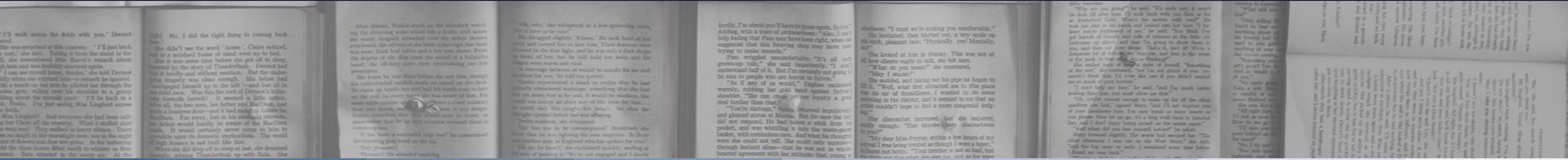


USING WIKIPEDIA TO ENHANCE LEARNING

BY CASSANDRA DELLACORTE

Wikipedian in Residence, Special Collections and Archives, DePaul University Library





**Goal: Understand
the value of using
and engaging with
Wikipedia, and
know how to begin.**

What is it about Wikipedia?

1

The fifth most popular website; the most popular reference source

2

Wikipedia is open source, meaning anyone can edit

3

There are community guidelines for content, sources, style, and formatting

A Wikipedian in Residence:



- Advocates for Wikipedia as a learning tool
- Lead workshops for the university community and/or the public
- Is physically and virtually available to assist staff, faculty, and students in their own Wikipedia projects
- Serves as a liaison between Wikimedia and the university
- Increases web traffic to online sources and foot traffic to exhibits and collections by citing them in Wikipedia articles
- Improves Wikipedia to make accurate information widely accessible

Why Wikipedia?

What's the point of *engaging* with Wikipedia, instead of just using it?

MEDIA LITERACY

"DON'T USE WIKIPEDIA!"

Instead of forbidding students to use Wikipedia, encourage them to think critically about the reasons why it's not a reliable source.

CHECK REFERENCES

Ask students to look carefully at citations. Are all major assertions cited? Where do the citations lead?

EVALUATE SOURCES

Let students question the reliability of the sources cited in Wikipedia articles. They practice critical evaluation of media by examining articles' source materials.

ENCYCLOPEDIA WRITING

CHALLENGE STUDENTS TO EXPLORE TONE, CONTENT, AND STYLE

An encyclopedia is not an essay. It is spare, clear, and without frills. In any discipline, the ability to write for different audiences is important, and Wikipedia's audience is global and critical.

COLLABORATIVE WRITING

If an article is in the main space, anyone can edit it at any time. Students have to cooperate with editors from around the world.

TONE MODERATION

On Wikipedia, articles written like academic essays stand out, and are often flagged and taken down. Students practice putting source information first, and opinions last.

A DIFFERENT KIND OF RESEARCH

WIKIPEDIA'S GUIDELINES PRESENT LIMITATIONS...

NOR: No Original Research. One of Wikipedia's major tenets, this requires that information come from reliable secondary and tertiary sources.

WHAT ABOUT PRIMARY SOURCES?

All sources should be published, and if not independent from the subject of the article, used sparingly for verifiable information.

SYNTHESIS

Students practice presenting the work of others, working as gatekeepers, choosing the most important information to include. This is a skill set that is often used in post-grad life, but is rarely taught.

CITATION SKILLS

WHAT DOES "CITE YOUR SOURCES" REALLY MEAN?

For essays and research projects, students only cite as well as their instructor demands, if that. On Wikipedia, sources and citations are crucial to an article staying up and being rated favorably.

NO ORIGINAL RESEARCH

All information must come from reliable secondary and tertiary sources. To verify it isn't original work, clear citations are a must. Otherwise, the content added will be taken down by another editor.

COMMUNITY CONSENSUS

Other editors looking to verify the information in an entry follow the citations to the original source.

PLAGIARISM

WHERE IS THE LINE BETWEEN PLAGIARISM AND USE?

Students' main issue understanding what constitutes plagiarism is how it's different than use. Wikipedia is beautifully clear on this, and has training modules on how to use sources thoroughly without plagiarising.

BREAK BAD HABITS

Students may understand the consequences if they're caught plagiarising, but they often don't understand that their bad habits in terms of citation and quotation could land them in hot water.

WIKIMEDIA TRAINING

Wikimedia's plagiarism training is second to none. When students follow their guidelines and cite thoroughly, they create thoroughly cited, plagiarism-free articles.

RETHINKING SCHOLARSHIP

WHO GETS TO BE AN ACADEMIC?

Academia is steeped in status. Wikipedia is quite the opposite- the anonymity of its editors make it an arena without status. An undergrad is the same as a tenured professor - they are judged only on the strength of their edits and citations.

STUDENTS FEEL IN CONTROL

Not only will their work on Wikipedia be available to an unlimited audience, there's no authority challenging their right to post information.

