



Information Technology in Teacher Education

Summer 2006

No 53

<http://www.itte.org.uk>

ISSN 1362-9433

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Is that an Ofsted inspection I see before me?

The Newsletter of the Association for
Information Technology in Teacher Education

Newsletter



From the Chair

Graham Jarvis

At the time of writing the World Cup is about to start, but don't worry I am not going to inflict that onto you all here. The reason for mentioning it is that I am fascinated by the technology that is available to enable those who want to listen, watch, interact and be involved. Not just in the comfort of their own homes but in the garden, on the train, on the move and really anywhere you want.

The BBC and others are providing the usual radio and TV coverage but there is also interactive TV, viewing through broadband, RSS feeds, feeds to mobile phones, Blogs, podcasts and so on. In the words of that famous phrase: 'we have the technology'!

All of this made me think again about the possibilities for extending our present use of technology in various aspects of education, in our schools and in our training. Earlier this month a lecturer from Bradford made the national news because he was podcasting his lectures for students.

Certainly I know of those in the ITTE community who have the skills, expertise and willingness to 'think outside the box' and Peter Twining has started a discussion on the website entitled: '2020 vision - the future education system workshop' which has resulted in a good discussion so far. We hope that we will be able to organise an event for taking these discussions forward.

Our conference this year has the title 'Sharing Innovation' and I am sure it will give us, as an association and community, time to think about 'where we are' and 'where we are going'. What role can ITTE play in influencing the policy makers when considering how technology might change the way we think, teach and learn? How and in what ways can technology enhance what we do?

On a forum on our website I wrote about a lady who had grown up in a family where education was not seen as important for girls. She has now gained her Masters degree and is working towards her PhD. She said: *"For me teaching was something that was 'done to you' and learning was 'something you did in your own time.'"*

If we are not able to use the possibilities that technology affords effectively perhaps we will have pupils and students who will learn in spite of us and not because of us.

The challenge is there, it is up to us to take it on!!

COME ON ENGLAND!!!!!!

g.jarvis@leedstrinity.ac.uk

Editorial

Libby Jared, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge

Down Memory Lane

This Newsletter will hopefully arrive around the time of the World Cup Final (England has currently reached the quarter finals) during which I propose to drive down early to the Summer Conference. It's not that I can't wait to get to the conference, rather I shall be visiting my 'home' city (and thus family). The only building between the conference venue and my 'old' (state!) secondary school (King John reputedly fished in its lake) is the Prison. Those were the days, when we looked out from our form room to see those Radio Caroline Pirate DJs making an appearance over the road! And to think we only had blackboards, inkwells and logarithmic

tables and where the word Standards meant ensuring one's hat was on one's head prior to leaving the school gate. Ah such memories of sunny summer days.

However I do not seem to be the only one focussing on memories. Christina Preston shares two critical incidents that shaped her forward path in ICT. Reading them will make you remember little vignettes for you own trajectory and you are warmly invited to share such in future issues. (So please get writing now). Steve Kennewell has contributed a substantial article (to quote his e-mail: "if it's too long, tough!") on IWBs, offering his current thoughts on this 'contentious' piece of hardware. (It is interesting that the US is not unduly fussed with IWBs – a point made in another article, left for you to find in careful reading). Please note the last part of paragraph 2 for, if you do, what more incentive do you want, to make a contribution to this Newsletter? (So please get writing now).

Can such a new fan dangled thing such as a blog hold memories? Well in sharing two entries from his blog, (if only the BBC had been aware if it) Richard Millwood brings in the work of Papert on the scene a quarter of a century ago, but sadly the pioneering beliefs in young people programming were 'lost' through a host of curriculum 'reforms'. It would be good to have responses to Richard's blog. (So please get writing now). Helena Gillespie is planning to 'blog' with her trainees next year, so we will await memories of this initiative in 2031. The same might be said of Chris Shelton's article as he tussles with allocating those 'free' laptops to next year's intake. You need to read the article and not just rely on the picture to know what Chris is doing with them.



John Potter's brand new i-shed:
ready for some memorable work!

In counterpoint to the memory theme, Martin Owen looks to the future in writing about social software – broadly software which supports group interaction – and its effect in promoting C learning.

Other memories in this Newsletter? Well Tony Fisher is in the Hot Seat, David Longman and Lynne Jones share a Best Lesson, Neil Stanley has recent memories of a holiday taken this term (how can he do that?) which has helped him in his compilation of New on the Bookshelf and Web Wanderings. There is lots of scope for other contributions. (So please get writing now).

And so onto the picture competition (see page 20), kindly supplied by Roger Keeling. All I know is that it must be a distant memory by now. Could this be the first of many such competitions? (So please get writing now).

P.S. I suggested to one of my trainees that when writing an essay he should try and stop repeating the same word towards the end of one and the beginning of the next sentence, using an alternative (Thesaurus style). He 'argued' that this repetition was good as he had been told that when he was writing party political leaflets there was a requirement that this should be done, so that the message could be driven home to the public.

So, times five, please get writing now.

ecj20@cam.ac.uk

Has the interactive whiteboard solved any problems yet?

Steve Kennewell, University of Wales Swansea

Let me start by saying very clearly: THIS IS NOT A RESEARCH PAPER! Now I'd better explain this statement from the beginning.

Five years ago, I wrote a brief article for ITTE Newsletter 39 which set out a few "primitive ideas" in the form of questions about the "IW" to which I'd like to know the answers. Even the title was a question: *Interactive whiteboards – yet another solution looking for a problem to solve?* It seemed that the IW (now, of course, usually IWB or electronic whiteboard or digital whiteboard) was about to become fashionable in Education - I certainly got that right – but we didn't know much about its potential. In the absence of research evidence, I highlighted the positive aspects of the technology which I perceived, and I think I got those right, too. I certainly hope so, because some snippets of what I wrote were cited by Becta in their review of IWB literature in the series *What the research says*. As a result, and to my horror, the article I wrote as a quick brain-dump has been cited in most academic papers concerning IWBs since then.

Three years later, I had an opportunity to work more systematically on answering some the questions. The ICT Education Research Group at Swansea School of Education proposed a project in the ESRC's Teaching and Learning Research Programme, with the abbreviated title Interactive Teaching and ICT. This proposal was based on the belief that it was no longer appropriate to make broad, general studies of the impact of ICT and that we needed to focus on the sort of classroom activities for which ICT was likely to be most beneficial if we were going to form clear conclusions concerning the effective deployment of ICT resources. Since there is a consensus around ICT being *interactive* compared with other media, and the government is keen on teaching being *interactive*, it seemed a good idea to focus on how the pedagogical and technological manifestations of interactivity were mutually related.

We are aiming to characterise differences in teaching, learning and attainment brought about by the adoption of ICT. We are working with pairs of teachers, based in a wide variety of primary and secondary schools in south and mid Wales, to investigate the differences in teaching approaches and the learning which takes place when similar classes are taught by good teachers using ICT and non-ICT approaches for maths, science and languages (MFL in secondary, Welsh in primary). Next year, the same teachers will both work with ICT, so that we can explore the difference in teaching approach and learning outcomes when a teacher adopts ICT or experiences some professional development concerning the use of new technology.

