

Wikiversity: a project struggling with its own identity



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What is Wikiversity?

Set up to host & develop two things:

- Learning materials
- Learning activities & communities

For example:

- Resources for self-learners & peer learners
- Resources for teachers, including lesson plans
- Spaces for people to learn collaboratively

How big is Wikiversity?

11 languages:

(Czech, German, Greek, English, Spanish, Finnish,
French, Italian, Japanese, Portuguese, Russian)

Also, 'Beta Wikiversity' for incubating new language
projects

English Wikiversity: 12000 articles; French: 6600;
German: 2000



Wikiversity:Main Page

Welcome to Wikiversity

Set learning free

with 12,643 learning resources and growing.



*"The mind is not a vessel to be filled, but a fire to be kindled."
-Plutarch (discuss)*

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Welcome

Wikiversity is a [Wikimedia Foundation](#) project devoted to [learning resources](#), [learning projects](#), and [research](#) for use in all [levels](#), types, and styles of education from pre-school to university, including professional training and informal learning. We invite [teachers](#), [students](#), and [researchers](#) to join us in creating [open educational resources](#) and collaborative [learning communities](#). To learn more, try a [guided tour](#) or [start editing now](#).

Today's Featured Project

Trade Finance



[Trade Finance](#) is a 240-page wikified coursebook for use at university level. The course was developed as a foundational part of Michigan State University's Open CourseWare project and was published on Wikiversity (as well as on the Michigan State University's Open CourseWare site) as a part of the project. This is an example of government grant money being used directly for the creation of [open educational resources](#). The course comprises 8 modules: [Political and Economic](#)

Educational Picture of the Day

Prehistoric Rock Art



This is an example of rock art from the cave of *El Tajo de las Figuras* in southern Spain. The painting depicts deer, birds and people. The art in the cave comes from the paleolithic and neolithic eras. Click on the image for a full size version which you can freely re-use and modify. Print it and use

Explore Wikiversity

[Catalogue](#) | [Guided tours](#)

[\[-\] Resources by level](#)

[Portal:Pre-school Education](#)

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News



2010



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Portal:Reading groups

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What are Wikiversity Reading Groups? [edit]

Wikiversity Reading Groups are [learning projects](#) oriented around generating discussion and notes around specific books, texts, videos, or entire oeuvres that users find of interest.

Starting a Reading Group [edit]

Please add [[Category:Reading groups]] to any newly created Reading Group. If the book or text has a page on Wikipedia please consider adding the [Wikiversity Template](#) to the appropriate Wikipedia page.

Weekly chat session [edit]

There is a weekly chat session in the weekend on [Wikiversity:chat](#) for social bonding and to discuss the future of the reading groups.

[Organization Brainstorming IRC Session 30 Dec 2007 18:00 CET draft agenda](#)

Reading groups [edit]

- [Thucydides: The Peloponnesian War](#). Discussion every weekend on [IRC](#).
- [Ivan Illich: Deschooling Society](#) - a reading group on Illich's 1971 discourse on education.
- [John Seely Brown on new learning contexts](#)
- [Is consciousness a chemical process?](#)
- [Worldpolitics](#) - a reading group on texts dedicated to major issues in worldpolitics: the influence of religion, humanism, depletion of resources, economy.
- [Islamic Feminism: Contemporary Debate](#)
- [Many-worlds interpretation](#)
- [Michel Foucault reading group](#)
- [Molecular Paleontology Reading Group](#)



Reading groups

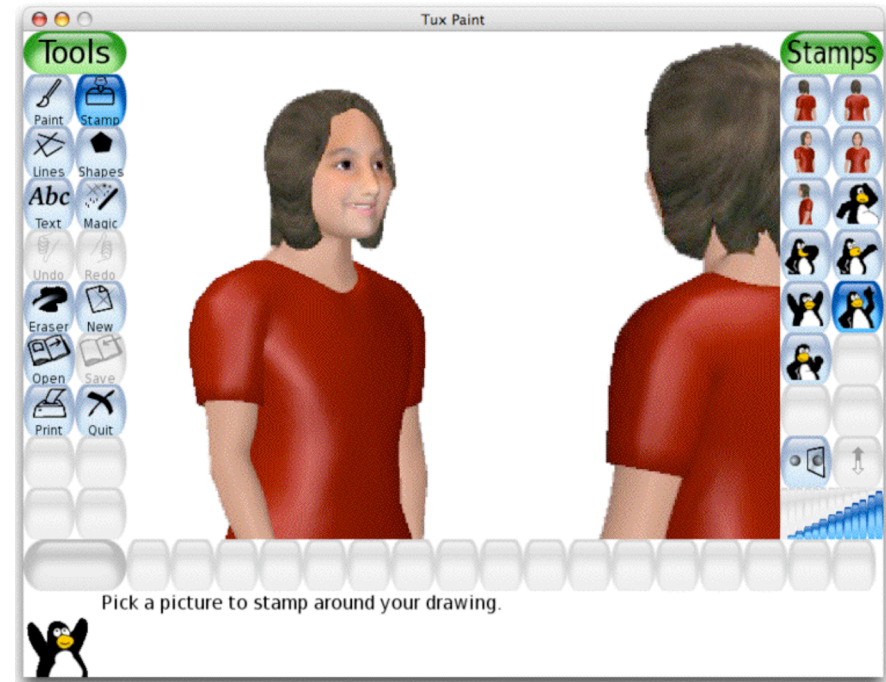


Film School Preparatory

Wikiversity Film School is a **preparatory school** for budding filmmakers who plan to go to film school or take classes in motion picture production.

