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October 6, 2013



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## How To Use Wiki In The Classroom

More and more classrooms are now learning, creating, reading, and testing online. In order to keep up with our technologically demanding lifestyles, the traditional classroom is making way for such innovative tools as wiki. Not only is this an inexpensive way to manage your classroom, it's also a fun way to engage students in content across the curriculum.



## What is Wiki?

Wiki is an online application that allows users to contribute to or edit its content. Meaning “quick” in the Hawaiian language, wiki is a creative and open environment where everyone has a voice. The significance of wiki lies in the fact that there is no assigned “leader” or “head writer”.

The founder of wiki, Ward Cunningham, described his creation as “the simplest online database that could possibly work”. And it did.

Yet what makes wiki so unique (in most cases anyone can add or change content on a wiki website) has also given it a bad reputation among most educators. Wikipedia, for example, is the most commonly known wiki website and is often blacklisted by educators as a credible reference.

## Why Teachers Should Use Wiki in the Classroom?

Incorporating wiki into the classroom provides a very different kind of online experience for your students. Essentially, you put them in the driver’s seat.

On the road to effective use of wiki in the classroom, your first step is to find a wiki site suitable for you and your students.

Check out this short video by YouTube user Vanessa Van Edwards for a short overview of what a wiki is and how it can be a beneficial educational tool for teachers.

### How Teachers Can Use Wikis in the Classroom



If you have concerns about student safety online I highly encourage you to read [What Should Teachers Do To Keep Students Safe Online?](#)

## The Top 3 Wiki Sites For Teachers

### 1. [Wikispaces.com](#)

Designed specifically for use in the classroom, wikispaces is a social writing platform that also acts as a classroom management tool by keeping teacher and students organized and on task. Not only does this site provide easy to use templates, it's free and also has a variety of assessment tools. Teachers can also use wikispaces to create assignments and share resources.

### 2. [Wikidot.com](#)

At its most basic level, this website is free to users. Some of its features include easy to use website templates with unlimited pages, free web hosting and domain

### 3. [PDWORKS.COM](#)

With over 300,000 education based workspaces, this wiki-like website offers educators a range of options that encourage student-centered learning. Students can build web sites or web pages that can be shared with other students and staff.

An often overlooked fact is that Google Docs can function similar to a wiki if you prefer not to use any of the previously mentioned platforms. This YouTube video from Mathieu Plourde discusses why Chris Penna, an educator at the college level, uses Google Docs in place of traditional wikis.

#### Why Chris Penna Uses Google Docs vs. Wikis for Collaborative Writing



## 8 Top Tips For Using Wiki In The Classroom

Now that you've chosen a wiki publish platform, what's next?

### 1. **Set Clear Expectations**

Before setting wiki guidelines and sharing them with your students, consult your school's policies on social media. Provide students with written guidelines that must be adhered to. Let students know that if they publish inappropriate content, there will be consequences. Asking students to sign a contract is also an option.

### 2. **Start Small**

Take baby steps. Everyone will benefit from gradually increasing wiki use in the classroom. By starting small, teacher's can stay on top of monitoring classroom

Although wiki is fairly easy to use, there are times when you'll run into stumbling blocks. Ask for help when you don't understand something. You'd be surprised at much your students and colleagues might know about wiki.

#### 4. Read other Wikis

As a class and individually, explore other classroom wikis. This will give you ideas and inspirations for your own wiki pages.

#### 5. Let Wiki Work for You

Wiki is more than just a learning tool for students; it's a communication tool for teachers. Use wiki to keep parents informed and post assignments and other class related content. Your wiki page is easily edited and updated so there's no more need for a last minute trip to the copy machine.

#### 6. School-wide Wikis

Use wikis to showcase field trips, class events and school-wide events, such as the prom or last week's football game.

#### 7. Pinterest

This site has a wealth of information on wiki for the classroom. Simply type in a search term such as "wiki tips for the classroom". If you don't already have a Pinterest account, learn more about it through [The Teacher's Guide to Pinterest](#).

#### 8. Collaborate

Do lots and lots of group work. Create assignments that require students to work together, continuously communicating as part of team as they would in the real world. For example, a media class can work in teams to create an advertisement for a product of their choice that involves print and/or video. For a science class, have students work together as a research team investigating the sudden drop in the local wolf population.

## 12 Top Wiki Activities for the Classroom

### 1. Historical Figures

Instead of just another boring academic paper on an historical figure, make research and documentation fun by creating wiki fan pages. Students can add and edit text, post photos and famous quotes, as well as links to the references they used.

### 2. Student as Editor

Turn grammar into a challenging and competitive game. Have students use wiki to

### 3. **Join the Debate Team**

Using a written set of guidelines, teachers post topics that students can argue by using wiki online forums. Teachers will monitor the discussions/debates while students learn online debate etiquette.