We are assessing pupils before and after the teaching, interviewing teachers and pupils, and observing lessons. Lessons are also video recorded, and researchers discuss sections selected by the teachers with the teacher and with small groups of pupils in order to gain an understanding of pedagogical decision-making and effects on learning of the classroom activity observed.

The work will suggest whether there are any quantitative differences in attainment as a result of using ICT, and help identify the most effective teaching strategies for particular curriculum topics in the three subjects. It will also provide information concerning the effects of adopting new technologies and the influence of professional development. We are developing a range of theoretical ideas to support the analysis. I gave sessions concerning the main framework for analysing teaching and learning at last year's Summer Conference and the Research Conference; this is continually developing but you can find the basic ideas in our BERA 2004 paper (information on accessing this is provided at the end).

The project has been running for over a year now and we decided to squeeze some funding out of the budget for teacher involvement in order to have a Professional Development Day. Most of the time was spent in cross-phase groups, which proved very successful in enabling teachers

and researchers to reflect about the teaching within particular subjects. The mixture of foundation, primary and secondary teachers seemed to stimulate the discussion of aims and beliefs in addition to curriculum content and resources for both the maths and the language groups. The secondary science group, who had worked by themselves owing to the absence of their primary colleagues who were on another course, gained less from the day. Fruitful discussion was further aided by the focus on how best to teach particular ideas:

- when is it valuable to use the IWB with the whole class?
- when is it better to have a small group working independently (IWB or PC)?
- when do we want pupils to work individually on PCs?
- when is a different medium preferable?

Despite noticeable and quite fundamental differences in pedagogy across the subjects, some common ideas are emerging. I will briefly discuss four of these:

- attention, motivation and ‘learning styles’
- pace v. momentum
- flexibility v. ‘Death by PowerPoint’
- pupil participation and collective experience

We can take it for granted that the IWB generates greater attention and motivation amongst pupils when a teacher adopts the IWB (see any IWB research article for evidence). There are two big questions: why is this and does it lead to improved learning? The idea of learning styles may be helpful here. I’m not keen on labelling pupils and feel that the visual aspects of the IWB display – size, clarity, colour, movement – are actually of benefit to everyone, albeit in different degrees. There may be benefits for understanding, but most particularly for retention of ideas and information. These benefits will be best realised when the teacher adds emphasis to images through highlighting, annotation, etc. I’m not so sure about the kinaesthetic aspect of pupils coming to the board to drag things around; I suspect that the rest of the class gain more from this than the pupil at the front and will come back to this later.

The increase in pace also seems to be a natural consequence of IWB use – except when (a) the technology malfunctions and (b) a succession of pupils come to the front to carry out a trivial action at the board. But is pace the holy grail in interactive teaching? We prefer to use the classic Kounin concepts of smoothness and momentum. A frantic pace can be generated by asking trivial questions with one-word answers, but those familiar with the principle of conservation of momentum know that in order to convey something more substantial, you have to slow down! The important factor is avoiding gaps when pupils are not engaged, and this is where the IWB helps with smooth transitions. It is common to find much use of basic PowerPoint when teachers first adopt the IWB, but they soon realise that the big advantage of this is in having material prepared in advance, and that the slide presentation model is actually inflexible to the extent of reducing interactivity. Several of the teachers were excited to discover how to do hyperlinks to provide some control over sequencing of material, while others are choosing to use flipchart/notebook software unless they need the particular features of PowerPoint. A similar process is occurring with commercially produced pre-programmed packages; if they can change them they will, and if they can’t, they’ll be selective in what bits they use and how they them in combination with other resources. They also use the original whiteboard frequently as well, and teachers in the new schools, which **only** have interactive whiteboards, feel deprived of an important alternative resource. So please don’t just say ‘whiteboard’ when you specifically mean the interactive one!

As for pupil participation, it does seem to be more common for teachers to invite pupils to work at the board when it’s interactive, and there are many reasons for this – teacher perceptions of pupil ICT capability, the easy ‘undo’ facility, the use of drag-and-drop rather than writing or drawing on blank board, and the greater clarity of what pupils write/draw if they do present their

own ideas. But what about the rest of the class? The important factor is that they all participate in thinking about what the pupil at the front is trying to do – will he be able to do it? How will he do it? How would I do it? – and this collective thinking can work extremely well with the right material and effective management of learning by the teacher.

During Phase 1, we have seen much excellent teaching both with and without the IWB. Many of the ICT users are not yet at a high level of pedagogical or technical expertise with the IWB, and we expect to see a better but more selective use of its features in Phase 2, combined with a return to some traditional approaches with a better understanding of why they work. Our wonderful research design depends on the same teachers being involved for two years in order to incorporate some analysis of professional learning into the study and to control some of the variables in the statistical analysis. Unfortunately the research design is not a priority for teachers as they go about their normal lives – having babies, getting new jobs, and going off around the world on a mid-career gap year, so we have recruited some new schools and teachers for next year. Meanwhile, we'll spend the summer catching up with data analysis!

When we started the project, we soon found that we were not the only research group concerned with these issues. Several groups gave papers at BERA 2005, and representatives of teams at Keele, London IoE, MMU, Newcastle and Cambridge formed the IWB Pedagogy Research Group, which has met twice subsequently to discuss informally the similarities and differences in what we are doing and what we are finding. Some members have moved to other institutions, whilst other projects have joined and so the network is already growing. We would welcome interest from other teams engaged in similar research. We have two linked symposia at BERA 2006 at the University of Warwick in September, and are producing papers for a special issue of Learning, Media and Technology next year. Some of us will be in Adelaide for AARE in December, where I am presenting a synthesis on behalf of the group. You may find us in other places as well, and we will be pleased to talk to ITTE members in any location!

In conclusion, I must reiterate that this is a collection of thoughts based on anecdotal evidence and pure speculations. By all means reflect on them, relate to your own experience, and perhaps contact me with your own anecdotes and speculations, whether in agreement or conflict with mine. But please do not confer the status of 'research findings' on the ideas in this article!

Here are some links to the real research papers and reports from the IWB Pedagogy Research group that you might like to follow up:

From Swansea: <http://www.tlrp.org/dspace/> and search on **interactive**

From Newcastle: <http://partners.becta.org.uk/> and search on **interactive**

From Keele: <http://www.keele.ac.uk/depts/ed/iaw/>

From Manchester Metropolitan: <http://www.evaluation.icctestbed.org.uk/>

From Cambridge: <http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/istl/pub.html>

From Cambridge/Open University: <http://www.educ.cam.ac.uk/iwb/main.html>

This is not comprehensive; there are other journal papers which you can track down by searching BEI on **interactive** AND **whiteboard** OR **whiteboards**. There are also some papers given by group members at BERA which can be found on Education-line http://brs.leeds.ac.uk/cgi-bin/brs_engine and search on 'interactive whiteboard' and 'interactive presentation'.

S.E.Kennewell@swansea.ac.uk

Thought for the term

I offered to send a member a copy of last term's Newsletter via snail mail if they would like to give me their home address.

The reply consisted of four lines:

house name
road
town
county with postcode.

The next line of the message read: 13 characters in each line, interestingly!

And it was true. Have you counted your characters?

Would we *have* to take it home? - Laptops for staff and students

Chris Shelton, University of Chichester

Like many other teacher education providers, at Chichester we have recently placed an order for a number of laptop computers for our students and tablet PCs for our staff. And, hopefully, by the time you are reading this they will have arrived. The computers have been paid for by the TDA as part of the "Support for ICT in ITT 2005-6" grant scheme and although we didn't get as many as we might have liked, the computers are very welcome.

