Blogging Best Practices *for Educators*

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30th annual iste necc 2009

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Washington, DC ■ June 28–July 1, 2009
Walter E. Washington Convention Center

John G. Hendron

blogger (1999-present)

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musician

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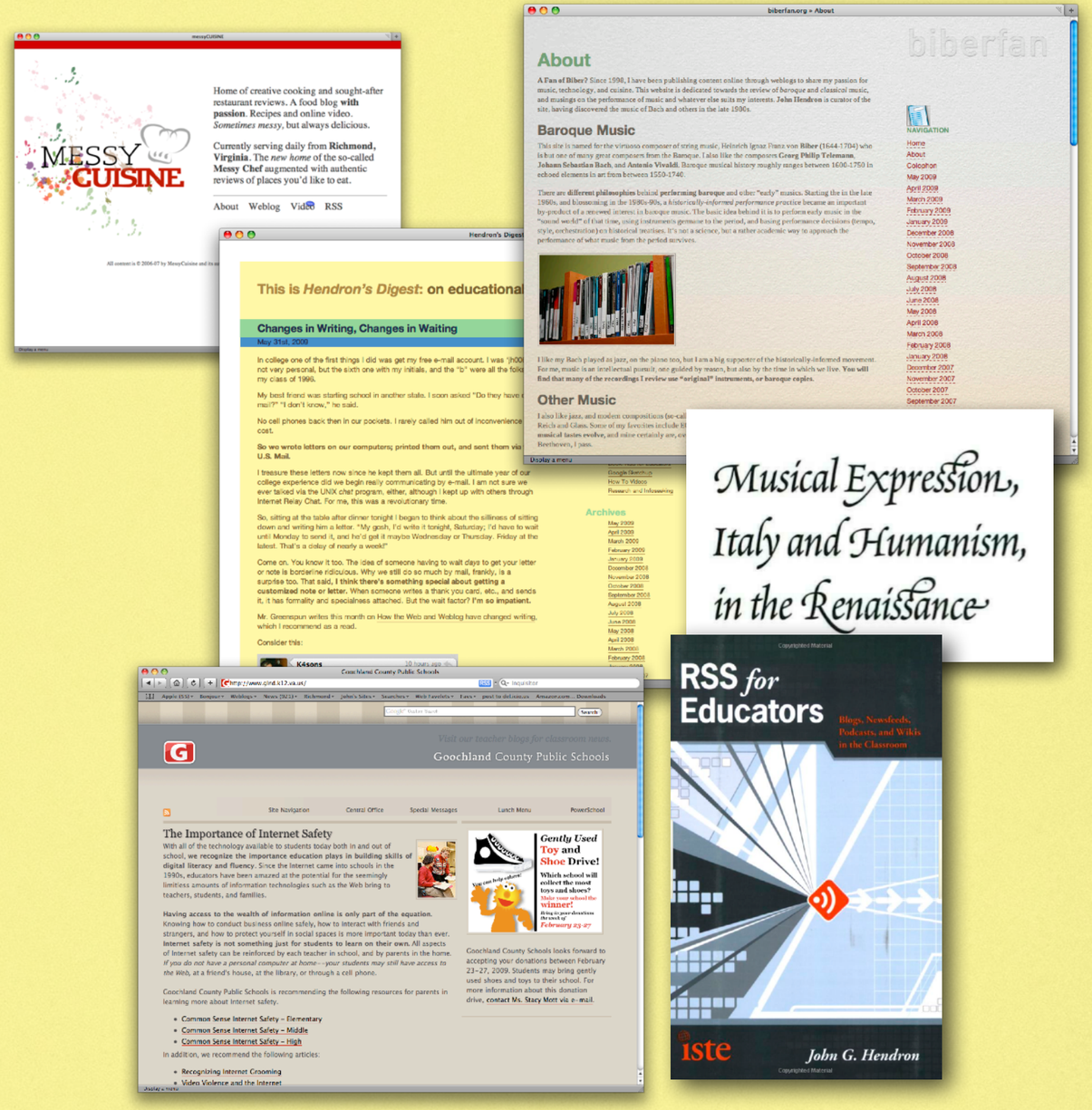




In September, 2005, Goochland County Schools began its *Teacher Blogging Initiative*. It required each teacher to maintain a weblog on the school division's server, to be maintained weekly for the purpose of maintaining communications between the school and home.

