Title of Session: Waypoint Online - Structuring the Peer Review Process
Moderator: Andrew McCann
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Room: After School Online Room

BJB2: Welcome to the second of the Waypoint Online discussions, everyone.

BJB2: we usually start the discussions with introductions. I know you did that for Michael, but humor me

AndrewJM: And introduce themselves - name, location, grade taught, discipline.

AndrewJM: Michael, could you begin the introductions?

AndrewJM: Or David:)

MichaelH: sure

MichaelH: My name is Michael Hutchison... I'm the host of the Social Studies forum here, a social studies teacher and independent curriculum consultant in southwestern Indiana

AndrewJM: Thanks for joining us Michael.

JeffC: I'm Jeff Cooper... Tapped In Helpdesk and professional lurker.

BJB2: I'm an art teacher in Pennsylvania and a lifelong learner

AndrewJM: Ah...the shadow behind the bushes...hi Jeff.

BJB2 . o O (i.e. professional lurker like Jeff   )

AndrewJM: David and Maria, chime in with an introduction if you would like.

AndrewJM: But I will start...

AndrewJM: Welcome and thank you for attending this After School Online session.

AndrewJM: My name is Andrew McCann and I teach English at Drexel University in Philadelphia.

AndrewJM: I am also the developer of waypoint, a tool for assessing and responding to student writing.

AndrewJM: Please ask any questions you might have as we go along – I am interested in any and all feedback. Also, please let me know if I move too quickly (or slowly).

AndrewJM: I'd like to organize our session in two parts:

AndrewJM: 1. An overview of waypoint using static webpages.

DavidWe: I'm David Weksler. I live in New Jersey, near New York City and I help teachers learn more about technology

DavidWe chimes

AndrewJM: Hi David!

AndrewJM: 2. A 'live' demo of the peer review process using waypoint.

DavidWe: Andrew! Pleased to meet you

DavidWe smiles

AndrewJM: First let me try to sum up what waypoint is and is not.

AndrewJM: Waypoint began as a productivity tool. I teach 100 college freshmen per term and felt the standard process of responding to their writing – margin notes and "end comments" was inefficient and ineffective.

JeffC: http://www.subjectivemetrics.com/index.cfm (puts in the URL for the heckuvit)

AndrewJM: I felt I was writing the same comments over and over again…both from student to student and to the same student on subsequent assignments.

AndrewJM: I worried about consistency issues – whether the paper I graded at 3pm on a Saturday received the same focus as one I graded at 9am that morning.

AndrewJM: I didn't like that I had little idea of the feedback had received on earlier work – I couldn't hold my students accountable for becoming active learners.

DavidWe believes that Andrew TRULY is an engineer

AndrewJM: Waypoint is designed to deal with these issues – not through artificial intelligence, but through automating some of the work a teacher does

AndrewJM: ...heh heh...you cannot crowbar the engineer out of a person...

AndrewJM: - whether the course is AP English, 6th grade social studies, or legal writing in law schools. The results, we feel, are improved feedback that takes less time to create, easy access to the history of comments for a student, and the ability to do longitudinal assessment of student writing.

AndrewJM: A major side benefit, we have discovered, is the opportunity to improve the peer review process.

AndrewJM: We describe waypoint as an interactive rubric…and that rubric can be made available to students to facilitate the peer review process. So teachers can evaluate student writing AND use the peer review feature…or do just one or the other.

AndrewJM: I will assume that everyone here has the potential for having students use computers to review each others work – either in class or as homework.

BJB2 nods

AndrewJM: I am interested in how much of an assumption that is.

AndrewJM: Clicking on the URL I will give you in a minute will open a window and display an overview of waypoint. After the page loads, placing your mouse over the numbers at the bottom of the page will change the screenshot.

AndrewJM: The page is small, so you should be able to resize it and still see our chat session. After I display the URL I will give you a minute or two to read the first 6 steps in the overview.

AndrewJM: The URL is:

AndrewJM: http://docs.subjectivemetrics.com/home/k-12/demo/k12_demo_home.htm

AndrewJM: Click 'peer review' in the menu.