But now the computers are on their way, I am questioning some of my original ideas about how to distribute and use them. Of course, our bid to the TDA set out in some detail what we intended to do and we will follow through with this. But how can we really make the most of these laptops and, given that we can't provide one for every trainee teacher or tutor, how will we decide who to give them to? And what do we expect students and staff to do with them?



'Old Main' on Penn State campus

In May I was fortunate to be the recipient of a UCET/AACTE travel scholarship¹ and travelled to Pennsylvania State University (Penn State) to explore how student teachers are supported to use ICT. A full report on my trip will be published on the UCET website (www.ucet.ac.uk) later in the year. There were many aspects of teacher education in the US that caught my attention and many innovative aspects of the work of the student teachers and faculty members at Penn State but here I just want to mention their use of laptops.

The big ICT issue here (around Chichester at least) seems to be Interactive Whiteboards (How do we use them most effectively? Are they worthwhile? What difference do they make? Are there better alternatives? etc.). But this wasn't really an issue for the schools I visited in Pennsylvania and although one or two classes had interactive whiteboards, few teachers or school administrators seemed particularly keen for more. A much more critical issue for many of the teachers I spoke to was '1-1 computing' - usually in the form of providing a laptop for

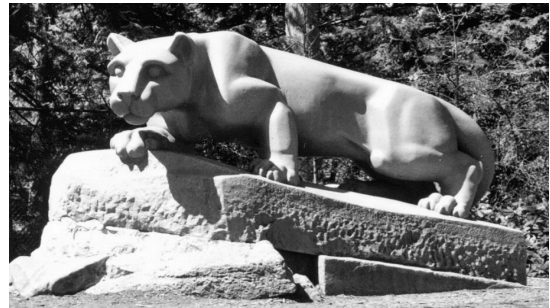
¹ Each year the Universities Council for the Education of Teachers (UCET) and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) along with the Stanley Hewett Trust offer a travel scholarship to the USA for academics at an early stage of their career. See www.ucet.ac.uk for more details.

every pupil. Hence there were laptop trolleys for classes, but also laptop schemes for teachers and even one for some Penn State student teachers.

The teacher education programme at Penn State is very large and I spent most of my time looking at one part of it – the PDS (Professional Development Schools) intern programme². This internship entails spending a full school year working alongside an experienced teacher mentor. This year, for the first time, every intern has been provided with a laptop computer.

A few points about these schemes are worth noting. Firstly, **all** the interns on the PDS programme have been given a laptop, whether or not they already have one of their own. This is not because the university has an endless supply of computers – the majority of student teachers are on other programmes and are not offered a laptop. But a decision was made to make sure this particular group were all provided for. The most striking consequence of knowing that all of the cohort has access to the same computers and software is that the university tutors have been able to integrate ICT more fully into their courses. For example, all of the interns created podcasts and videos on their laptops in taught sessions and then were able to take their laptops into school and try out these activities with pupils.

Our TDA bid focused on increasing the percentage of students with a laptop and will face some difficult choices about eligibility in September. I was surprised at first that students with laptops might be given a second one by their university but the students (unsurprisingly) were able to provide reasons why they needed one. For some, computers that had been bought while they were in school or at the start of their degree were now too old to cope with the demands they placed on them, for many others, their own computers were not compatible with the systems used in their placement schools. (This arose because of the wide use of Apple computers in the local school district and is unlikely to pose too much of an issue around Chichester.)



The Penn State University mascot

It is possible that after distributing our laptops as fairly and carefully as possible, we will continue to have a situation where no tutor can be completely sure that all their student teachers have access to the same technology or software. In that case, will tutors be able to adapt their courses to enable students to make full use of the laptops? I'm sure all students who receive a laptop will glean some benefit but I expect that only some will get the most out of them. So a key challenge for September will be to distribute our laptops in a way that promotes the widest possible equity of access but also enables tutors to be confident that changes to their courses will not further disadvantage any student.

Secondly, both the scheme for interns and the scheme for qualified teachers involved a substantial amount of training. All interns were provided with two half day training sessions on how to use their laptops and the training for teachers lasted even longer. This length of time allowed the organisers to go far beyond simple laptop use to address more complex topics, e.g. video creation. For the teachers, regular training sessions provided an opportunity to share ideas and examples of how they had used the computer in class. The teachers seemed to view the commitment as a fair exchange for being given the laptop and for the organisers it was an opportunity to cover some of the things that there had never been time for before.

This sharing of practice worked because the teachers involved in the scheme worked in the same department. At the start, not all teachers in the department wanted to be involved and one

² See www.ed.psu.edu/pds/ for more information about the PDS programme

who was worried about increased workload asked “would we *have* to take it home?” Our tutors are quite used to taking work home but it remains to be seen whether tablet PCs will alter their working practices. I expect that one factor in this will be how the small group of tutors support each other. We will probably follow the example of the US scheme by arranging regular training sessions and trying to ensure that the tutors have peers in their department or team to share practice with.

Thirdly, the burden of maintaining these schemes was surprisingly low. Those responsible for providing technical support felt that the scheme had run very smoothly and the laptops rarely broke down. They suggested two possible reasons for this: all the laptops were Apples (matching the computers used in the local schools - I wonder if anyone will spend their TDA grant on Macs?) and the interns and teachers felt ownership over their laptops. (In some cases this went too far and interns had to be warned not to customise the computer with stickers.)



You did *what* with the laptops?

Finally, the laptop schemes were very successful. The interns were very enthusiastic about the laptops and made extensive use of them. (At the end of the day, they could even be found with their laptops and a pile of marking in Starbucks.) Teachers and interns demonstrated a constructive but critical attitude towards technology and showed me some impressive examples of work that they had done with their pupils that they claimed would not have been possible without the schemes. In some schools, interns who had not been particularly strong users of computers before were now supporting more experienced teachers to use technology.

So I'm looking forward to receiving the laptops but not to allocating them. I'm confident that the students here will make good use of them and hopeful that the outcomes will be comparable to the work I saw in Pennsylvania.

c.shelton@chi.ac.uk

Social Software from eLearning to C Learning

Martin Owen, Development Director, Futurelab

Call it community learning, communicative learning or collaborative learning, at its heart learning is a social process. C-learning has always been important and new approaches to computer use emerging over the past 5 years provides an amplifier to C-Learning – the emergence of social software. Futurelab have produced a publication *Social Software and Learning* which is designed to promote debate on its use in education. Many schools ban IMS, Mobile Phones, and in some cases private email accounts. The most common tools of our modern world offer tremendous educational potential but schools want them parked outside. However students are doing it for themselves.

In the publication I argue that our relationship with knowledge is changing, from one in which knowledge is organised in strictly classified ‘disciplines’ and ‘subjects’, to a more fluid and responsive practice which allows us to organise knowledge in ways that are significant to us at different times and in different places. At the same time, we see changes in the ‘spaces’ of knowledge, from its emergence within discrete institutional boundaries, to its generation in virtual and cross-institutional settings. Moreover, the ways in which we engage with knowledge are increasingly characterised by ‘multi-tasking’, engaging with multiple and overlapping knowledge streams. There are also changes in our understanding of practices of creativity and

innovation – from the idea of the isolated individual ‘genius’ to the concept of ‘communities of practice’, where reflection and feedback are important collaborative processes.

