Wikis Discussion

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I started using Wikis about two years ago, but it was still interesting to hear the refresher from Vicki and Adam. We use wikis in some of the ways that Vicki does but with K-3 there are some adaptations that must occur. She uses wikis in 5 basic ways: 1. Summarize and Synthesize, 2. Collaboration of notes, 3. Introducing concepts and exploratory projects, 4. Share with parents, and 5. Genuine assessment. The projects that we do in our school have students using all of these, but maybe not doing the actual technology piece (YET). For starters, our students put limited information on the wikis at this point…we are heading in the direction of the students putting it in, but we needed the adults to get comfortable first. The students create the content, though. For the K-3 level, wikis are mostly used to showcase information. Our second grade classes contributed the information to teach others about Native Americans in the various regions of the US. <http://wasecondna.wikispaces.com/> (This would be an example of #1, 2, 4, and 5)

We tried to create a school wide collaborative wiki this spring about poetry, but it isn’t finished and I couldn’t get everyone to participate. <http://waprimarypoetry.wikispaces.com/> I also use wikis to organize and teach information (#3) <http://wageorgia.wikispaces.com/> --First grade does a Georgia unit and all of the material is above their head…I created a Pageflakes (linked to the wiki) and wiki to help them explore various places in Georgia. (I have to change the Youtube videos…The students can’t access them at school and I was hoping that embedding would get around it, but it didn’t.) When the students hear they are creating something for the “Web” they get excited. The statement that Vicki made, “Wikis make students feel like they are creating something for a global community” rings true. They put in more effort and are motivated to learn and teach others.