AndrewJM: I will give you a minute or so to glance through the different screenshots - just put your mouse over the numbers, starting with 1.

AndrewJM: If you have questions, perhaps refer to the number of the screenshot...

BJB2 checks to see if everyone got the url?

AndrewJM: Thanks BJ.

DavidWe looks at the web page

MichaelH has it

BJB2: this is a remarkable project that Andrew has designed

DavidWe is so glad that Pennsylvania HAS a "holistic language arts rubric"

AndrewJM: It is probably a good idea to stop and ask what sorts of peer review processes you are using (and other teachers are using).

AndrewJM: Is peer review prevalent in your school, David?

AndrewJM: Let me make a few remarks about the process of peer review - that are independent of waypoint.

DavidWe listens

AndrewJM: I feel that peer review can be some of the most important writing a student does all year - for once they have an audience (a fellow student) who is potentially actively engaged with what they have to say.

AndrewJM: As opposed to "writing for the teacher."

AndrewJM: As such, I weight peer review work relatively heavily...

AndrewJM: And I measure and evaluate student performance...

AndrewJM: The results of a well executed peer review process (again independent of waypoint) are:

AndrewJM: 1. students can end up doing a heck of a lot more writing.

BJB2 . o O (authentic audience)

AndrewJM: 2. they read a lot...both the detailed rubrics and other student's work

AndrewJM: 3. A deeper understanding of the assignment goals...

AndrewJM: Yes - authentic audience.

AndrewJM: So...

AndrewJM: Let's log in to waypoint and take a quick run through the process.

AndrewJM: Now we will actually log in and do a mock peer review.

AndrewJM: The writing task is called "15 Minutes of Fame" – students interview a fellow student and write a magazine-like profile. It is an assignment appropriate for high school or college students and will just serve as an example.

BJB2 nods

AndrewJM: So imagine you are a student in a class and have been given a fellow student's paper to review. You will read the paper, perhaps make notes in the margins, and log in to waypoint to respond to the author.

AndrewJM: A note about browsers: waypoint works best with Internet Explorer, FireFox, and Netscape on the PC, and FireFox and Netscape on the Mac. Internet Explorer on the Mac is not an up-to-date product. Safari, the Apple browser is not supported but will allow you to see enough of waypoint to get the idea. We highly recommend FireFox.

AndrewJM: If you use a popup blocker, please disable it for our website.

AndrewJM: URL:

AndrewJM: www.gowaypoint.com/wpdemo

AndrewJM: Username:

AndrewJM: GB_512_9040

AndrewJM: Password

DavidWe . o O (nice username!)

AndrewJM: reviewer

DavidWe grins

AndrewJM: The usernames are automatically generated - so a teacher can grant access to students temporarily.

AndrewJM: But I have been thinking of getting my name legally changed to "GB_512_9040"

AndrewJM: You should see a radio button with "Evaluate" next to it...click this radio button.

BJB2 laughs. I recently hear where someone got their name legally changed to They

AndrewJM: Two drop down boxes should appear...

AndrewJM: I wonder what the last name was...

AndrewJM: Choose the assignment "15 Minutes of Fame Peer Review" from the Assignments drop-down (the only choice).

AndrewJM: Choose a student name – any name for demonstration purposes.

AndrewJM: A series of "Elements" will appear. Pretending that you have actually read a paper, choose a response for the first Element.

AndrewJM: A window will popup…notice that the second (middle) text box has a series of questions. The questions depend on which option is chosen. Students are instructed to write their answers in the third box…then click "Update Element."

AndrewJM: What you are seeing was developed by the teacher...waypoint does not primarily provide content.

AndrewJM: So each Element could have 4 choices, 5 choices...whatever the teacher wanted.

AndrewJM: Complete a few Elements – just pretending to give feedback to a student's writing. Click Save.

AndrewJM: There is a text box at the bottom of the page for overall comments...

AndrewJM: Notice the "Score" just below the text box...

AndrewJM: The score reflects the choices made during the evaluation.

AndrewJM: Right now it is a zero to 1 scale.