Goochland began its Teacher Blogging Initiative *in 2005 for all teachers, preK-12.*

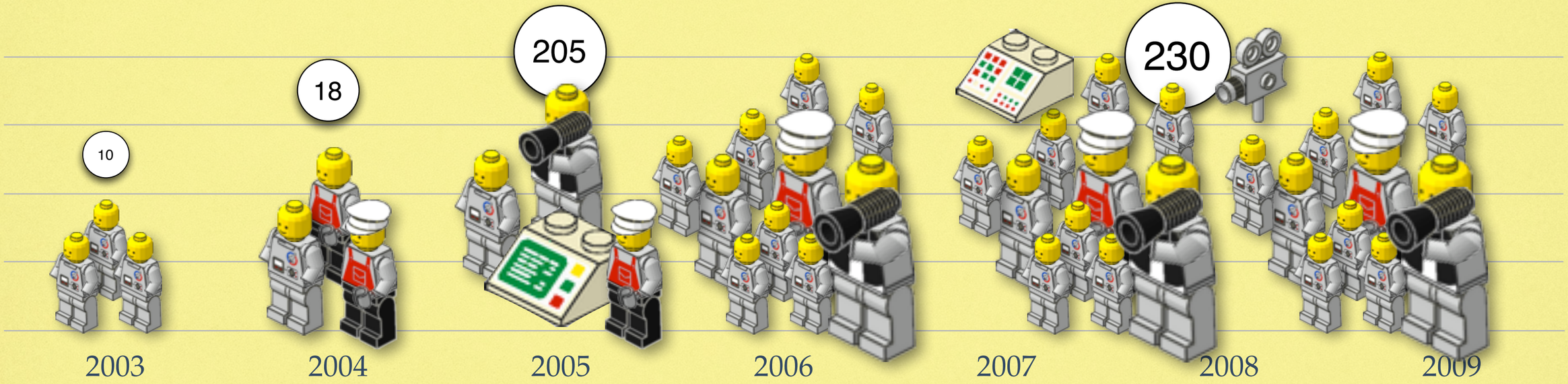


Comment/Trackback Support

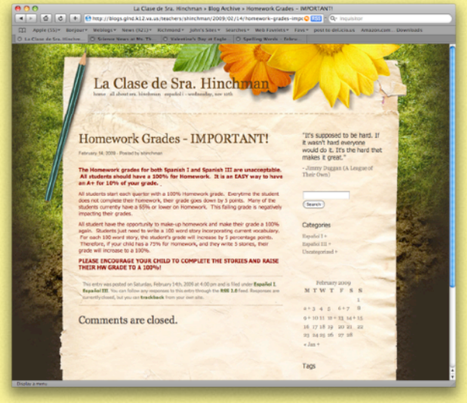
Podcast Support

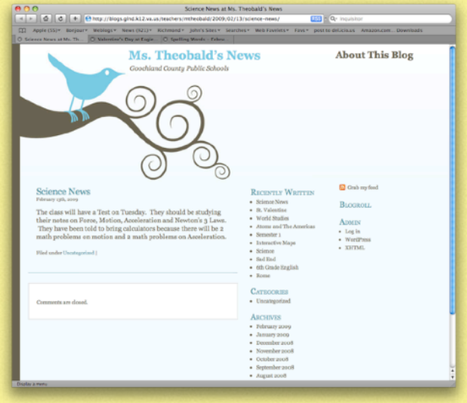
ExpressionEngine

MovableType — Plone — Blojsom — WordPress-μ











In this presentation today, I will share what we have learned in this endeavor plus invite you to visit some of the many blogs we maintain.

I invite your questions throughout today's presentation.

