Editorial

Hi

This issue of Digital Education contains articles on:

- Digital equality.
- Internet regulation.
- The EU Copyright Directive.
- Plagiarism.
- The LGfL Technical Conference.
- Conferences listing April to July 2019.
- Prizewinner.
- Interesting articles.

I hope you enjoy reading it, and find it useful. If you, please feel free to pass it on to your colleagues.

All the best

Terry

Digital Equality

Many people assume that all kids are
"digital natives" and that, crucially, they all have access to (a) digital devices and (b) are able to get online easily. None of these assumptions is true, and in the UK the Learning Foundation has recently set up an initiative to tackle the problem.

It's not just about having shiny devices in order to play online games (although that's important too, in my opinion). As the press release from the Learning Foundation says:

"Digital exclusion can lead to poorer health outcomes and a lower life expectancy, increased loneliness, social isolation, and less access to jobs and education. It can mean paying more for essentials, financial exclusion and an increased risk of falling into poverty. There is also a risk that digitally excluded people lack a voice and visibility, as government services and democracy increasingly move online. [See below also.]"

The Learning Foundation will work with a number of partners over the next half year, trying out different approaches by which to address the issue. It draws on a couple of reports, linked to in the press release, which make for sobering reading. For example, around 700,000 youngsters cannot easily access the internet from home. This is a challenge, given that three quarters (76%) of those aged 11-15 say they would find it difficult to complete their schoolwork at home without the internet.

Of course, the issue is not unique to the UK. In the USA, for example, a Pew report in 2015 found that around 5 million kids are unable to access the internet through broadband at home. One approach to tackling the problem is having wifi-enabled school buses.

I also thought I'd mention, even though it's not perhaps directly relevant to most teachers, that it's becoming increasingly hard in Britain for people to access the services and benefits to which they're entitled. This is especially true for older people, as this report makes clear.

In case you were wondering, the photo above was one I took in the car park of a park near where I live. There is no parking meter, just a notice telling you where to phone or text in order to pay for parking. So if you don't have a mobile phone, like many elderly people, then as far as I know you can't park there.
Anyway, do check out the [Learning Foundation's initiative](#).

**Internet regulation**

According to a recent [House of Lords report](#), there are several regulatory bodies covering matters digital, but not one overarching one. It recommends changing that, at least in the UK, and establishing an agency called The Digital Authority to co-ordinate the work of the other agencies.

It has a few sensible suggestions, such as establishing a classification system for apps and social media websites. You can read the full list of recommendations in the Report's [Summary of conclusions and recommendations](#).

On the subject of internet regulation, the British government's plan to introduce a system of age verification for accessing pornography on the web has been shelved for now. They are concerned about what the companies behind the websites might do with the data.

The reason for age verification being mooted in the first place is in order to protect kids from online porn. The thing is though, unless I'm missing something, it would be pretty easy for you to circumvent such controls by setting up a virtual private network (VPN). This can make it look like your computer is in a different country. If you're not sure how to set up a VPN, why not ask a youngster?

Erm....

On the issue of privacy, it seems that in some ways it's a luxury to be enjoyed by the better off. I'm reading several books at the moment on the subject of technology, surveillance, data and privacy, and related matters. They are Monitored, Radical Technologies, The People vs Tech and How to Fix the Future. [Monitored](#), a book apparently written from a Marxist perspective, states that the mega-rich can keep their data private while the rest of us can't. I haven't come to the part that says how that can be the case or what might be done about it, so I'm reserving judgement. However, a [report from Fast Company](#), hardly a left-wing publication, let alone a Communist one, makes a similar point.

Who do you believe?

**The EU Copyright Directive**
There has been a lot of discussion on the internet about the EU copyright directive, with claims being made along the lines of "It's going to break the internet" because linking to other people's content won't be allowed unless you've paid for a licence.

Look, I'm no lawyer, but having looked into this I think the following:

- As far as I know, the original clause about linking not being allowed has been dropped.
- The UK's Society of Authors welcomes the Directive because it will help to prevent authors (and other creatives) having their content ripped off, a sentiment with which I agree.
- It will apply to large websites whose purpose is to share other people's content, and which usually do so without adequate remuneration.

It's worth reading the EU's Questions and Answers document on the matter.

---

The great rip-off

So you've been plagiarised...

A few weeks ago I was alerted to the fact that one of my articles had been stolen. It had been published word for word on a website I'd never heard of. I sent the website administrator a take-down notice. That's an email stating that the article in question was my copyright, and asking them to remove it forthwith or offer to pay for it. I won't name the website, but to their credit they took it down immediately and asked me what my terms would be.

There are a few steps I took before sending the email, but first things first: how did I become aware of it in the first place?

What I did, a long time ago, was set up a Google Alert for my name. This wasn't purely for vanity reasons: it was to discover when my stuff was being used illegally, or if I was being written about anywhere, so that I could respond in a timely manner if necessary.
The Google Alert approach does throw up a few false positives. For example, there's a Terry Freedman in America who writes dictionaries, and there's another one who's been in prison (that wasn't me, honest!). Nevertheless, the advantages outweigh the disadvantages.

