part of the school-driven adoption of the electronic portfolio concept, the Grade 9 students have developed web-based digital portfolios using a class weblog for interactive instructional delivery, online discussion and peer evaluation as well as personal weblogs and blogging for journal processing, electronic communication and portfolio publication. The students have been able to communicate with the teacher and each other via an asynchronous bulletin board style of interface as well as using email. They have developed their online digital portfolios by following the portfolio development process of planning, collecting and selecting, reflecting, designing and evaluating their work with support from both the online and face-to-face classroom communities. The advent of weblogging has been advantageous to this project as both a vehicle for communication and as a publishing medium.

JulieLi: OK, put simply...my students are using weblogs for a number of educational purposes including digital portfolios and process journals

JulieLi: I started the weblog integration using www.schoolblogs.com

JulieLi: This is a free service

AzzamP . o O (is it a blended learning approach or pure online)

JulieLi: I would encourage you to use it to develop curriculum or for interaction between students and/or teachers

DavidWe joined the room.

JaneAP: Does schoolblogs have features that are different from other blog hosts?

JulieLi: Azzam, I see all of my students f2f every week, so the weblogs idea is to extend the walls of the classroom in a number of ways

AzzamP thanks Julie

JulieLi: Well...not entirely sure of that Jane, the server can be down sometimes with schoolblogs ..keep this in mind

DavidWe . o O (servers CAN always be down)

JulieLi: But I like the basic Manilla interface and it has worked well for me

SusanneN: is this lindsayonline.net page hosted by Schoolblog Julie?

JulieLi: Susanne, my personal digital portfolio is on my own server space

JulieLi: and with my own domain name

JulieLi: before moving on from schoolblogs.com. Have a look at
http://www.schoolblogs.com/educ265/

JulieLi: This is a project I completed as a group a while ago...the topic may interest you...

JulieLi: It is also another example of what a weblog can be used for

JulieLi: After setting up the digital portfolio curriculum on schoolblogs at
http://www.schoolblogs.com/isdweblog/

DavidWe: Looks cool, Julie

JulieLi: Thanks David

AaronPC: yes...resource plus discussion forum

AzzamP . o O (can't seem to get the browser to open these sites)

SusanneN: your personal portfolio structure is very clear & attractive, and something I could use myself, as a model, one day when I get ready to make my own portfolio (hopefully soon)

RitaZ: very user-friendly for kids, Julie

JaneAP: Do students use the blog portfolio only for English classes or with other classes as well?

JulieLi: Yes Aaron, the discussion forum can be a key feature of a weblog

SusanneN: schoolblog opens slowly - but it does open at last here

JulieLi: This ESL blog is an example only...I have not used it with students

JaneAP: it opened slowly for me too

DavidWe agrees that it isn't the speediest web site

BeeD joined the room.

BeeD: I am terribly sorry

RitaZ: why not, Julie?

AlanE: what are the options for having students write and comment on each other's writing?

JulieLi: Given that schoolblogs has limitations.....I found Peter Ford in the UK see http://www.ict4schools.info/

RitaZ hugs Bee

AaronPC waves

ElaineGa joined the room.

BeeD: pbs at school to connect

SusanneN hugs madame Bee

JulieLi: Hi barbara

JeanMC: Hola Barbara. Traquille tout va bien

BeeD: HI Julie...I am so sorry

JulieLi: No problem, Aaron introduced very well

BeeD: but go on...

BeeD: do not let me interrupt you

GerryGst2: So, the "discussion forum" is not a threaded discussion, but rather blog entries?

JulieLi: Alan, I have not forgotten your question...

AlanE: thank you

SusanneN: hello Elaine - Julie is showing around in her School blog rpoject at http://www.schoolblogs.com/educ265/

JulieLi: Gerry...we are talking asynchronous communication

ElaineGa: thanks

GerryGst2: Yes, I understand

JulieLi: it can be a threaded discussion..or a series of separate entries

GerryGst2: OK

JulieLi: As I said before, the digital portfolio curriculum is at http://www.schoolblogs.com/isdweblog/

AzzamP . o O (do students find it easier to respond in blogs than in threaded bulletin boards?)

JulieLi: But, my school invested in its own domain name and weblog site at www.isdweblogs.org through Peter Ford as mentioned above

JulieLi: Azzam, it depends how you set it up

AzzamP nods

JulieLi: If you look at http://www.schoolblogs.com/isdweblog/discuss/

JulieLi: You will see I set up topics and peer group discussion forums

JulieLi: This is from last year's class

PaddyG: do sts really see a difference between blogs and threads?

