One Approach to “New Media”: Digital Publishing

Jonathan Turner, English Teacher, Alpha Secondary

jonathan.turner@burnabyschools.ca

Our public-facing project: [**8forty.ca**](https://8forty.ca/)

Our class website: [**alphanewmedia.wikispaces.com**](https://alphanewmedia.wikispaces.com/)

**The Core Process**

We create a general-interest, magazine-style website

1. Students study media websites to understand subjects, brand and audience.
	* Authentic materials--see [list of media sites](http://alphanewmedia.wikispaces.com/List%2Bof%2BMedia%2BSites)
	* [Wikispaces](http://alphanewmedia.wikispaces.com/)
2. Students define our own brand and audience.
	* Brand identity and the connotations of words and typography
	* Creating pseudonyms
3. Students generate their own story ideas. (Various genres suggested)
	* Genres of general interest writing
4. Students pitch story ideas to editors. Editors evaluate in terms of general interest.
	* [Pitch meetings](https://8forty.ca/2017/11/06/pitch-meetings-an-essential-part-of-running-a-media-site/)
5. Greenlit pitches are assigned student editors.
	* Organizational spreadsheet shared on Google Drive
6. Students write in Google Docs, sharing the first draft with their editor when complete.
	* [Google Docs](https://docs.google.com/)
7. Editors make suggestions and comments and send the work back.
	* The revision cycle
8. Once editors are satisfied, they send clean drafts on to the instructor who comments and sends the writing back to the writer for another pass.
9. This revision cycle continues until the piece of writing is appropriate for the audience.
	* Standards of a finished draft - teacher determined, but my focus is on publication-ready work that a general audience can appreciate.
10. Work is published, with appropriate images, etc. on a [class-made media site](https://8forty.ca/).
	* Pride, motivation, connecting with an audience

**New Media Tool Kit**

* [Google Docs](https://docs.google.com/): A Word Processor for Collaboration
* [GIMP](https://www.gimp.org/) and [Gravit](https://www.designer.io/): Free image editors as alternatives to the Adobe Creative Suite
* [Wordpress](https://wordpress.com/): Blogging website
* [Google Drive](http://drive.google.com): Shared space for images, files and collaborative documents
* [Wikispaces](https://www.wikispaces.com): This site is now being shut down. Next year I will use either Office 365 or Google Drive for class materials, instructions, and a collaboration site
* Email: Communicating with peers and staying organized (students need instructions on using real names in profile information and unsubscribing from junk mail)
* [Media](http://alphanewmedia.wikispaces.com/List%2Bof%2BMedia%2BSites) / social media (Twitter, Facebook, Instagram) as models for forms & conventions.

**The Anatomy of a Blog Post**

* Title Using t[he four u’s](https://www.google.ca/search?q=the+4+u%27s&ie=utf-8&oe=utf-8&client=firefox-b&gfe_rd=cr&dcr=0&ei=2KMbWuuODePe8AeiwJPoAg): ultra-specific, urgent, useful and unique
* Excerpt Creating summary with an emphasis on generating interest
* Images, captions Understanding illustration, copyright, [fair use](https://www.lib.umn.edu/copyright/fairthoughts), attribution
* Byline Creating [pseudonyms, personal brand, online safety](http://alphanewmedia.wikispaces.com/Creating%2BYour%2BFirst%2BBlog%2BPost)
* Links Learning in-line citation style on the Internet
* Category Using site-defined categories
* Tags Identifying subjects and topics for navigation and SEO

**Helpful Processes**

* [Differentiation of roles](http://alphanewmedia.wikispaces.com/Choosing%2BYour%2BRole) (all students must first write before finding a good fit for additional tasks)
* [Pitch meetings](https://8forty.ca/2017/11/06/pitch-meetings-an-essential-part-of-running-a-media-site/)
* Using authentic materials to clarify specific forms of general interest writing
* The revision cycle (several drafts with student editors and the teacher)
* Sharing learning with the group (specialists present on their learning)
* Mini-lessons based on needs determined through the editing process