EVERYONE IS WATCHING

For an essay, the audience is the instructor. For a peer-reviewed piece, the audience is the journal's readers, and other academics. Wikipedia's audience is nearly everyone.

Benefits of a Wikipedia assignment:



- Media literacy
- Writing style and tone modulation practice
- Research skills
- Citation skills
- Plagiarism training
- Ownership of scholarship

What to do with Wikipedia

How to harness different types of editing
to yield different learning outcomes

What are the types of editing?



1

General editing

2

Source editing

3

Subject editing

General editing

SMALLER, BASIC EDITS

- Copyediting
- Formatting
- Hyperlinking
- Citation Hunt

BENEFITS

- Start an account, build a presence
- Familiarity with Wikicode
- Understanding community rules and guidelines
- Pride of efficacy
- Generally good practice

Citation Hunt

The Wikipedia snippet below is not backed by a [reliable source](#). Can you find one?

Click **I got this!** to go to Wikipedia and fix the snippet, or **Next!** to see another one. Check [Introduction to referencing with VisualEditor](#) if you have questions. Good luck!

In page [Homestead Acts](#):



The Homestead Act also brought settlers into conflict with indigenous Americans resulting in displacement and conflict.^{[\[citation needed\]](#)}

I got this!

Next!

Source editing

PRIORITIZING ONE SOURCE

- Adding citations
- Minor content additions
- Uses one source to edit multiple Wikipedia entries

BENEFITS

- Perfect for short-term projects, training
- Best use of a collection of sources
- Broad impact on Wikipedia
- Students learn to look for gaps in content

Subject editing

FOCUSING ON ONE TOPIC

- Editing at length one or more articles on one subject
- More research and writing required
- New article creation, article overhaul
- Long term project

BENEFITS

- Assign in lieu of an essay or project
- Test research skills
- Larger impact
- Students learn to connect related topics

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Welcome to Wikipedia,

the free encyclopedia that anyone can edit.

5,387,131 articles in English

From today's



Roman glass cup unearthed in China

remained low and firm knowledge about each other was limited. Only a few attempts at direct contact are known from records. Several alleged Roman emissaries to China were recorded by ancient Chinese historians. The indirect exchange of goods along the Silk Road and sea routes included Chinese silk, Roman glassware (*example pictured*) and high-quality cloth. Roman coins minted since the 1st century AD have been found in China. A coin of Maximian and medallions from the reigns of Antoninus Pius and Marcus Aurelius were found in Vietnam. Roman glasswares and silverwares have been discovered at Chinese archaeological sites dated to the Han period. Roman coins and glass beads have also been found in Japan. **(Full article...)**

WIKI ED: WIKIPEDIA COURSES

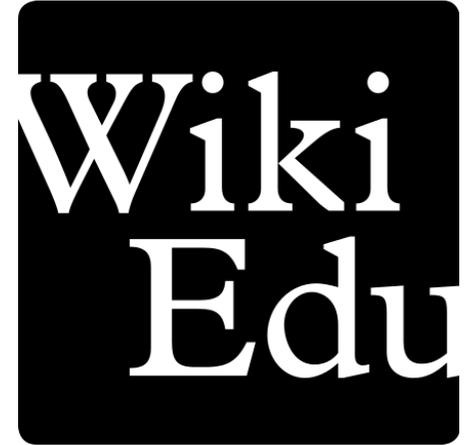
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The Wiki Education Foundation (Wiki Ed) is a spin-off of the Wikimedia Foundation, the nonprofit organization that runs Wikipedia.

Wiki Ed supports educators and students with tools, learning materials, and personal assistance.



Resources for starting a Wikipedia assignment:



1

Me, the Wikipedian in Residence

2

Wiki Ed training modules and materials

3

Wiki Ed Staff

STARTING A WIKIPEDIA ASSIGNMENT

Preview starting a course...



1

Resources for instructors

2

Training modules

3

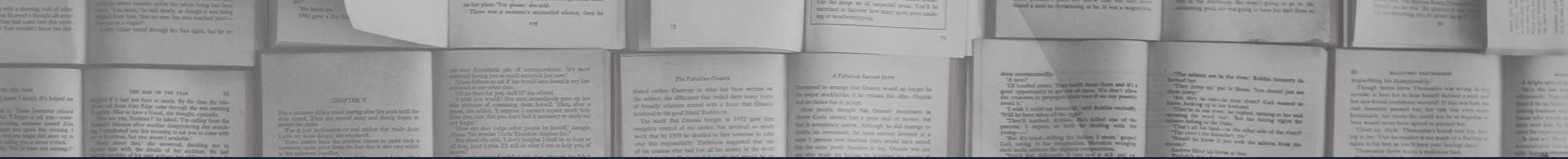
Previous course

Wikipedia editing challenges students

- Bigger audience, higher stakes than a paper
- Real world impact for student work
- More learning outcomes achieved
- Easy to create and customize
- Improve the world's most popular reference source



**Goal: Understand
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