

Teaching Year Five and Six Information Literacy using the iPad

By Christine Wilson

Introduction

In 2011 we introduced Information Literacy to the subjects offered to year five and year six. We combined two separate subjects, Library and ICT. Information Literacy for year five and year six at Braemar College is a subject which incorporates traditional library skills and ICT skills. It is taught over three eighty minute periods a fortnight. Students undertake the subject for the entire year. The classes are taught in the MNIRC (Marcel Nyeholt Information Resource Centre) using the library classroom, resources and computer lab. It is taught by teacher-librarians, myself and Mrs Belinda Dess. We produce workbooks for each semester. Students are marked on their workbooks and a major assessment piece each term.

In 2012 Braemar College adopted an iPad program for the whole school from year's five to twelve. This made a significant difference to the year five and year six Information Literacy subject. Teaching staff were encouraged to incorporate the use of the iPad. Belinda and I were keen to exploit the teaching and learning potential of the iPad.



Each student having an individual iPad made a difference to the types of software and apps we could teach and utilise. Now that the students each have their own individual personal learning device in their hands with instant connectivity to the world wide web, a host of apps, software and our college network. We are truly connected to the world beyond the four walls of the classroom. We still had the computer lab of desktop computers in the MNIRC to utilise as well.

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Year five students are given basic instructions on using the Pages and KeyNote apps and other apps used in Information Literacy, as they are our entry level students into the College. The Year six students have their skills in each app extended.

In 2011 we had taught Microsoft Office Word and PowerPoint. We had also used MovieMaker. Now we introduced Pages (word processing) and Keynote (presentation tool).



APPS

Using their iPad, students are required to produce digital products. Students use various apps to create products which can be displayed, published and shared. Some of the key apps we use are outlined below.

Pages (Word processing)

Students produce a variety of documents. Students learn to use the iPad keyboard and features of Pages - copy, paste, import picture, etc. Year five create environment poems. Learning about layout, font, text and design features.

Year Six Information Literacy Subject

Description In this subject students will undertake studies in information literacies. This will include studies of an individual author, visual literacy, digital citizenship, non-fiction and information research skills. Emphasis will be placed on developing a variety of information and communication technology skills. There will be a focus reading and enhancing the enjoyment of literature.

(Subject description from the Middle School Handbook)

KeyNote (Presentation)

Year five and year six students make Keynote presentations which are displayed on our big screen television in the MNIRC. The students enjoy seeing their created presentations on the big screen. They can see how the design features and information are viewed by a wide audience. Presentations can be exported and emailed from the KeyNote App in either KeyNote or PowerPoint format.

Creative Book Builder (Book production)

Year five and year six produce their own books using the Creative Book Builder app. The Creative Book Builder app allows students to publish in epub format to their iBook's shelves or PDF, or use a website hosting linked via a QR code. In Year 6 students are taught to use the Creative Book Builder app to produce a book based on *Mr Chicken goes to Paris* by Leigh Hobbs. This is a visual literacy unit. Students research another country for Mr Chicken, or similar character, to visit. Some intensive research is involved. Students must find out about tourist destinations, language, food, transport and currency. The researched information facts must then be woven into a picture book format and story. Students enjoy reading each other's books.



iMovie (video production)

Year six students produce their own book trailers using the iPad features, the inbuilt camera and the iMovie app. Students must produce a book trailer suitable for a Middle School audience. The iPad makes the book trailer unit easy. Before the iPad we would video on Flip Cameras, download the video to a desktop computer and edit it in MovieMaker. Now we can do everything on the iPad. The templates in the iMovie app are really useful. The iPad makes it much easier and faster to make the book trailers.

SCAN (QR code reader)

The students have the Scan the QR code reader app installed on their iPad as part of the required apps list. This has enabled me to enliven student's revision tasks. I have created quizzes using QR codes as clues and placed them around the MNIRC. The students enjoy the challenge of finding the QR codes and scanning them for information. Students can also read the QR codes that are now appearing in some books and on promotional materials.

Comic Life (cartoon/animation)

Students use this app to produce posters and storyboards. The app has lots of fun features which the students enjoy exploring, experimentation is encouraged.

Year Five Information Literacy subject description

In this subject students will undertake studies in information literacies. This will include studies of fiction, visual literacy, non-fiction and information research skills. Emphasis will be placed on developing a variety of information and communication technology skills. There will be a focus on reading and enhancing the enjoyment of literature. There will also be a focus on digital citizenship.

(Subject description from the Middle School Handbook)

Garage Band (Music production)

The Garage Band app allows students to use great features to create music. Features include instruments, beats and voices. Student can easily record, create and edit sound files. As part of our Creator's Rights Common Sense Media Unit students write, produce and perform an original version of the 'Happy Birthday' song. The chipmunk voice sound effect is a favourite. The iPad allows all students to participate in this activity. They do not have to be musically talented.

