

Brief Outline of Sample Student Created “How to” Wiki Activity

In this activity the pupils will be asked to create a “how to” wiki page (only a single page) on how to mark out a joint in a given project which the pupils will have to complete. The pupils may use text, pictures, voice recordings or videos to create this resource. Before the pupils begin this activity the teacher will give a demonstration on how to find the dihedral angle between two lamina in class, this means that the pupils will have the knowledge of how to find the dihedral angle between two lamina which will only leave the pupils with the responsibility of recording and explaining how it is/was done accurately and using the correct techniques and principles. The pupils will be given a username and password for the class wiki which will give them editorial access to the wiki page. The pupils will then work at the wiki collaboratively and without the aid of the teacher (apart from issues referring to the wiki software itself)

Duration

Once the pupils have been shown the process that they are describing the pupils should be given 2-3 days (to facilitate collaboration) to complete the “how to” wiki.

Pedagogic Rationale for Activity/ Research Testing Results

Lund and Smordal (2006) found that one of the problems with introducing the use of wikis into a classroom is that “students are often hesitant to directly intervene on a peer’s written work”. Guth (2007) also found this to be a stumbling block for effective integration of this new technology into the classroom when she said “both a challenge and a benefit of using wikis in education is helping students let go of individual ownership”. This wiki, therefore, needs to try to help students realise that working as a collective body to achieve a shared goal requires each student to realise that it is often a positive when other people edit and build upon the work that the individual student has done. The way this activity tries to help pupils relinquish their individual ownership is by making the subject that the pupils must write about very specific and also familiar to the pupils. This means that the pupils will be confident enough with the subject matter that they will be willing to contribute to the page and if the pupils see a mistake made by another pupil they will be willing to make revisions without fear of antagonising their peers, as a study by Grant (2008) found can happen in some cases.

Subject Matter of Activity

For this example I will be asking the pupils to create a “how to” wiki which explains how to find the dihedral angle between two lamina. The sequence for finding the dihedral angle is:

1. Draw the Lamina in both the elevation and plan views using the Cartesian system given in most Leaving Certificate lamina questions
2. Find the line of intersection between the lamina using the horizontal cut method
3. Find the true length of the line of intersection using an auxiliary elevation
4. Draw an edge view of the lamina by looking along the true length of the line of intersection
5. Measure the dihedral angle between the lamina where it is labelled in the video

Aim of Activity

To introduce pupils to releasing control of their work to a peer community using wikis

Objectives	Assessment
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Pupils will familiarise themselves with wiki software2. Pupils will contribute to a collaborative wiki page in a constructive and collaborative manner3. Pupils will relinquish ownership of the information they contribute to the wiki page4. Pupils will create a shared resource that they and the teacher can use in the future	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The amount of teacher aid required as the activity progresses should reduce as time elapses2. The accuracy and relevance of the work submitted to the wiki and the pupils’ ability to edit and build upon the information that is submitted by their peers3. The volume of information each individual pupil adds to the wiki (the more information a pupil adds the more they are able to let go of their work). Monitor the content of the comment section of the wiki for pupil aggravation or anger at their work being changed4. Review of the final edit of the wiki page

Assessment of Activity

Assess pupils on the amount of information they contribute to the wiki (using the version feature to roll back the wiki to see their contributions) and also the pupils willingness to change their peers’ work if it is incorrect, again using the version feature.

Teacher/Pupil Activities

1. Give pupils a demonstration on how to complete the task that you want the pupils to create a “how to” wiki page about
2. Give each pupil a username and password (these usernames and passwords can be created using the class accounts function in pbworks) for the class wiki which will give them editorial access to the wiki page which the teacher has created for this activity.
3. Ask the pupils to work at the wiki collaboratively and without the aid of the teacher (apart from issues with using the wiki software itself)
4. Check on the wikis progress each day. You may also set up alerts to an RSS aggregator or via email whenever there is a change to the wiki page. This will mean that you will only need to look at the wiki when a change has been made to it.
5. If there are issues raised in the comments section about change or modifications refer to them in class and emphasise that that this is a group activity and not an individual one.
6. Once the time limit on the activity has elapsed change the wiki page’s security status to “read only”
7. Give the pupils feedback on the wiki in class and go through the content of the wiki with the pupils

Important Teaching and Observation Points

- Ensure that any quarrels that are alluded to in the comment section of the wiki are dealt with as soon as they occur, either by way of talking to the pupils in class or by posting a reply comment as the teacher.
- Comment on the progress of the wiki in each class held during the duration of the activity. This will mean that the pupils will be aware that you are keeping track of the activity and will also ensure that pupils do not forget to contribute to it.
- Do not intervene in the wiki changes, this activity is about the pupils working together and gaining autonomy so it is important to allow them to have the wiki space to themselves. Review the information and layout of the wiki after the page is completed.
- Refer the pupils to [Wikipedia](#) to show them the ideal layout for a wiki page

Resources

Organisational Resources

- Demonstration equipment
- Question for demonstration
- Access to computer room/ school laptops for pupils

Technological Resources

- An individual wiki login (username and password) for each pupil
- Digital Camera(s)

Other Student Created “How to” Wiki Activities

- How to use drawing equipment
- How to draw a hyperbola
- How to model a hammer on Solidworks

References

Grant, L. (2008) 'Using wikis in schools: A case study', *Retrieved March, .*

Guth, S. (2007) 'Proceedings of the 2007 international symposium on Wikis', in *Proceedings of the 2007 international symposium on Wikis, 2007, 61–68.*

Lund, A. and Smordal, O. (2006) 'Proceedings of the 2006 international symposium on Wikis', in *Proceedings of the 2006 international symposium on Wikis, 2006, 37–46.*