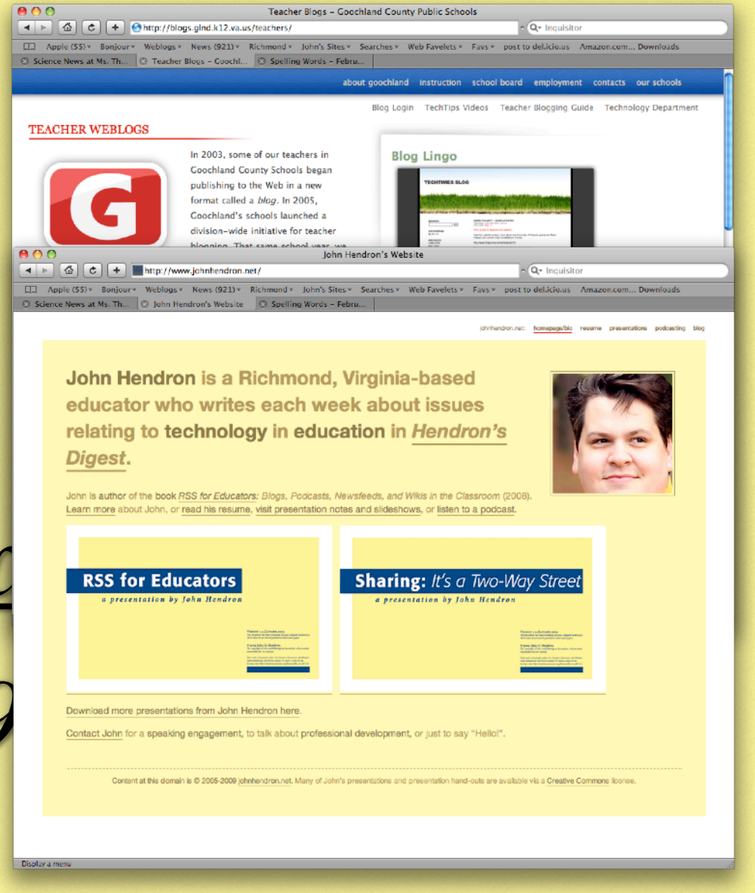
Important U.R.L.s for today include:

blogs.glnd.k12.va.us/teachers/

www.johnhendron.net

todaysmeet.com/ *http://www.tinyc*

Twitter Hash Tag: #hendron2009



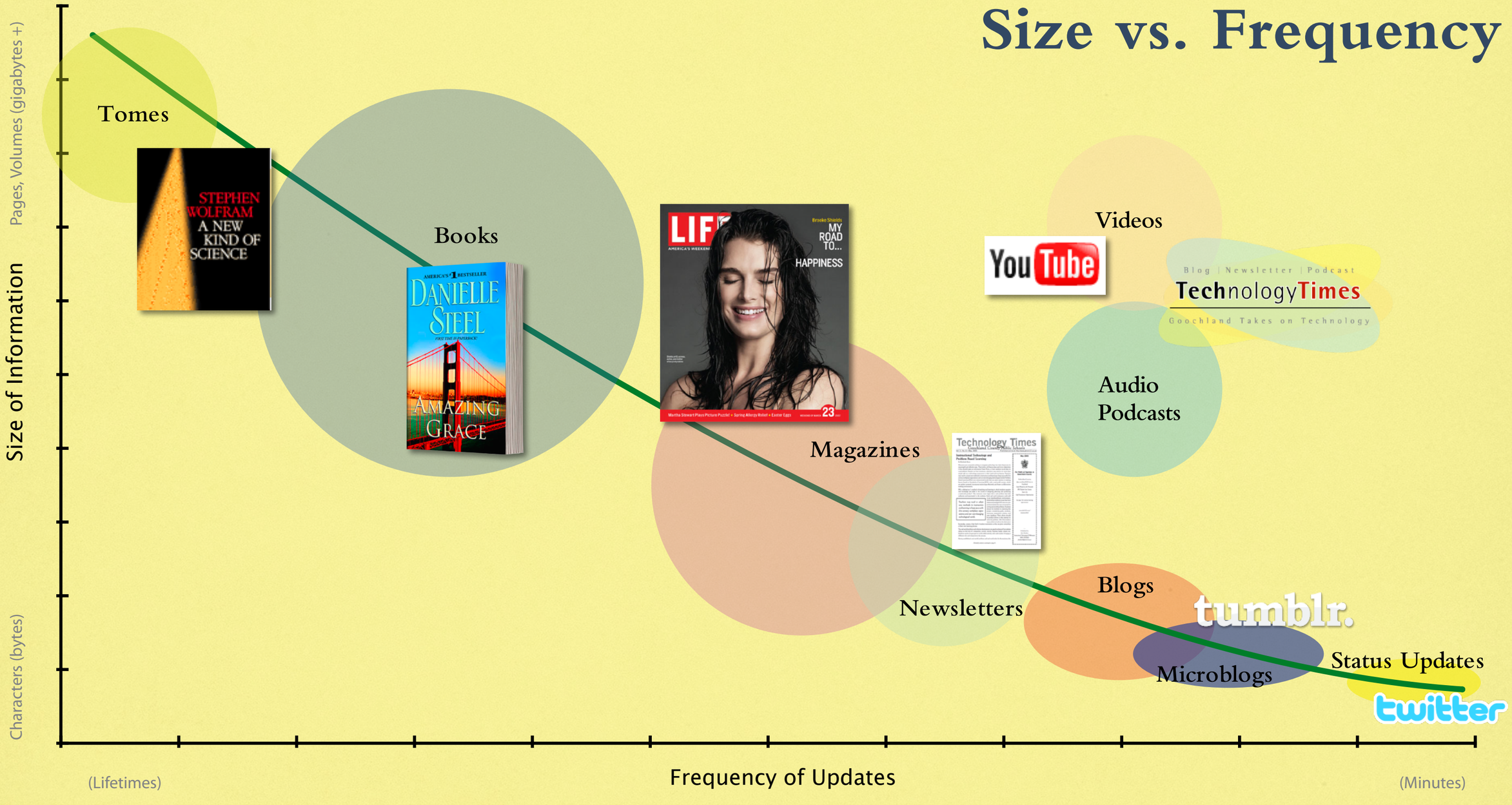
Why Communicate Online?