The interesting thing about my article being stolen was that it was published in someone else's name, and my name wasn't visible anywhere. So how did Google pick it up? The answer lies in the fact that I make sure that my name is in the metadata of any article I publish, and also, when I remember, in the Alt text of images I use (when they're mine, of course). This sort of data is invisible to humans unless they go looking for it, but not to search engines.

As for the steps I took, I followed the advice given in Moira Allen's article on Plagiarism. The article is ages old, but it's very good I think, and it contains links to a website that features examples of take down letters.

Obviously, I need to say that I'm not a legal expert, and this article should not be taken as legal advice. All I'm saying is that the procedures I've outlined or alluded to worked for me.

A quick report

The LGfL Technical Conference

The LGfL -- aka London Grid for Learning -- is a bit of a misnomer these days, seeing as it covers the whole of England. Still, all power to the CEO, John Jackson, who seems to have the knack of persuading huge corporations to make their wares available at indecently low prices. He and his staff know what schools need in terms of both curriculum software and protective applications.

The conference I attended recently was aimed mainly at those who have to keep the school's technology ticking over. The sessions I attended included the following:

- a presentation on Office 365 -- the Team applications look very good indeed, and there are more coming on-stream;
- turning your old computers into Chromebooks. Seems like a good way of saving a lot of money, although it would need to be done properly if kids and teachers are not to lose huge amounts of work;
- ICT strategy planning, which would be useful to those who have not had to deal
Some of the presentations left something to be desired. One person gabbled their way through, making it difficult to understand what he said, while some presenters stood there mumbling, making it difficult to hear them. Still, I think what one has to do when suffering that kind of thing is focus on what the presenter is saying (if you can hear and understand it!) rather than the delivery.

I should mention that I was given a free ticket to attend the conference, but that has not influenced these comments.

If you’d like to find out what amazing software a subscription to the LGfL affords, check out their website: LGfL.

---

**Dates for your diary**

**Conferences listing April to July 2019**

- **LGfL Annual Curriculum Conference** 25 April
- **Westminster Forum Misinformation and Disinformation online - public understanding, technology and options for policy** 7 May (morning)
- **ISTE Conference. Bold Educators Activate Change.** 23 - 26 June.
- **Technology, Pedagogy, and Education Association**: A Richer Curriculum. 11 - 12 July.

**By the way...**

If you have a copy of my book on how to get the most out education conferences, I'd really appreciate it if you could leave a review on Amazon. It's stuck on 19 reviews on the UK website, and 1 on the US website, at the moment, and it would be nice to have a few more. Thanks! This link will take you straight to the book on your country's Amazon website: [http://viewBook.at/conferences](http://viewBook.at/conferences)

---

**Announcement**

**Winner of the prize draw for**
Understanding How We Learn

I'm delighted to announce the winner of the prize draw I ran in the last edition of this esteemed publication. The book was Understanding How We Learn, my review of which you can read by clicking on that link.

The winner was New Zealander Malcolm Roberts, who says:

"I am the programme manager for the Graduate Diploma of Information Technology in Education at the Waikato Institute of Technology in Hamilton, New Zealand. I will use the book as background reading to help me improve my delivery of ICT professional development to NZ teachers in ECE, primary and secondary schools throughout New Zealand. I deliver ICT professional development both face to face and online. I am pleased as the book will give me new ideas to improve my pedagogy and transfer these skills to the teachers throughout New Zealand. Thank you for this opportunity."

Congrats to Malcolm!

Look out for future prize draws.

Just in case there wasn't enough to read in this edition...

Interesting articles

- The value of simplicity and experimentation in learning programming, by Dave Darwent.
- How to make books interactive, by Derek Tangredi.
- Ten note-taking apps for writers, by Terry Freedman.
- Teacher journal clubs, by Sam Sims et al. (Looks at a way of discussing research with your colleagues; I proposed a similar (but not the same) idea in Creating A Culture Of Innovation, Part 4: Spreading Good Practice).
- Human contact is now a luxury good, by Nellie Bowles.
- Should your pupils bring their own devices? By Terry Freedman, in Primary School Management.
Not reviews as such

Quick looks

I've been burning the midnight oil reading, searching, and jotting down notes. Here are a few things you might find useful, or at least interesting:

Guffpedia

Are you as fed up as I am with hearing people coming out with stuff like "Drive the agenda", usually by people giving presentations on training days who aren't going to be doing any of the actual work or held accountable? Or the overuse, not to say erroneous use, of the word "deliver"? Whenever I hear a politician talking about delivering a curriculum, I wonder where they're posting it to.

If these kind of things raise your blood pressure too, you'll enjoy Lucy Kellaway's Guffpedia website. Kellaway is no longer a full-time journalist for the Financial Times, having decided to set up Now Teach and become a teacher, so this website is no longer being updated. It's still a good laugh though.

Cardfile

Do you recall Windows Cardfile, Apple's Hypercard or the version of it for the Atari (which I think may have been called TCOS)?

If so, all is not lost. There's a very good Windows application called AZZ Cardile, which is like Cardfile on steroids. If you use a Mac, here is a list of similar applications: Alternatives to AZZ Cardfile for Macs. Please note that I have not used the Mac programs.

Last word

Hope you've enjoyed this issue of Digital Education. Do tell all your friends and non-friends about it! The subscribe page is here: Digital Education.
You received this email because you signed up on our website or made a purchase from us.

Unsubscribe