In this context, educational agendas are shifting to address ideas about how we can create personalised and collaborative knowledge spaces, where learners can access people and knowledge in ways that encourage creative and reflective learning practices that extend beyond the boundaries of the school, and beyond the limits of formal education.

It is in the light of these new educational agendas that we are interested in the emerging practices of social software. Social software can be broadly characterised as ‘software that supports group interaction’. The most familiar types are likely to be internet discussion forums, social networking and dating sites. However, applications like massively multiplayer online games and internet messaging can also be seen as social software, as could group e-mails and tele-conferencing. Applications such as weblogs, wikis and social bookmarking have seen a recent increase in popularity and growing mainstream interest. At the same time, there are other technologies which enrich and enhance these practices, like syndication systems that bring information in a well organised way from one source to another.

New forms of collaboration tools are also emerging, where people can work together to build new documents or products. We are also seeing a shift in the ‘modality’ of communication away from text alone: podcasting or audio publishing via the net is a growing movement, and it will be a relatively short time before there is also good support for video publication on the net. Locative and geographically mediated activity via mobile phones is also a likely area for further experimentation. Experimentation and development is not over. There are further ideas to emerge. They need investigation and when appropriate – exploitation in education.

Futurelab’s publication is freely available for download on:

http://www.futurelab.org.uk/research/opening_education.htm

martin.owen@futurelab.org.uk

My Best Lesson

David Longman & Lynne Jones, Newport School of Education, University of Wales

A Barrier Game using draw tools in PowerPoint and email.

Not so much a ‘best’ lesson but one that is always fun and gets things going at the start of a new ICT course.

A ‘barrier game’ is when one partner (the source) has an object or drawing to describe to another partner (the target) who in turn tries to draw or make the object. The barrier is usually some of physical shield separating the partners so that each cannot see what the other is doing. Typically the communication between the partners is oral. You can make up rules about how much and what type communication can take place between partners -- e.g. is the target allowed to ask questions or should s/he simply try to follow instructions.

For the ICT version of the game create teams of two or four. Each half of the team has their own computer as far apart as possible, if you can in a separate room (we can do this as we have two teaching rooms next door to each other). Each group makes a picture using the draw tools in PowerPoint (the reason for this is that the default slide size is standardised, but you could use Word). There are rules about the picture you can make: e.g. make a picture using 1 red, filled triangle, 1 blue filled square, etc. etc. You can position these anywhere on the slide you like. (You can make up these rules).

Now use email to describe your picture to the other half of your team. The partners have to reconstruct it from your instructions and descriptions.

You have 10 minutes (or some other suitable time limit).

As part of the preamble to this game we explain that it is imperative to establish a communication channel with your partner on the other computer. Don't spend ages writing out long lists of instructions because your partner(s) is out there waiting for some information to get started. You have a time limit after all. So the challenge here is to think about your partner and to communicate frequently and quickly. Of course, your partner is also trying to contact you to tell you about their picture.

It can be confusing because you are sending and receiving emails -- one to instruct the other to create a copy of your picture, the second to construct a picture from their instructions (it helps if each group can have a couple of computers to work on side-by-side). But confusion is the fun of it. And the results are often interesting too. Along the way, much is learned about drawing tools, about email, about communication, about writing instructions. It can be interesting to discuss the various instructional strategies adopted and to discuss the strengths and weaknesses of email as a method of communication.

By the way, we had a group of secondary school pupils in and played this game with them. One pair of clever clogs decided to draw a black filled shape on a black background - this was before we had refined the rules to make this impossible!

One last thought: we haven't tried this using instant messaging instead of email.

david.longman@newport.ac.uk

How were you introduced to computers in education?

Christina Preston, MirandaNet Fellowship

I've been looking back on the critical incidents in my life that led to the founding of the MirandaNet Fellowship in a paper in the MirandaNet Braided Learning e-journal volume called, *O brave new world: the birth of an e-community - 1955-1991* (<http://www.mirandanet.ac.uk/ejournal/ejournal.htm>).

The full paper is also a reflection on the ways in which teachers in my generation were introduced to the use of computers in the classroom in the 1970s, 1980s and the 1990s.

ITTE members are invited to add their own critical incidents to the e-journal volume by using the peer review facility. In addition, let Libby know if you also want to publish your incident in the ITTE Newsletter. This way we can build up an auto-ethnographical study of our community's history. It will be interesting to reflect on these experiences as we set up the proposed working party to predict the future.

For the present, in this Newsletter I share two incidents – “A child learns ...” and “It's on the timetable”. I intend to publish some more of these critical incidents in the ITTE Newsletter in the next few issues. It all began when I was asked to give a keynote presentation in 1994 at the Women in Computing Conference in Manchester.

This first extract I have chosen to share, comes from that keynote and pinpoints for me now, more than when I first wrote it, the innocence, naivety and freshness of a young learner's interest in the world around them. The incident also serves to remind teacher educators how far many professional teachers have had to climb in their learning lifetime to understand new technologies.

In this passage I am inducted into the discourse of computers and learning.

Critical Incident 1 A child learns from the high priest of mainframes

The imperious ringing of the telephone broke into my sleep at two in the morning. A throbbing taxi squatted in the road. Hanging from the window, I saw my father, his pin striped pyjamas replaced by his pin striped suit, dashing out into the night like Dr Findlay. Black bowler firmly on. The patient was the Citibank computer. Down again!

The mysterious deletion of a couple of million pounds was the staple diet of breakfast conversation - computer fraud and security issues for our late, late, supper when he came home. The computer seemed a voracious night and day devourer and regurgitater of information requiring constant attention, devotion and coaxing to perform.

My father's bank was in Threadneedle Street in the City of London. Every Christmas the children of bank employees were invited to a spectacular party. Travelling through the grey and empty City streets on a Saturday was exciting in our new party dresses and our hair frizzled by curling tongs. The windowless buildings dwarfed us as we struggled up the marble steps. The Xmas party always lived up to expectations: the biggest tree, the most avuncular Father Xmas, the most sumptuous presents and the wobblest jelly.

But there was a greater excitement in store one year. My father took my sister and I up in one of the lifts, "To see the computers." In an antechamber, we pulled white gauze hats over our hair like operatives in a food factory. White plastic overshoes and stiff overalls signalled that dust and dandruff were the enemy.

Secret codes were punched into the door panel. Inside the room, which was about 20 feet by 20 feet, there were ten tin boxes the size of wardrobes. Through the window on their chests I could see giant brown tape reels whirling round. These mainframe computers looked rather like the old reel to reel tape recorders that had eaten from the wrong side of the mushroom like Alice - and grown. There was a hallowed silence. So this was the operations sanctum to which my father, the high priest, was called night and day. I decided to have nothing to do with computers.

My children and other PETS

In the sixties and early seventies my adolescence and teacher training days were blissfully free of 'computer awareness'. Not until the early eighties was I aware of the personal computer revolution when we bought a Spectrum 48K for our growing children, a girl and a boy. Games for children seemed to be the purpose of a home computer. I never actually touched the keyboard. On the first day of purchase we took it with great pride to show my father who had recently retired from Citibank. Usually an obliging man, we were surprised when he refused, point-blank, to plug the little computer into his television.