JulieLi: I suppose the difference I see with the students is that they 'blog' for their process journal

JulieLi: and they join discussion 'blogs' for required peer assessment and other work as part of their curriculum

JulieLi: Students are using www.blogger.com for process journaling

AlanE: can you define "process journaling"

JulieLi: Have a look at http://maisha89.blogspot.com/ as an example

JulieLi: OK, as part of ICT they must keep a process journal to discuss progress, problems, evaluations, etc

JaneAP: I don't know if I'm getting ahead, but do students then choose certain posts to be part of the portfolio?

JulieLi: This becomes their 'private' place to store ideas and thoughts to do with their work

AaronPC nods

SusanneN: This model sure looks very useful!

JulieLi: Jane, no the digital portfolio is set up using a fairly strict structure. It must contain artifacts and reflections

AidenY joined the room.

JulieLi: They can trial some ideas in their blog

JeanMC: Hi Aiden

BeeD: Yes...I have done sthg similar in French....the stds reflected on the process of a project they had to present at the end of the year

JulieLi: Hi Aiden

AidenY waves to all

BeeD: Hello Aiden

JulieLi: I have also had students become members of others blogs to form a peer group to help each other with their work

JaneAP: do they do their blogging at home or in class?

JulieLi: Jane, both...in class then finish for homework

SusanneN: peer blogging sounds good!

JaneAP: This Maishooo seems very fluent--is s/he ESL?

JulieLi: See also http://www.rifathislam.blogspot.com/ for another student example

HalaH joined the room.

AaronPC: yes...I notice there are contributors on that blog.

JulieLi: Maisha is Bangladeshi, second language English, but fluent

SusanneN: These kids go to an international school - does this mean they are often multilingual?

SusanneN nods

JulieLi: All are bilingual, often multi. Most of our students are Bangladeshi..the wealthy ones

HalaH: Hello

JulieLi: Hi Hala

JaneAP: I just read her profile--impressive

BeeD: hello Hala...welcome

HalaH: Did I miss much

SusanMar joined the room.

JulieLi: Hi Susan...go to http://www.lindsayonline.net/Reaching_Out/Teacher_links/weblogs.htm

SusanMar: Hi, everyone! I'm so sorry I'm late; I was at work and just got home

JulieLi: The session handout will update you on the main URLs I am referring to tonight

SusanMar: OK, thanks

HalaH: Hi Julie

JulieLi: Please ask questions again if I happen to miss anything

HalaH: I am Hala from Sudan

SusanMar: Sorry, Julie, how do I go there; when I click on it nothing happens

JulieLi: I think others opened the link OK

AlanE: I didn't....

JaneAP: Is it possible to protect the privacy of students' digital portfolio--I mean restrict access?

BeeD: if you press CTRL and enter...it takes you there

JulieLi: thanks Bee...Back to digital portfolios using weblogs

SusanMar: I'm so sorry; could you send the URL again; I was temporarily kicked out and lost it

HalaH: Could you please write the url again? KI have been disconncted.

AlanE: Julie, is the ability to comment on each other's work a part of each weblog system, or are some better than others?

JulieLi: Restrict access.....no, unless you put the Manilla software on your school server for internal use only

SusanMar: me too

AidenY: http://www.lindsayonline.net/Reaching_Out/Teacher_links/weblogs.htm

SusanMar: thanks Aiden!

SusanneN: Julie - how do you manage to integrate the current curriculum into your portfolio project, and how is the reactions from your colleagues and school leader?

BeeD: It´s not in the nature of blogs to be restricted

HalaH: O.K

JulieLi: Any Manilla based weblog (software) you can delete or cut out the discussion forum

JulieLi: and use them purely for web publishing

JulieLi: But as Bee says...a true blog is not without discussion

AlanE: and if we don't want to host, is Manilla still the best, cost effective option?

SusanMar: Okay, I checked out the URL; now should I do anything?

JulieLi: The portfolio project is integrated into gr9

AidenY agrees

JulieLi: Susan..open the session handout

SusanneN: many blogs demand a membership before you can post comments, wisely as so many nasty folks mass post comments with silly or worse content

SusanMar: Will do

JulieLi: We have a portfolio tradition in the school, grades 6-8 do hard copy and now grades 9 and 10 do digital

AzzamP wow

BeeD: It´s wonderful work and this is what I am aiming at here at school

JulieLi: Alan..not sure about this

JulieLi: I am sensitive to my students being vulnerable online

AlanE: yes, please talk about that?

JulieLi: Having to be a member does stop any real interference...we have had no problems at all in 18 months

GerryGst2: Graduation portfolios are now mandated by the government in British Columbia, so teachers are trying to figure out how to deal with it.