Why Blog?

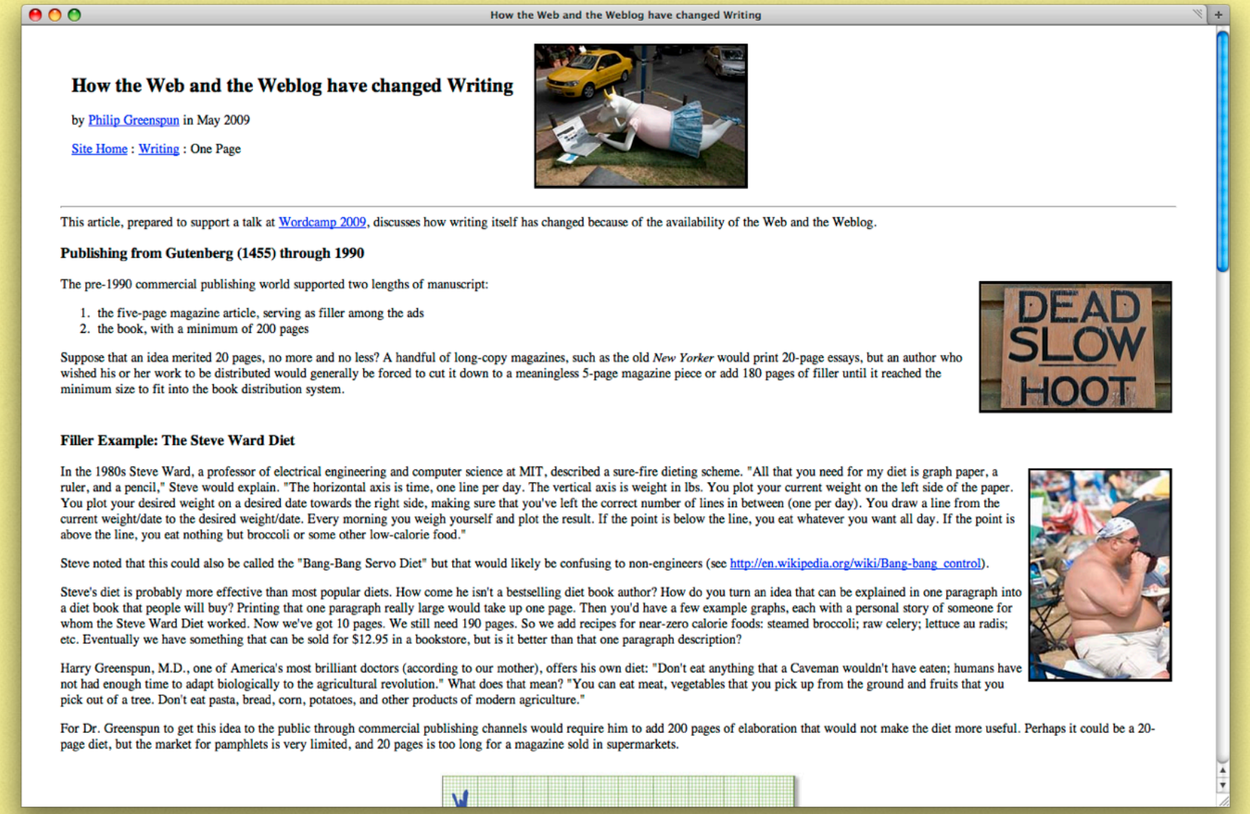
Current Gamut of Communications

paper • internet • television

Size vs. Frequency



Philip Greenspun


How the Web and the Weblog have changed Writing

How the Web and the Weblog have changed Writing

by Philip Greenspun in May 2009

Site Home : Writing : One Page

This article, prepared to support a talk at Wordcamp 2009, discusses how writing itself has changed because of the availability of the Web and the Weblog.

Publishing from Gutenberg (1455) through 1990

The pre-1990 commercial publishing world supported two lengths of manuscript:

1. the five-page magazine article, serving as filler among the ads
2. the book, with a minimum of 200 pages

Suppose that an idea merited 20 pages, no more and no less? A handful of long-copy magazines, such as the old *New Yorker* would print 20-page essays, but an author who wished his or her work to be distributed would generally be forced to cut it down to a meaningless 5-page magazine piece or add 180 pages of filler until it reached the minimum size to fit into the book distribution system.

Filler Example: The Steve Ward Diet

In the 1980s Steve Ward, a professor of electrical engineering and computer science at MIT, described a sure-fire dieting scheme. "All that you need for my diet is graph paper, a ruler, and a pencil," Steve would explain. "The horizontal axis is time, one line per day. The vertical axis is weight in lbs. You plot your current weight on the left side of the paper. You plot your desired weight on a desired date towards the right side, making sure that you've left the correct number of lines in between (one per day). You draw a line from the current weight/date to the desired weight/date. Every morning you weigh yourself and plot the result. If the point is below the line, you eat whatever you want all day. If the point is above the line, you eat nothing but broccoli or some other low-calorie food."

Steve noted that this could also be called the "Bang-Bang Servo Diet" but that would likely be confusing to non-engineers (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bang-bang_control).