"How many K does it have?" he said, eyeing it warily, "48? You remember the dust-proof data-processing centre I ran when you were still at school? You remember all those human-sized tin boxes?" Of course I did. "Well in that entire room there was 30K of memory - and you're not putting 48K through my television set!"

My father never recovered from his suspicion for personal computing although in the late eighties computers seemed so much more reliable and user friendly. My children invested in a joystick so that they could kill little yellow people, the Green Berets or furry monsters with more efficiency. They jet-setted with Willy and skied with Horace. They went in for interactive karate, kick-boxing and diving with the Red Arrows. I began to wish they would return to the television. My son's school held jumble sales and 'bring and buys' to purchase some ICL computers. My daughter's school held a parents' evening for us to admire and use the new 'PETS'. The young enthusiastic female head of the maths department extolled the virtues of women in the computer world and we, parents, were impressed. My daughter brought home

printouts of drawings and games she had programmed herself. She began to leave the house early so that she could join her computer teacher at 8.00 am - the only space for her year in the computer suite. This stopped suddenly - the young and enthusiastic teacher had developed morning sickness - the PETS were abandoned. Good computer teachers were thin on the ground in girls' schools in the late 1980s.

Critical Incident 2: It's on the timetable

It was something of a surprise in September 1986 to find 'IT' in four slots on my timetable.

"What is IT?" I asked the curriculum deputy.

"Information technology" he said patiently. "You are teaching IT to two first year classes this year starting next Tuesday."

"Why me?"

"Because English and Drama teachers communicate well, and because you had a two day MicroElectronics Programme (MEP) government project course on computers in May."

"Two days!" I squealed.

"Well it's two days more than anyone else teaching information technology this term."

Remember at this point in time I had still never touched a keyboard. In retrospect, I'm surprised I did not make more fuss, but I was too ignorant to know what I was agreeing to.

Actually the first term was easy as the computers had not arrived. We taught the bemused classes from earnest, newly-minted Croydon information technology books (Strong & McGee 1984). We looked at traditional and modern methods of storing information and tried to see how much information was important to our lives. We interpreted road signs, maps and timetables and learnt about using the computer for information retrieval, creating quizzes and learning to word process. It all seemed very relevant and I just wished I had more training than the experience of life in this field.

When the £75,000 grant from the Manpower Services Commission finally was secured for a computer suite it was a difficult pill to swallow. I didn't resent the money spent on computers - I thought it essential. But the roof of my classroom leaked and I had no lights or curtains in the drama studio. So I did hope if the cake was small, the arts would not starve altogether.

When the Research machines network of 186 computers was installed, I was promised training. We would be kept a week ahead of the students, we were assured. But, oh dear, the week we were to start turned out to be the first week of industrial action on the matter of directed time. No training for me after all.

Never mind. The director of computing studies had stuffed a word processing manual in my overloaded pigeonhole with a note pinned to it which said, "Teach this for the first six weeks." He had also left instructions for turning the network on. Luckily one of the boys in my class seemed competent in operating the system. I let him get on with it. For me, every plunge into the computer room felt like driving a different car out of the staff car park each night. I had no opportunity to use a computer between the sessions with the pupils and they were not at all keen to let me have a whole keyboard to myself.

The night before the first class, I sat up late copying commands from the manual onto flashcards. The package was Word: tiny white letters on a black screen - remember- and a menu at the bottom that had impenetrable American commands like 'transfer'. We diligently typed, saved and printed.

"I'm bored, Miss," said one of my charges after about two weeks of word processing procedures.

"So am I" I confessed. "At least you have a computer. What do you suggest?"

They huddled together in conference.

"Why don't we use these computers to do some proper English?" one ventured.

"Yes, let's get back to writing about Chernobyl," said another. "That matters."

"We could use these machines to publish a sort of newspaper about the tragedy."

"Or a magazine... We could write letters about nuclear accident."

"Yes, they won't know the letters are from children if we use these computers. They might listen to us."

In that computing laboratory my teaching style changed for ever. I was used to commanding a class from the front like a keynote speaker - I could tell a good tale to keep them in their seats. But because the cables had been laid round the edge of the room, the children had their backs to me and they were totally absorbed, on task, committed - they did not need me. It was a tough moment of truth. But faced by the pupils' backs in that south London computer lab, I reoriented myself and became facilitator and a learner.

References

Strong, T and McGee P (1984) *The Information Project – MEP*. London, Addison and Wesley

This incident will also be published in August 2006

Preston, C (2006 – in press). A creative approach to educational computing: key incidents in a typical life cycle. The history of computing and education, Santiago, Chile IFIT.

christina@mirandanet.ac.uk

ITTE Committee Members 2005-2006

Richard Bennett	Elected 2004 - 2007	University of Chester
Ken Bingham	Elected 2005-2008	University of Cambridge
Tim Denning	<i>Co-opted</i>	Keele University
Babs Dore	<i>Secretary</i>	University of Northampton
Tony Fisher	<i>Past Chair</i>	University of Nottingham
Bob Fox	Elected 2004 - 2007	University of Worcester
Helena Gillespie	<i>Co-opted</i>	University of East Anglia
Chris Higgins	<i>Treasurer</i>	Oxford Brookes University
<i>Libby Jared</i>	<i>Visitor (Newsletter)</i>	University of Cambridge
Graham Jarvis	<i>Chair</i>	Trinity and All Saints College, Leeds
Tony van der Kuyl	Elected 2005 - 2008	SITC, University of Edinburgh
David Longman	Elected 2004 - 2006	University of Wales Newport
<i>Avril Loveless</i>	<i>Visitor (Editor TPE)</i>	Brighton University
John Potter	Elected 2003 - 2006	Goldsmiths (University of London)
Ken Powell	Elected 2004 - 2007	Canterbury Christ Church University
Sarah Younie	<i>Vice Chair</i>	De Montfort University

ITTE update - what has happened and is planned for the future*Graham Jarvis, Trinity & All Saints College*

I would normally put this information in my 'View from the Chair' but as I decided to write in a slightly different way for this Newsletter I thought a specific update of recent activities would help keep everyone informed about what was going on.

Sarah Younie and I met with John Williams (HMI) in March and had a very useful and fruitful discussion. John is very supportive of the association and provides a useful perspective on Ofsted and ICT in Teacher Education. Although John's main focus in his work is on the Secondary sector he has agreed to support us in holding a joint workshop with HMI, Ofsted and the TDA on the 12th September in London. This will be a real opportunity to discuss the inspection process involving ICT in Primary ITE courses, talk with HMI and the TDA as well as being able to share courses, ideas and views with other colleagues. It is hoped that we can arrange further such workshops for KS3, KS4 and post-16.

The committee met at Canterbury and had a full agenda which covered this year's conference, the website, the updating of the ITTE constitution and many other items too numerous to mention here.

There was a meeting with Jill Collinson about the 'schools for the future project' and the TDA are arranging a further workshop event in the near future. Sarah Younie and Ken Powell are our contacts for this area and initiative.

Bob Fox and I had an initial meeting with the TDA and BESA to put forward proposals regarding software and software licences which specifically reflect the needs of ITE. The BESA steering group have now met and our proposals were received favourably. We are to meet again on the 19th July when we hope we will be able to give some further and more detailed information. Bob Fox is the main contact for this area.