AndrewJM: But clients can customize this and we have built in metrics for PA, NJ, CA and other states.

AndrewJM: Generally I ask students to type "n/a" for a grade...it can be left blank.

AndrewJM: In fact one of the things you might notice about waypoint is that things aren't "locked down"...

DavidWe: That's cool, Andrew - the applicability to other states, locales

AndrewJM: As much control as possible is in the teacher/reviewer's hands.

AndrewJM: There is no "you must complete box 3" sorts of logic.

AndrewJM: Just below the grade text box is a row of buttons.

AndrewJM: Click 'save'

AndrewJM: The evaluation is saved to the database...and immediately viewable by the instructor.

AndrewJM: So teachers can 'coach' peer review in real time - for instance, if the peer review work is completed in a computer lab.

AndrewJM: Or...

AndrewJM: Right now my students are working on a peer review assignment.

AndrewJM: Because college students have official email addresses, they can complete the review and then email it directly to the author.

AndrewJM: I get an email copy.

AndrewJM: So as we are here chatting I have emails popping up from my students.

AndrewJM: I can quickly review the quality of the review and 'reply' via email if there is an issue.

AndrewJM: Ideally we have all saved a review because we will log out...

AndrewJM: And log back in as the instructor.

AndrewJM: Are there any questions or comments before we log out of this student account?

JeffC: I wasn't able to login with the user name GB_512_9040 ...and password: reviewer

AndrewJM: Did anyone else have trouble?

DavidWe hasn't tried

DavidWe: I can if you want me to test the name/password

AndrewJM: If you would...I did just log in using it.

AndrewJM: Perhaps try again Jeff?

JeffC: tried several times...

BJB2: I got right in

DavidWe: Worked for me

BJB2: I'm on IE

DavidWe . o O (IE for me on a Mac)

AndrewJM: Jeff, do you see "Demo site username" just above the login text boxes.

JeffC: don't worry about me...

AndrewJM: Okay!

DavidWe . o O (We do, Jeff, we do)

AndrewJM: Browser type shouldn't affect login, just some of the fancier features.

DavidWe nods

AndrewJM: Click logout at the bottom of the page. You should return to the login page.

AndrewJM: Now use the username/password displayed above the login area.

AndrewJM: submetguest

AndrewJM: guest2003

JeffC: ok... I'm in now

DavidWe likes the name Gerald Bland

AndrewJM: You will see a fuller menu...

AndrewJM: The names are all from Faulkner:)

AndrewJM: It's hard to come up with fake names...

DavidWe smiles

DavidWe: I should read more Faulkner, I guess

AndrewJM: We will select "Manage" from the main menu.

AndrewJM: Again you will see an assignments and students drop down.

AndrewJM: Choose the 7th Assignment - "15 minutes of fame peer review"

AndrewJM: It has a (15) in front of it - indicating the number of evaluations.

AndrewJM: A page will load with a row for each evaluation.

AndrewJM: To see the content of an evaluation, click the small blue dot to the left of the author name.

AndrewJM: From this screen an instructor can email or print in bulk...

AndrewJM: And can sort by grade or by score.

AndrewJM: Clicking the 'view data' button that appears below the list of 15 evaluations pops up a set of histograms.

AndrewJM: The data represents the choices made by the reviewers.

AndrewJM: So a teacher could use peer review data to help students improve from draft to draft.

AndrewJM: Or, if the evaluations were created by the teacher, analyze a cohort's strengths and weaknesses and adjust the lesson plan accordingly.

AndrewJM: Because waypoint runs over the web, teachers can share these detailed rubrics...

ConnieEL joined the room.

AndrewJM: So a school district could standardize the evaluations for all science reports, for instance, and 25 teachers could all use the same evaluation criteria.

BJB2: Welcome, Connie

AndrewJM: If a teacher wants to give access to students, students can do self-assessment using the criteria defined by the teacher.

ConnieEL: Thank you.

BJB2: Anyone have any questions?

AndrewJM: So, potentially, parents would have a better idea what a particular assignment is asking for and could help their kids with homework more effectively.