Each year, USC Film School receives 800 applicants to fill just 50 undergraduate positions.

We teach you the things that film schools expect you to know **before** you get to film school so that you can have a base to work from when you first start film-school.

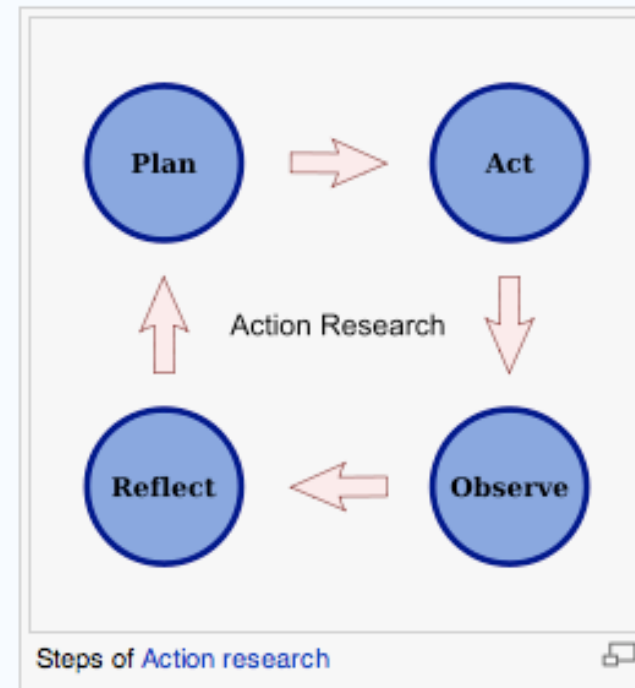


Courses on filmmaking:

<http://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/Filmmaking>

Wikiversity:Developing Wikiversity through action research

This page is to coordinate activities in this collaborative [action research](#) project to develop and, in some senses, *define* Wikiversity. Essentially, it asks: "What are we doing to learn and facilitate learning on Wikiversity, and how can we improve what we are doing?" Some background to this research can be found on the "[About](#)" page and, on a more personal level, [here](#). *(Disclosure: this research constitutes the bulk, if not the whole, of my empirical research towards a PhD in education - however, I do not claim any 'ownership' over the research whatsoever. [Cormaggio](#) ^{talk} 22:51, 6 February 2008 (UTC))* Discussion about this project can be found and continued on the [talk page](#), and if you wish to add yourself as an interested participant, please list yourself on the [participants page](#). But again, please, **edit this page** to make it a truly collaborative research project...



Research

First (and only) Wikimedia project to be set up through formal processes

‘Incubated’ in Wikibooks

=> proposed for deletion August ‘05

=> year-long proposal writing process

=> set up August ‘06

Wikiversity's scope broader than any other WMF project

However, its scope overlaps with every WMF project, since *all* WMF projects are educational!

From the beginning, Wikiversity aimed to be and do
‘something different’, ‘something *new*’...

“As you know, this isn't the English Wikipedia nor do
we strive to be, act or look like it.”

“We must perform a fundamental conceptual
transformation by which we shift our thinking
away from conventional university courses and
towards collaborative wiki editing projects that
facilitate learning”

Many deep challenges...

- How does Wikiversity fit with other WMF projects?
- How do we manage roles (e.g. teachers, researchers)?
- What is appropriate learning material?
- What is a legitimate learning project?
- What is a ‘wiki way’ for learning?
- What kinds of research can/should it support?

In an editable environment, is a resource ever
'finished'?

Can *anyone* edit this material; should there be
some level of control?

Can a resource be 'not good enough'?

What is quality; what is 'good'?
(For whom, and who decides?)

Wikiversity should be person-oriented rather than content-oriented (Leinonen, Vadén & Suoranta, 2009)

There is tension between these poles:

- Is deleting a resource cutting off someone's ability to learn *through developing the resource*?
- How do we manage this tension?

<http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/2252/2093>

Where are the boundaries?

Wikiversity has tried to be as inclusive as possible, but we can't include everything (Bomb-making 101? Creationist history of the world?)

Particular boundary case: learning projects about other people, or other Wikimedia projects

Raised issues of ethics and civility: how much flexibility does one person have, in relation to the community?

Learning the wiki way

- to be able to participate in a collegial, collaborative space
- to be able to co-define how that space works
- to learn through interaction and collaboration with others
- to be able to specify what and how you want to learn
- to be subject to the values of the community
- to be subject to colleagues' right to participate and learn

In other words...

We have personal freedoms, but also responsibilities to other community members

There is a limit to the openness and personalisability of Wikiversity

Wikiversity can learn from experience of other larger wikis, like Wikipedia (e.g. BLP)

I welcome your input...

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<http://en.wikiversity.org/wiki/User:Cormaggio>