The IT network had the contract with the TDA for supporting and helping new ICT tutors into ITE. This contract has now come to an end and ITTE are in the process of bidding for the new contract to run over three years. This includes the excellent work done on the ICT tutors website as well as mentoring and supporting new tutors in a range of ways. We look forward to getting the contract so we can carry on the excellent work which has been managed by Margaret Danby and supported by several ITTE members.

I am in regular contact with Tim Tarrant and the ICT team at the TDA and we have Bernie Zachary at Becta as our link there. We did have specific links with the DfES when Oona Hickie was seconded to the TDA for part of each week but unfortunately this secondment came to an end and we have no specific contact person at the moment.

For the future we have a date for the next Research seminar at Cambridge in February 2007 and are pleased to announce that the ITTE conference 2007 will be held at the Leicester University conference centre.

We continue to work hard on your behalf but are always willing to accept comments, advice and suggestions which will support colleagues throughout the ITTE community.

g.jarvis@leedstrinity.ac.uk

From Richard's blog

Richard Millwood, Ultralab

(Responding to yet another plea for articles, Richard offered the following, prefacing it with "Libby - do you want to pick from the bones of this brief introduction and two blog entries I made in the last months?" I thought you should have it in its entirety. Ed.)

Learning Programming?

I have recently been stimulated to make more sense of the debate on learning programming again - I was once a big enthusiast, but have found it hard to maintain that excitement as National Curriculum and vocational, business thinking have dominated in the nineties and now. I am very worried that the ICT 14-19 diploma is a disaster waiting to happen - what do you think?

Here are two entries from my blog which report on two encounters of the reviving kind:

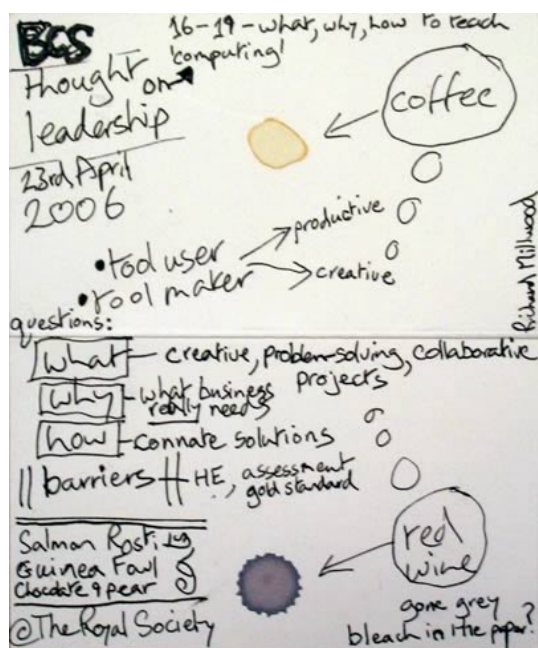
April 25, 2006

Computing/IT as a subject for 16-19 year olds: What should we be teaching? Why? How? What are the barriers to success?

"There is a lot of debate at the moment about the content of IT/ICT/ IS/Computing for 16-19 year olds. The focus of consideration recently has been in the teaching of ICT embedded within the curriculum, followed by the importance of a choice for pupils of the subject of IT/Computing at GCSE level and then 16-19 level."

"But research shows that many pupils aged 14 or so regard ICT/ Computing as akin to a typing skill. Often ICT/Computing comes over as a boring subject as many teachers find it hard to keep up and to make their subject exciting. The image of a job in the profession of IT does not capture pupils' imaginations and has little street cred. The numbers of pupils entering colleges and universities to study the subject is seriously below the nation's requirements."

"What exactly are we trying to achieve in the courses for 16-19 year olds, is the present set appropriate and what kinds of courses should they be offered? What would the universities like to see? What is E- skills UK planning to provide?"



notes made at the dinner

I was invited to this British Computer Society 'Thought Leadership' event last night at the Royal Society in London. My notes made on the back of my name card represent my response to the provocation above.

- What: a focus on creativity, problem solving, collaboration through projects;
- Why: this is what business and society really need;
- How: a connate solution - I am indebted to my colleague Malcolm Moss for the term 'connate'. You could link it with 'cognate', but I prefer to think of it as 'joined at birth', metaphorically meaning that the solution to this problem is born of joined-up thinking. This means addressing teacher continuing professional development, curriculum development, assessment innovation and pedagogic clarity from the outset and

together.

- Barriers: higher education's subject silo's and focus on individual endeavour, our false belief in the 'gold standard' examination as our means of summative assessment

Another concern I have is that computer science (and education) has failed the learner of programming - hardly any serious advances in programming environments tuned to learning since Papert and little basic research into children's understanding of programming since the same era - 25 years ago.

All this on the same day that my PhD student, Nili Naveh from Israel has her qualification confirmed. Her subject? - Algorithmic Thinking.

I am looking forward to a fertile decade - real need, excellent starting point!

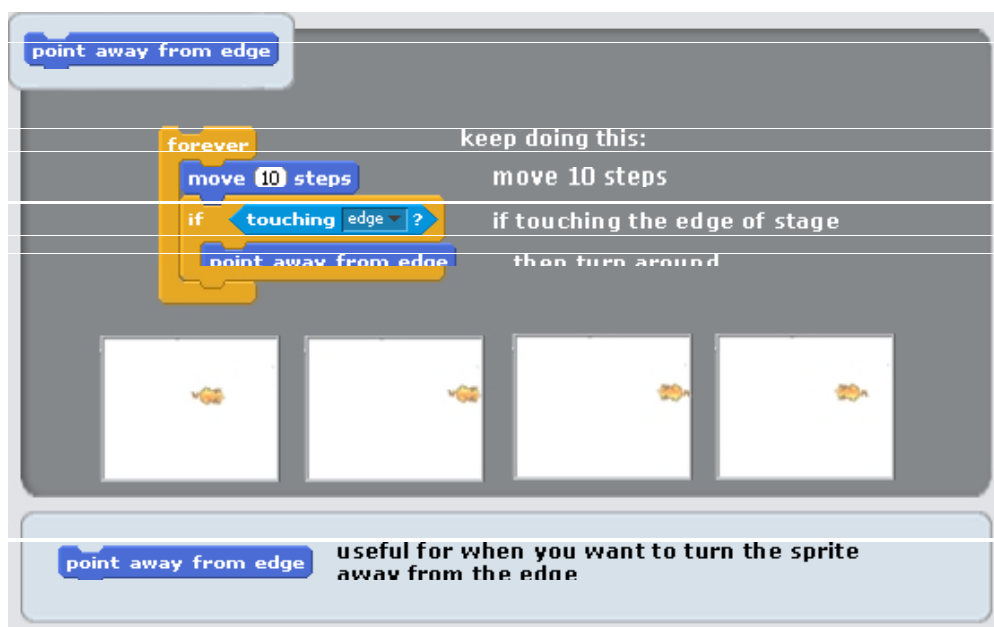
June 08, 2006

Scratch

I have just spent some time looking at Scratch from MIT - I really look forward to playing with it.

I recommend watching the video.

It puts together a pretty slick visual programming environment (which will help eradicate errors of syntax and thus focus on semantics) with programming a visual & aural environment (which will be seductive in motivating creative activity).



Example screen from Scratch

I approve, but wonder whether they are going to complete Wirth's formula: Algorithms + Data Structures = Programs by representing data structures visually too?