Steve's diet is probably more effective than most popular diets. How come he isn't a bestselling diet book author? How do you turn an idea that can be explained in one paragraph into a diet book that people will buy? Printing that one paragraph really large would take up one page. Then you'd have a few example graphs, each with a personal story of someone for whom the Steve Ward Diet worked. Now we've got 10 pages. We still need 190 pages. So we add recipes for near-zero calorie foods: steamed broccoli; raw celery; lettuce au radis; etc. Eventually we have something that can be sold for $12.95 in a bookstore, but is it better than that one paragraph description?

Harry Greenspun, M.D., one of America's most brilliant doctors (according to our mother), offers his own diet: "Don't eat anything that a Caveman wouldn't have eaten; humans have not had enough time to adapt biologically to the agricultural revolution." What does that mean? "You can eat meat, vegetables that you pick up from the ground and fruits that you pick out of a tree. Don't eat pasta, bread, corn, potatoes, and other products of modern agriculture."

For Dr. Greenspun to get this idea to the public through commercial publishing channels would require him to add 200 pages of elaboration that would not make the diet more useful. Perhaps it could be a 20-page diet, but the market for pamphlets is very limited, and 20 pages is too long for a magazine sold in supermarkets.

"The World Wide Web allows anyone to publish, even on topics with very limited potential readership, due to zero marginal cost of distribution…"

http://philip.greenspun.com/writing/changed-by-web-and-weblog

Darren Rowse

"you don't have to post every day but try to establish a regular rhythm of posting..."



http://www.problogger.net/archives/2009/05/30/warning-do-you-recognize-these-21-blogging-mistakes/

Tony Hung, m.d.

"Blogs that are fascinating, regular reads, that are also are reader-centered do best when they are also focused like a laser. And I mean "focused" and consistent in every single way."



http://www.problogger.net/archives/2007/01/08/5-prerequisites-for-blogging-success/

Where's your blog?

edublogs

SQUARESPACE

Blogger™

tumblr.