AndrewJM: Hi Connie...did you come for the discussion of peer review and waypoint online assessment?

AndrewJM: Well let me close out the overview with a couple of thoughts.

DavidWe wonders if Andrew knows about the Writing Associates (WA) program at Swarthmore

AndrewJM: David is wondering if I know of the writing associates program at Swarthmore...I don't. What is it?

ConnieEL: No, I'm new to this chat room stuff. I'm learning how on an on-line class. So basically, I'm just 'listening' in if that's O.K.

DavidWe: Well, peer review, for one, before assignments are handed into the professor

AndrewJM: Great - we're glad to have you Connie.

DavidWe: Here is the FAQ page - it leads to other pages...

DavidWe: http://www.swarthmore.edu/Humanities/wa/WA_Program/FAQ/generalFAQ.htm

AndrewJM: At Drexel we have "Writing Intensive Tutors"

DavidWe nods

AndrewJM: Perhaps a similar thing.

DavidWe nods

DavidWe: I would guess

AndrewJM: The WITs, as they are called, were one of the first groups to pick up waypoint.

DavidWe smiles

DavidWe likes the "WITs"

AndrewJM: Because the writing program administrator could provide some structure for their work.

AndrewJM: Drexel started with 5 undergraduate WITs 5 years ago and now has 100 per term working (and getting paid) with writing intensive courses.

AndrewJM: So some takeaways:

AndrewJM: The more structure that a teacher can bring to peer review, the better the outcome.

AndrewJM: Students feel better about being critical if they are choosing from a list of options rather than filling up a blank piece of paper.

AndrewJM: Waypoint gets students to write a ton more - they like to fill up the little boxes with examples.

DavidWe smiles

AndrewJM: Using a paper-based process students would writing things like, "nice thesis" and leave it at that.

DavidWe . o O (Little Boxes)

AndrewJM: Plus, if you combine waypoint with tapped in...where students can post drafts...reviewers can copy and paste examples into the review.

AndrewJM: Peer review needs to be a measured (read: graded) part of the curriculum.

AndrewJM: If you are interested in learning more or would like to pass along our info to teachers you know, the URL for the 'live' site is:

AndrewJM: www.gowaypoint.com

AndrewJM: Our contact info is there.

AndrewJM: We have two pricing approaches:

DavidWe smiles

AndrewJM: Individual instructors can subscribe for $50 per year.

DavidWe . o O (Now! the pitch)

AndrewJM: Yes, the pitch.

DavidWe smiles

AndrewJM: School districts can subscribe for a base fee of $3000 and $2.50/student...

AndrewJM: So a high school of 2000 students is $8000 per year. Which includes 2 training sessions.

DavidWe: Have any school districts signed up, Andrew?

AndrewJM: We are working with Lower Merion outside of Philadelphia. Also Archbishop Ryan high school. Drexel. Penn Law School. Temple.

DavidWe: Neat!

AndrewJM: We started locally - this is our first year of actively selling.

DavidWe nods

AndrewJM: There are a lot of drivers for writing now...

AndrewJM: SATs, NCLB, howling parents.

DavidWe: Within the WA program at Swarthmore there seems to be an online writing lab (OWL) component

AndrewJM: Accreditation for universities...

DavidWe: http://www.swarthmore.edu/Humanities/wa/WA_Program/FAQ/OWLFAQ.htm

DavidWe: I would have benefited from a writing program when I was a student

AndrewJM: So I thank you for your interest and welcome your feedback - here or offline.

DavidWe thanks Andrew for his presentation

AndrewJM: If you know any language arts coordinators who might take a look at waypoint, send along their contact info:)

BJB2: Andrew will present Waypoint again on March 15

AndrewJM: I would be delighted to set up accounts for teachers to try the full version of waypoint (includes peer review, team teaching etc.)

DavidWe: Cool

AndrewJM: Thanks to all - thanks for hosting us, BJ.

BJB2: Thanks, Andrew. See you in March.

ConnieEL: Thank you for letting me come in late and listen in.

DavidWe: Thanks for joining us, Connie

DavidWe: Do come back