ReaddlleDocs (File sharing, reading, storing and network access)

Students and staff use the ReaddlleDocs app to manage their files and documents on the college network.

We have a student directory, S:Drive, which allows students to access a Subject Resources Folder where teachers can place documents, files, etc. There is also a drop box set-up which allows students to deposit completed work for teachers. The drop box is very useful as many of the media files are too large to email to staff. There is also a Collaboration folder where students can place work that is to be shared and worked on in groups. This is important as students can be held up from working on their projects if one student has all the work on their iPad or home directory. This was certainly an issue that I had before the Collaboration Folder was set up. Students have to be reminded to place the work in their groups' Collaboration Folder at the end of each session. The golden rule in using any technology is often evoked. 'Don't forget to back up your files'.

DayMap

DayMap is our College daily organisation tool. It is, of course, accessible via the iPad. Teachers can upload lesson plans and files to their chosen class. Students have access to DayMap from school and home.

Using the iPads has meant that paper copies of documents have been cut to a minimum. I frequently PDF documents and place them on DayMap and on S:Drive. I can also produce detailed instruction handouts with screen shots and examples and not be concerned about how much paper I will be using. Students can copy the files and documents to their iPads.



Digital Citizenship

Digital Citizenship is part of the Information Literacy curriculum. Students learn to blog and use netiquette. Students' blog book reviews can be found on the [MNIRC blog](#). Having the iPad provides easy access to the communication opportunities afforded by blogs. Students participated in a [Virtual Blog Tour](#) with author Ian Irvine.

Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge

Students in year five and year six all participate in the Victorian Premiers' Reading Challenge as part of Information Literacy. The students can record their progress on their iPad whenever it is convenient. They do not have to wait to get to the computer lab. This is an example of the flexibility the iPad offers to the teaching and learning process for students and teachers. Many students are reading eBooks on their iPad, using iBooks and many other eReaders. Students have borrowing and reading time as part of each

class. Braemar College now has a Wheelers eBook platform set up to accommodate students who like to read eBooks on their iPad.

Research Project

In Year 6 students complete an individual research project which is a negotiated topic of their choice. It is great to see the students use the iPad for all aspects of the project - research, note-taking, drafting, editing and finally presenting. The students present their project to the class. The presentation must include the iPad. In this project we see the culmination of the students experience with utilising their iPad. The learning, creativity and confidence demonstrated in the presentations are very gratifying.

Issues

In the early stages of the introduction of the iPad program we had some issues with the wireless network which caused some frustration. However these issues have now been addressed. The lack of a drop box was also a problem. It meant students had to email work to teachers which caused email inboxes to fill to capacity at times. Now we have the drop box system the email issue has been addressed. The only current issue I have is using the data projector with student iPads. The general purpose classrooms have AppleTVs installed in them. The library classroom does not yet have an AppleTV installed. Connecting an iPad to a data projector usually works well. Sometimes there are issues. Using a VGA connector works with the data projector with student iPad's except where the students have customised settings, or have a faulty connector port on their iPad. It can take a long time to connect to the data projector under these circumstances. I have also needed to find additional spaces outside the library for noisy activity such as filming dramatic scenes for book trailers. You need break out areas.

Conclusion

I am sure that I will continue to explore and exploit the teaching and learning potential of the iPad into the future. There are always new apps to discover and engaging ways of incorporating the iPad into the classroom to be explored.

I love the iPad. I find it to be a fantastic teaching and learning tool and a great piece of technology. It is a one stop production tool for a myriad of products. Some samples of the **student work may be viewed at the MNIRC blog**.

The iPad enables a connected classroom. It allows for flexibility in the classroom and variety, many different tasks can be undertaken. It has had a positive engaging effect on the teaching and learning in our year five and year six Information Literacy classes.

The iPad enables a connected classroom.

References

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Cottrell, Rob (2010) *Seriously Useful Information Skills*, Mascot, N.S.W.: User Friendly Resources.

Digital Citizenship - using technology appropriately, Accessed at: <http://www.digitalcitizenship.net/Resources.html>

Christine Wilson is currently Learning Area Leader – MNIRC (Marcel Nyeholt Information Resource Centre) at Braemar College. Christine also holds a Master's in Business Information Technology from RMIT. Braemar College is a coeducational, ecumenical, independent, Christian school that caters for students in Year 5 to Year 12. It is situated in Woodend, Victoria. A qualified teacher-librarian of many years' experience Christine has worked in Government, Catholic and Independent schools. Throughout her career she has been an active member of SLAV and is currently a member of the Macedon Ranges and District SLAV Branch and their representative on SLAV Council. Christine has a great enthusiasm for ICT and believes students need to be fluent in multiple literacies, key areas for the MNIRC.

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