WordPress.org

MOVABLE TYPE™

Free?

Hosted?

Ads?

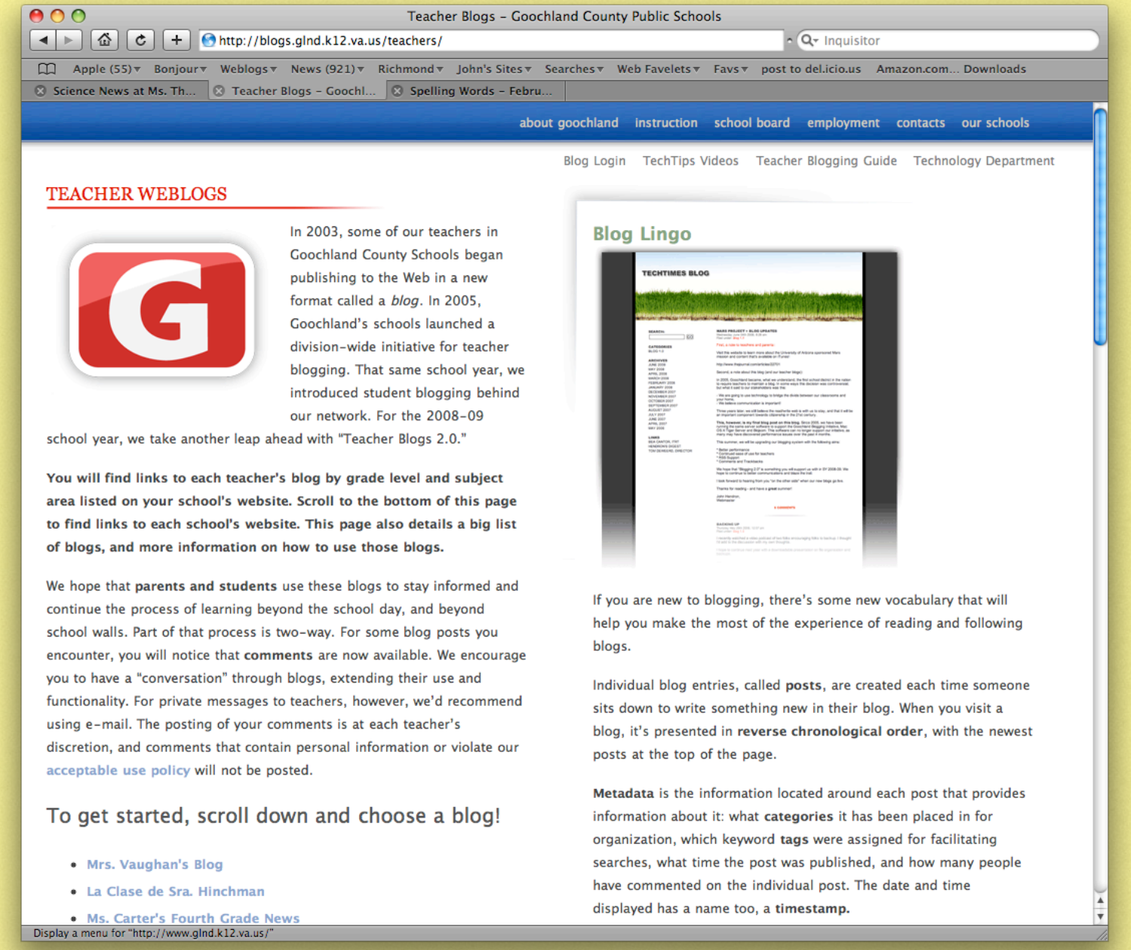
Tested?