I look forward to its public release this summer and perhaps I will find out.

<http://blog.ultralab.net/~richard/blog/>

richard@ultralab.net

From the Red carpet at the Bloggies ...

Helena Gillespie, University of East Anglia

The best blog of 2006 is officially the cornucopia of oddness boingboing.net (www.boingboing.net). The BBC recently reported (BBC 2006) the annual Bloggies award for the best weblog had been awarded to this fascinatingly diverse blog of what's new, interesting and odd on the internet. This was the fifth annual Bloggies award. It seems that the blog, as a way of publishing on the web, is here to stay. Blogging is developing as a uniquely up to date, discursive and innovative way of publishing. As with many new technological developments, educators who ignore the rise of the blog do so at the risk of missing out on its educational potential. But what might this educational potential be?

A blog is a content free web based tool, which enables one or more individuals to share ideas as text or images with others. The scope can be small, and shared between two or three individuals, or large and well publicized throughout the educational community. As a content free resource, a blog can be used in many contexts to give information and resources, share ideas and discuss issues. It may be that blogs can be convenient ways to begin electronic communities. In addition, blogs can help develop the skills needed to learn successfully through learning platforms, which is a significant challenge for schools and for ITE in the near future (Becta 2005). They also have the advantage of being freely available and easy to set up. So how might blogs be used in education? It is likely that guidance comes from what blogs do best on the internet outside the educational community.

- Travel Blogs (www.travelblog.org) are a very popular way of creating a narrative over time. In ITE, this might be a useful way of trainees communicating about a portfolio or long term project.
- News blogs are useful to communities to keep up to date with developments (<http://blogs.guardian.co.uk/news/>) and could be used in ITE to help trainees keep up to date with news and announcements during time in teaching placements
- Specialist blogs allow discussion about specific topics and might be useful for developing subject knowledge in ITE (<http://www.cricket.mailliw.com/>)

The developing world of blogging could have some interesting and useful applications in ITE, and the free and easily accessible nature of blogs (try www.blogger.com), mean this could be one ICT innovation without technical and logistical problems. I plan to try blogging with my trainees next year, and I'd be pleased to hear from anyone who has tried or wants to try the same thing.

References

BBC 2006 BBC Website: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/technology/4350041.stm>, London, BBC 2006

Becta 2005 An introduction to learning platforms, Coventry, Becta.

h.gillespie@uea.ac.uk

Newsletter Questionnaire: Tony Fisher in the hot seat

Short Biographical sketch

Tony Fisher

Tony is a lecturer and researcher at the University of Nottingham School of Education where he is the ICT Co-ordinator. He teaches on a range of courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level, including an online taught doctorate in teacher education which he helped to set up. He has been an evaluator of a number of national ICT initiatives, with a particular emphasis on the interviewing of teachers (slightly over a hundred to date). He is

a member of the University's Learning Sciences Research Institute. Tony previously had eighteen years' experience as a schoolteacher; he was variously head of faculty, mentor and professional tutor in a comprehensive school, and he taught geography and humanities. He was also seconded as an advisory teacher for two years.

When and where did you first encounter a computer?

It was during the first year of my geography degree at Hull University in 1970. The computer occupied the ground floor of a medium-sized building, and it processed batches of punched cards. The 'user' (eg me) passed a stack of cards through a hatch and came back the next day to collect yards of print out. It was not a good idea to drop the stack of punched cards! For reasons which are now obscure, I did a course in Fortran 4 programming.

Computers have changed the world – but for good or for evil?

I don't want to be pedantic (oh, all right, I will be!), but computers *haven't* changed the world - people have. I remember Germaine Greer on Desert Island Discs saying that women would write to her saying "Thank you for writing *The Female Eunuch*. You changed my life," to which she would reply something along the lines of "I'm glad you liked *The Female Eunuch*. I didn't change your life – you did!" In other words we need to be clear where agency lies. So, people have done good and bad things *with* computers, but I'm generally optimistic and feel that overall the world is a better place with them – though at times it's a close-run thing.

What's your favourite gadget?

The corkscrew?

You are appointed Secretary of State for Education and Skills for the day. What are you going to do?

Reach for the corkscrew...?

Seriously though, what needs doing can't be done in a day (Rome was not built, nor the Roman Empire undone, in a day), and so much needs to be *undone* before getting to grips with what is to be done. But I would start with the drafts for the publicity campaign to explain why I was getting rid of all those pesky league tables and the infrastructure that supports them.

What is your ideal alternative career?

I quite fancy international, long-distance lorry driver. Or maybe warden of a nature reserve. Or perhaps presenter of a radio music programme. Or maybe chef/proprietor of an idyllically placed country hotel. But actually I feel really tremendously fortunate to do the job I do, so I'm not looking for a change of career.

What's your motto?

Give it a go!

Do you believe ICT is worth the trouble?

Trouble? What trouble?... ;-)

What's the most surprising thing you have ever seen in the classroom?

People - kids and even adults - paying attention to me... sometimes!

What's the most important lesson being a teacher has taught you?

The provisionality of knowledge.

Which words are going to define the future of education?

Now, are you asking me for my optimistic list, or for my pessimistic list? They are rather different, so I think that despite the way the market-orientated state is driving things, and despite the re-professionalisation project associated with that, there is still the possibility for struggle as we and others contest the future of education. As David Hartley observes in his book 'Re-schooling Society' (1997; Falmer), the re-making of education now and in the future ('re-schooling' rather than Illichian 'de-schooling') "... will as usual be framed within the competing claims and complexities of democracy and capitalism" (p.155).

When you retire, what do you hope your legacy to your field will be?

I'm not sure I'd leave much of a 'legacy', but I hope that people in the field would try to keep sight of the big picture, which is what I try to do. I would also finally try to tidy my office!

ITTE Newsletter Competition

Dear Libby

In response to your request for pictures, please find one attached.



It could be made into an ITTE competition with the following questions:

- 1 Name the three people who are clearly visible
- 2 At which ITTE conference was this taken?
- 3 What year was it?

Now anyone delving back in the last few editions of the Newsletter will find answering q. 2, 3 and two-thirds of q. 1 very easy, so a tie-breaker question follows:

4. Who was the photographer? (No, it was not Neil Stanley!)

Just in case two winners emerge ...

5. At the time of the photo what connects all three? (Time meaning not that precise second, but life in general).

Roger Keeling
(who set the questions but couldn't remember the answer to q.3!)

Competition entries should be sent to the Newsletter editor, to arrive no later than September 30th 2006. The competition is open to anyone who is not actually in the photograph or knew of its existence. Whilst every effort has been taken to find out the identity of the fourth man, to date all explored avenues have failed. If you are 'he' please step forward.

Answers will appear in the Autumn Issue of the Newsletter.

A new project leaves the starting block

Vicky Cartwright, University of Warwick

Some of you who attended the December '05 ITTE research conference in Cambridge may remember Michael Hammond, Avril Loveless and Vicky Cartwright presenting a proposal for a project which aims to explore colleague's experiences of developing the use of ICT in education over the last 20 or so years. Since then, Sarah Younie, David Benzie and John Woollard have come on board and we have managed to get the project off the ground, sponsored by ITTE. The first round of interviews have just begun, focusing upon colleagues' careers in general and in ICT in particular, and on what they have seen of the use of ICT in education and their reflections on that use over time. We aim to report back our findings in papers and a project web site. So, if you have been involved in developing ICT for ?... well for what seems a long time, then you may be hearing from us soon! However please don't take offence if we do not contact you - we are carrying out a small number of in depth interviews and there are only so many we can do. We will keep you informed via the Newsletter of how the project is going.