JulieLi: OK, well we could have created d portfolios and put them on the school server...no one would see them

AzzamP . o O (interesting)

BeeD: Julie I noticed you mentioned Peter Ford...he is developing a wonderful blogging project for ECML (European Centre of Modern Languages) - they are developing their own blogs software

SusanneN: Interesting news, Gerry

BeeD: http://www.helferlein.com/blogs/blog.asp

JulieLi: Thanks Bee

JulieLi: I believe the students enjoy the immediate online publication that weblogs provide

SusanneN: helferlein, means Little helper!

BeeD: yes...it adds a lot to their motivation

JulieLi: Have a look at Haris's weblog/digital portfolio Ÿ

GerryGst2: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/graduation/portfolio/

JulieLi: He is developing it well this year....loves multimedia, still has a lot of work to do on the academic content

JulieLi: Thanks Gerry for the URL

PaddyG: I started a class webpage last Oct but wasn't allowed to put personal info or pictures if going online; so we stayed on hardisk - not so much fun or use

JulieLi looks smug...

JulieLi: I am in Bangladesh...we bend the rules a little

PaddyG: I understand the concern, but there must be a way...

HalaH: What about using blogs with large classes teach for a class of 120.I have dived the class into two, 60 each. Does this mean it is impossible to use it?

SusanneN: Julie - I was wondering if your school lets students switch new teachers each year, or the teacher can follow their classes for more years?

JulieLi: I think we are being sensible, too many restrictions can harm creativity I feel

SusanMar: Wow! 120 students, Hala!

JulieLi: Hala! 120?

AidenY: 120! I thought I've got handful with 50!

HalaH: University level

SusanneN: Hala - sounds like you need to work with peer groups

JulieLi: Susanne..I am the ICT teacher for the secondary school...therefore control the program

HalaH: That means working for endless hours a week.

JulieLi: Hala, make groups for discussions

HalaH: O.K?

SusanneN: Oh, I see - so you can stretch their portfolios over more school years

JulieLi: Yes, a lot of work for you online to monitor

AidenY: Hala, I'll be doing what Bee has done with weblogging session, collaborative blogging.

BeeD: I feel portfolios should accompany the students

JulieLi: In 2 terms the grade 9 students set up the portfolio...then continue to develop it after that

BeeD: so they can feel their progression

AlanE: can ones weblog contain public and private writing spaces?

AaronPC: Yes...they can continue for life.

SusanMar: Julie, do you think blogs and portfolios would work equally well for all ages, proficiency levels, personality types? I have a group of MA students of IT, and I was wondering how they would take it.

AzzamP . o O (yes ... lifelong learning)

SusanneN: I agree, Bee, but I can imagine that not all teachers would be ready yet to take over responsibility for doing online portfolios

HalaH: What do you mean (stretching portfolio over more school years?

JulieLi: Alan..blogs are not private unless you conceal the URL

JulieLi: Susan, yes definately

AidenY: Susan, I think it's possible

SusanMar: I thought they might somehow think it's childish?

AidenY: it depends on how you package it, Susan

SusanneN: I do have many private postings in my blog; I write and then decide later if I want to edit and publish, or just keep for myself

SusanMar: Any suggestions?

JulieLi: No, not childish, a professional digital portfolio should be a must these days I feel

BeeD: yes Hala...a portfolio is something you add to through the years...it chronicles your development in the language

JulieLi: A blog can complement the portfolio

BeeD: recording your reflections

JulieLi: Or it can be a more private diary type writing experience

AzzamP listening attentively

AidenY: and your blog could serve as your portal

JulieLi: I am not a real blogger

SusanneN: If portfolios follow the student , schools and universities will need to offer permanent server hosting - even after they left school

JulieLi Julie confesses!

AidenY: with all the links to your students' works

AlanE: I ask because I work in a US public School environment which has concerns about uncontrolled web posting. I'm trying to think through these logistics to allow the creativity.

JulieLi: Because I do not have the discipline to maintain a daily or weekly blog

JulieLi: They should take responsibility for their own server space

SusanneN: to me, the blog is, first of all, a simple WYSIWYG tool for posting content online, and can have many more dimensions than just a diary, open to an unknown public

BeeD: Just like Julie mentioned...I feel too much control restricts creativity...stops you short on your tracks

GerryGst2: I put a link in the collective blog to a Breeze presentation on UBCs new blogfolio project.

JulieLi: Yes Sus

JaneAP: What happens to the student's portfolio when s/he graduates? Does it stay on the server forever or is it burned on to a CD?