WordPress-μ

Mac OS X Server, MySQL

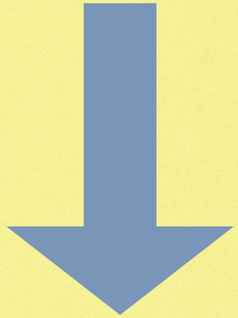
150-300MB quota/teacher

SuperCache & Akismet Plugins

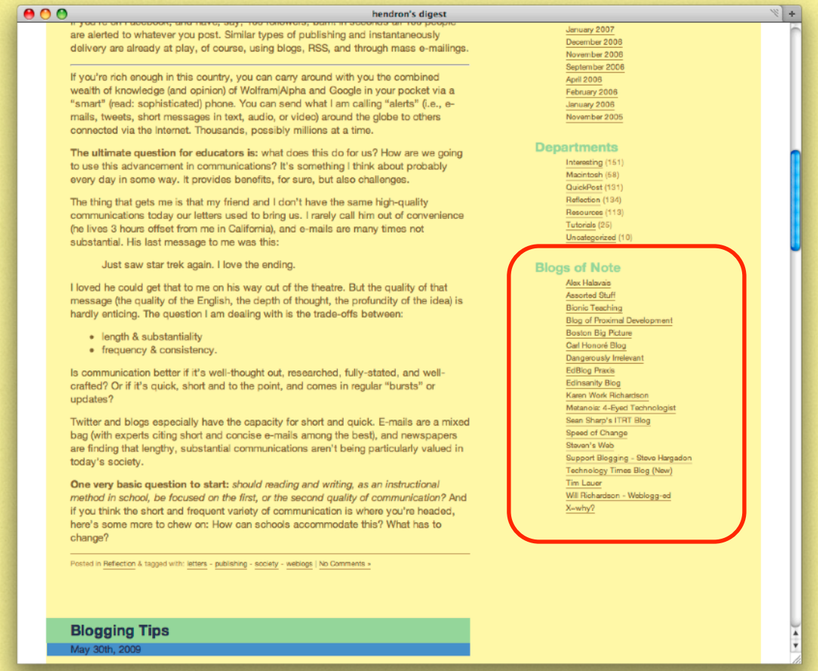


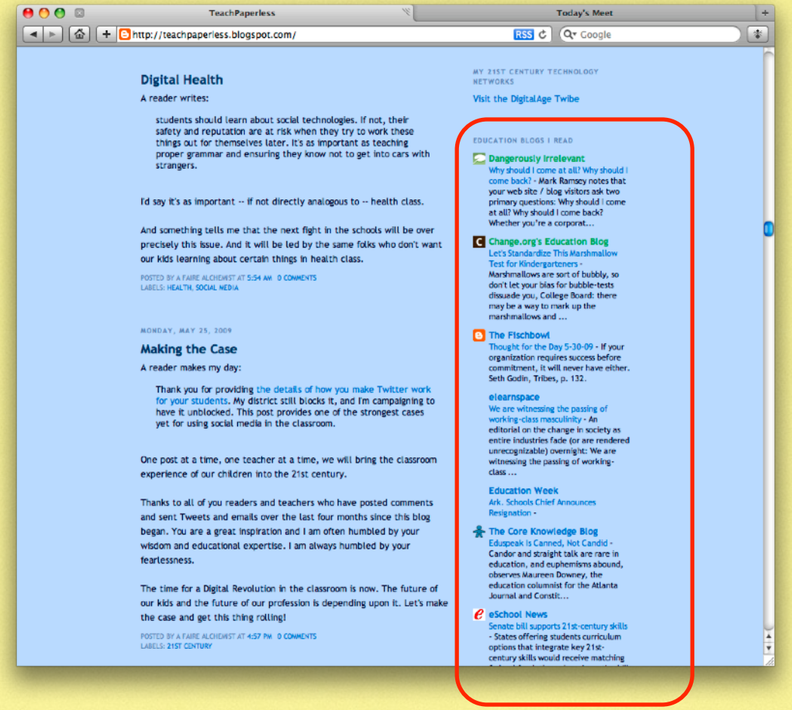
thinking about

Just getting started?



Follow some folks that already are writing.





each good blog find begets another, and another...

b l o g r o l l

Decisions About Your Blog

What information will I share about myself?

where am I going to host it?

what's my policy on comments?

scope of topics I write about

what's my school's policy on sharing content?

CreativeCommons?

Should I create a blog with multiple authors?

Colors/design/templates

Questions?

Colophon

Created using Apple Keynote 5

Typeface: Bembo

Theme created by John Hendron based upon the design of his website, *johnhendron.net*

A printable, PDF version of this presentation is available online with Creative Commons Licensing.

An earlier version of this presentation was given at the February, 2009 annual conference of the Virginia Society for Technology in Education in Virginia Beach, Virginia.

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