V.J.Cartwright@warwick.ac.uk

Booking opening soon ...

The 9th ITTE Research Seminar

will be held on

Friday 9th & Saturday 10th February 2007

as usual at the sumptuous venue of

The Møller Centre, Churchill College, Cambridge.

Enquiries to: Libby Jared, Faculty of Education, University of Cambridge, Cambridge CB2 2PQ.

email: ecj20@cam.ac.uk

New on the bookshelf

Neil Stanley, Liverpool John Moores University

As I had some holiday over the past month or so, I've actually caught up with some reading for fun. Currently reading and enjoying *The Time Travellers Wife* by Audrey Niffenegger (finding it hard to put down). Read the compact book by Gideon Defoe *The Pirates!* In an Adventure with Scientists – very silly. Marc Acito's *How I Paid for College* – a tale of sex, theft,

friendship and musical theatre made for a fun read too.

I've had *English Passengers* by Matthew Kneale on the shelf a while and read that when in Crete – makes you really feel for the Tasmanian aborigines. Coincidentally it was also one of the books in the small collection in the Villa we rented.

You'll know my taste in slightly surreal books by now – Malcolm Pryces's Aberystwyth Mon Amour certainly falls into this category. I enjoyed it so much I bought the two sequels.

Those of you attending the conference in July may find out why I've been reading *Authentic Happiness* by Martin Seligman (Nicholas Brealey Publishing).

I also read *iPod and iTunes* (4th Edition) by JD Biersdorfer (Pogue Press/ O'Reilly). I've a video iPod and this did draw my attention to some things I'd not noticed or realised I could do. This is the sort of book that you might borrow from the library. Does give some useful software links but the copyright detail is for the US and might cause you problems in Europe. As an aside I did buy the hardware gizmo that means I can suck the images from my camera into my iPod as a backup device – it works well with my Fuji S7000 (not on the Apple list).

Whether the following count as bookshelf items is a good question but it is worth mentioning them. Futurelab (no Nesta now) have produced two publications – one on Social software and learning and the other on The potential of open source approaches for education. Available from

http://www.futurelab.org.uk/research/opening_education.htm they are designed to support and stimulate debate and are well worth the read.

Terry Freedman has produced *Coming of Age* – an introduction to the new world wide web. This is a series of essays from the informed and influential, about many of the ideas behind Web 2.0. Available from <http://www.terry-freedman.org.uk/cgi-script/CSDownload/forms/frmsamples.htm> (you'll need to register or supply some info to download it for free).

Terry has also produced *The Characteristics of Boring ICT Lessons* (http://www.terry-freedman.org.uk/ebooks/doc_page22.html) this is one of his subscription products and in the 32 pages it uses it manages to indicate most of the reasons that ICT lessons might fail to command attention. There is a lot of common sense in this publication and it would make a very useful resource for ICT trainees. Issues covered include the starter activity, the role of the teacher, issues of challenge and too much teacher talk. I need to talk to Terry about a licence to use this with our trainees. Much of the content would also apply to other subject areas.

n.r.stanley@livjm.ac.uk

Web Wanderings

Neil Stanley, Liverpool John Moores University

My LRC colleagues sent me details of <http://newsfilm.bufile.ac.uk/> - not sure how to fit the resource into my teaching but I'm sure you'll have ideas. The BBC have also released some clips; register to use <http://www.bbc.co.uk/schools/archive/>.

As I teach Maths I'm always looking for useful Maths sites – found the Create a Graph site <http://nces.ed.gov/nceskids/graphing/>

interesting. For a downloadable grapher try <http://www.padowan.dk/graph/>. There is a Maths visualisation toolkit at <http://amath.colorado.edu/java/>. I expect you are familiar with the CGP revision

books at <http://www.cgpbooks.co.uk/>. For maths past papers try <http://www.mei.org.uk/meiresources/apapers.shtml>

If you want to keep up with the latest shareware etc then

<http://www.majorgeeks.com/> and

<http://www.filehippo.com/> have their uses. Tux Paint

<http://www.newbreedsoftware.com/tuxpaint/>

is an open source drawing package. I often get asked to help get deleted files back so the free software for this at

http://www.pcinspector.de/file_recovery/UK/welcome.htm
looks useful.

I grew up with Ladybird books, if you did too you might wish to visit

<http://www.easyontheeye.net/ladybird/index.htm>.

We put our ICT trainees through a prototyping module so Experimental Gameplay at

<http://www.experimentalgameplay.com/>

is of interest (our trainees have less time to waste though!). The concept of reusability caused me to find <http://www.rlo-cetl.ac.uk/rlos.htm>, the CETL pages on reusable teaching resources – including statistics, research methods and Maths.

For sheer beauty of the images visit http://www.digitalglobe.com/sample_image_ry.shtml. For historical images of the UK visit

<http://viewfinder.english-heritage.org.uk/home.asp>

And for collected things
<http://www.collectbritain.co.uk/>

the British Library site.

One of my trainees found
<http://www.siastraining.co.uk/ed/ed%20def.htm>

– Evil Detentions. Actually by someone who believes that detentions should not just punish but should also educate.

For reasons too long to state I've been reading Seligman's work on happiness – his website and online tests are at

<http://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu/> (register for full access).

We had a holiday on Crete in early May and I've been trying to identify the wildflowers we saw.

http://nybg.org/botany/mori/ecotours/Crete_06/Greece_Mani/Crete_wildflower/CreteHTML/Crete_familyhome.htm

and

<http://www.pharmakobotanik.de/gallery/mediterr.htm>

have been of help.

My birthday present this year was a burr coffee grinder to accompany my Gaggia Classic. In pursuit of the perfect crema I found <http://sweetmarias.com/espresso-crema.html>.

No really silly site this time, but for possible uselessness try

http://www.botsko.net/Demos/notepad_generator/

- on the other hand you may want to print out a set of notepad sheets that you can tailor to how you work in meetings. For a proforma to facilitate the Cornell note taking method then try

<http://www.eleven21.com/notetaker/>.

n.r.stanley@livjm.ac.uk

First announcement ...

ITTE Summer Conference 2007

will be held on

Wednesday 11th to Friday 13th July 2007

hosted by

University of Leicester

Endpiece - A Cautionary Tale

Graham Jarvis

Recently I was to visit a school as part of my external examining role. The tutor had kindly sent me the name of the school so it would not be difficult to put its name into a Google search and get a map.

When making the search I omitted the word school but the search gave me the place in the right area - or so I thought.

Setting off from home in good time I reached the said place but there did not seem to be a school nearby and several enquiries at shops and petrol stations drew a blank.

On phoning the school I explained that I could not find them. The reason being that - as you will have guessed - the place name was right but some 20 miles from the school I was due to visit. Yes, it was a visit to see an ICT lesson, and I felt very foolish when I eventually arrived.

The moral of the story being that the web may be clever - but NOT that clever!

Lesson learned!!!



Just don't do it!

g.jarvis@leedstrinity.ac.uk