AidenY: the thing with school servers is sometimes they lose your files and worst, your students' works and they'll just tell you that that needed an upgrade

JulieLi: Yes, we burn portfolios onto CD's

BeeD: yes...I had this happening Aiden...very frustrating

AaronPC: good idea

SusanneN: Right Aiden, so backup CDs are a must somehow

JulieLi: This takes a snapshot of the portfolio as it is at a particular time

AidenY: you can burn it

AzzamP . o O (concerned with identity theft if too much info is revealed ...)

JulieLi: Take a look at http://www.lindsayonline.net/Portfolio/student_portfolio.htm

HalaH: Whenever you post sth, you should add it to the CD ?

JulieLi: This is the portal for the digital portfolio project with links to resources etc

BeeD: I just love Julie your colours and the whole way you approach these portfolios

JulieLi: Thanks Bee

JulieLi: The student dp's from this URL are my current grade 10's.

BeeD: I did some of it...but not in such an organized and colourful way

HalaH: Very motivated Julie

BettinaM: Or we may teach sts how to back up or store the contents they've posted in their PC

SusanMar: How do you burn them onto CD's?

JaneAP: I looked at the various links helferlein had on his blog and see that he's got posts in English and French--is it used in Math/Science/History etc classes also or just language

GerryGst2: If one were to use a free service like Blogger or schoolblogs, is there a way to create an archive/backup?

BeeD: We should get together for a project...my students are the same age

JulieLi: To burn use an HTML download program

SusanneN: Gerry, I'm wondering the same

AidenY: you'd be needing a cd burner, Susan

SusanMar: Like Nero?

AidenY: yes

JulieLi: archive backup...you can do this through Manilla in order to move the site

AidenY: I use Nero, too.

HalaH: You can use Ahead Nero program to burn CD

BeeD: My sons have Nero...they like it

SusanMar: I have one, but I've never burnt anything from the Net

GerryGst2: Most blog software has an export feature.

JulieLi: Yes, export feature

SusanMar: Isn't it any different from regular burning of files?

AaronPC: http://help.blogger.com/bin/answer.py?answer=130&topic=12

JulieLi: But we found this not adequate for our purposes and had to use a separate program to download the entire website

AidenY: which program is this, Julie?

SusanMar: Thanks, Aaron, that was quick!

BettinaM: yes, thanks Aaron

JulieLi: HTTP Track something I think was one we had success with

SusanMar . o O (How does he do that?)

AzzamP: I'm just astonished how your pupils are able to publish such nice blogs and portfolios

JulieLi: Thank you Azzam

AzzamP . o O (if these young children can do it, so can my older students)

SusanneN: I suppose they have a cool role model!

JulieLi: I think I have shown you all I can so far...

JeanMC: time, motivation, and Julie's assistance!

JulieLi: Susanne...so kind

BeeD: absolutely

AzzamP: Incredible job, Julie

SusanneN: Julie, this was great inspiration !!

GerryGst2: Got to run - thanks very much!

AlanE: Thanks a lot, Julie. This was most eye opening

AaronPC: Yes...this is amazing.

BeeD: Beautiful

JulieLi: Thank you everyone for participating tonight

PaddyG: v. interesting - role on the next hols to have time set sth like this up!

AidenY: thanks, Julie

SusanMar: Yes, thanks Julie!

AzzamP: muchos gracias

ElaineGa: thanks

JeanMC: Thanks, Merci; gracias

JulieLi: Please email me if you want more details about enything

AidenY stands and claps hands

PaddyG: ooppss 'roll on'

BeeD: I would like to thank YOU Julie for sharing it with us...giving us ideas of what can be done

BettinaM: thank you Julie for sharing such a successful work with us

AaronPC: Thanks so much Julie.

PaddyG: thank you

JulieLi: You are most welcome

BeeD claps

HalaH: Thank you Julie

JulieLi takes bow

JaneAP: Julie, I am in awe--I might want to send you an email if you wouldn't mind.

SusanneN hands a large bouquet of wild flowers to Julie

SusanMar cheers and claps

HalaH waving bye

JeanMC: and thanks to weblogging moderators to give us the possibility to listen at Julie's presentation

JaneAP: Can you give an address?

JulieLi: email Julie@lindsayonline.net

RitaZ: THANKS, Julie!!!

JaneAP: Thank you so much. Excellent work

HalaH: with large classes problem?

HalaH: thanks

JeanMC: Barbara, tu as vu! tout s'est bien passe et c'etait SUPER

JulieLi: Ok, goodnight everyone..keep in touch

AidenY waves bye to all

PaddyG: must go off and teach now... and a bunch of syllabi to update! Bye all and thanks again Julie

AzzamP: bye Julie

BeeD: Merci...impéccable

SusanMar waves goodbye to everyone

SusanneN: goodbye everyone and thanks again to Julie for taking your time to show us your creative work