### 4. **Create a Collaborative Story**

Start with one sentence pulled from a hat, "The girl looked beyond the dusty field and saw a team of horses approaching, their riders hands tied behind their backs." From here, students add and edit text to create a story. Set a minimum amount of words each student must submit. Chances are, you'll actually have to set a maximum amount of words.

### 5. **Poetry Class**

For English class, the teacher can post a poem online and have the students discuss its meaning. Students can also post their own poems for peer review.

### 6. **Book and Film Reviews**

Students can use wiki to write assigned book and film reviews. Other students can add to as well as comment and discuss the reviews on a monitored forum.

### 7. **Word Problems**

For math class, teachers can post word problems on wiki. Students work individually or in groups to solve the problems.

### 8. **Wiki Worlds**

For history and social studies, students can create pages for historical events such as famous battles or specific periods in history, creating entire worlds based on historical facts.

### 9. **Geography**

Wiki pages can be used to study geography by giving states or countries their own wiki page. Have students include useful and unique information about each geographical area.

### 10. **Fact Checking**

The reason why wikis is often blacklisted as a reputable source is because not everyone who contributes to a wiki page is an expert. Keep your students on their toes by assigning them to fact check each other's work.

### 11. **Riddles**

Encourage teamwork by posting riddles and having groups of students solve them through online collaboration. The students will use a forum to discuss what the possible answer is.

By taking the advice, tips, and lesson ideas in **The Teacher's Guide to Wikis**, it should be fun and easy to incorporate wiki into your classroom. As an education tool, wiki will help keep you and your students engaged and working together.

### Why Chris Penna Uses Google Docs vs. Wikis for Collaborative Writing



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September 8, 2017

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## 4 Challenges Of In-House Course Translation And How To Overcome Them

Are you thinking of translating your online courses in-house? Before you proceed, look up on the hurdles you might face and the solutions to overcome them.





## Overcoming 4 Challenges Associated With In-House Course Translation

Are you thinking the in-house translation of eLearning courses is good enough to offer effective training to your multilingual, geographically dispersed employees? Have you given a thought to quality, timelines, learning effectiveness, and Return on Investment (ROI)?

[In-house translations](#) can be quite tricky. Translation requires a fine understanding of the subject matter, along with linguistic expertise. These skills sets are rarely found in a single individual and relying solely on internal resources to translate and [localize training courses](#), leads to poor quality courses, delayed rollouts, and unnecessary costs – despite strenuous efforts.

Let's examine the challenges you are likely to face with in-house translations and the

Though organizations have well-established in-house training, learning and development, and talent management departments, you will hardly find a dedicated team for translating online courses.

All Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are not professional translators and vice versa. Though good at his subject, an SME might lack the ability to translate it accurately into several languages. Native speakers, among your employees, though fluent in their regional languages, don't understand the nuances of the topic. Both instances lead to poorly translated courses. The original impact may be lost and the thought may not be conveyed properly in the target languages.

## 2. Tight Deadlines

The need for translations is often planned, but sometimes it can arise suddenly. For example, training multilingual sales teams quickly on new updates to a product. Your employees already have their regular duties and core tasks and if such needs crop up suddenly, you will have enormous work to do within short deadlines.

## 3. Cultural Differences

Remember that your audience are scattered across the globe and have [cultural and political differences](#) apart from linguistic differences. Not just language, gestures, colors, dialects, clothing – all assume various connotations in different regions.

In-house translators won't be fully equipped to deal with the local nuances of different regions, this will lead to courses that don't cater to local sensibilities – you can end up losing your credibility. You have to strike a fine balance between [training translation and localization](#).

## 4. eLearning Translation Is Not Just Content Translation

If it was so, it would be good and the in-house training department would be able to manage with the help of multilingual SMEs (though they are hard to come by).

eLearning translation is not just translation of content; translated content has to be

designers – imagine the complexity and cost of maintaining this team.

So, what is the way out of this murky business?

## Overcoming Challenges

1. You can **recruit native speakers** as in-house translators but there is always the risk of they being unfamiliar with the intricacies involved in various training areas –specially compliance, legal, safety– where translated content has to be accurate.
2. Invest in translation memory tools or use free [translation tools](#) for consistency in the corporate lingo across all your translation projects. This will [reduce your translation costs](#) in the long run and enable you to complete projects faster.
3. Leverage [latest authoring tools](#) to incorporate the translated content into online courses, rapidly. You just need to download the content of the source course in a Comma Separated Values (CSV) format or XML document and send it for translation. The translated file can be uploaded directly in the course without any changes.

This will entail dealing with multiple vendors and agencies. If you want to avoid all this, you can [partner with an eLearning translation vendor](#), with a strong background in offering eLearning translation and localization services.

Read more about the hassles of in-house translations in this handy [free eBook](#). Plan for translation and localization at the start of eLearning development. This will help eliminate unnecessary delays. Leverage technology to reduce efforts and partner with a suitable eLearning translation vendor who will be the one-stop solution for all your translation requirements.

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