

To Wiki Or Not To Wiki?

Using Wikipedia to Teach Critical Thinking Skills

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<http://towikiornottowiki.pbwiki.com>

Who's Afraid Wikipedia?

Teachers worry that...

The information may not be accurate

Wikipedia is not trustworthy

You don't know where the
information came from

Anyone can edit Wikipedia



“It’s the first place I go when I am looking for knowledge, or I want to create some.”

Stephen Colbert

A Brief Overview of Wikipedia



- Free, online encyclopedia
- Able to be edited by anyone
- Created January 15, 2001
- More than 75,000 active contributors
- 8,700,000 entries in over 250 languages

WIKIPEDIA

English

The Free Encyclopedia
2 045 000+ articles

Deutsch

Die freie Enzyklopädie
651 000+ Artikel

Français

L'encyclopédie libre
568 000+ articles

日本語

フリー百科事典
423 000+ 記事

Italiano

L'enciclopedia libera
358 000+ voci

Español

La enciclopedia libre
287 000+ artículos

Svenska

Den fria encyklopedin
254 000+ artiklar

Polski

Wolna encyklopedia
432 000+ haseł

Nederlands

De vrije encyclopedie
370 000+ artikelen

Português

A enciclopédia livre
308 000+ artigos



Vs.



A blue spiral-bound notebook with silver rings at the top. The text is centered on the page.

What Everyone Should Know About Wikipedia

What Wikipedia is NOT

- ❑ A paper encyclopedia
- ❑ A publisher of original thought

Do not include original research, original inventions, personal essays, discussion forums, or journalism



What Wikipedia is NOT

- ❑ A Soapbox
 - ❑ Propaganda, advocacy, or recruitment
 - ❑ Opinion pieces
 - ❑ Self-promotion
 - ❑ Advertising



What Wikipedia is NOT

- ❑ A battleground
- ❑ An anarchy
- ❑ A democracy
- ❑ A bureaucracy
- ❑ Your webhost



Grading Scheme

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Template:Grading_scheme

Good Articles

- articles considered to be of good quality but which are not yet, or are unlikely to be, featured article quality

B Class

Start

Stub



<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/WP:GAC>



The Five Pillars of Wikipedia



I. Wikipedia is an Encyclopedia

- Written for the benefit of its readers
- Three Principle Content Policies
 1. Neutral Point of View
 2. Verifiable
 3. No Original Research



1. Neutral Point of View

All Wikipedia articles and other encyclopedic content must be written from a neutral point of view (NPOV), representing fairly and without bias all significant views (that have been published by reliable sources). This is non-negotiable and expected on all articles, and of all article editors.



2. Verifiable

"Verifiable" in this context means that any reader should be able to check that material added to Wikipedia has already been published by a reliable source. Editors should provide a reliable source for quotations and for any material that is challenged or is likely to be challenged, or it may be removed.

The burden of evidence lies with the editor who adds or restores material. The source should be cited clearly and precisely to enable readers to find the text that supports the article content in question.

If no reliable, third-party sources can be found for an article topic, Wikipedia should not have an article on it.



3. No Original Research

Original research (OR) is a term used in Wikipedia to refer to unpublished facts, arguments, concepts, statements, or theories. The term also applies to any unpublished analysis or synthesis of published material that appears to advance a position — or, in the words of Wikipedia's co-founder Jimmy Wales, would amount to a "novel narrative or historical interpretation."



http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:No_original_research



II. Wikipedia Is Free Content

Anyone may edit.

Articles can be changed by anyone.

No individual owns any specific article.

If you don't want your writing to be edited mercilessly, do not submit it.

Do not submit copyrighted material.



III. Wikipedia Works By Building Consensus

Consensus decision-making is an inherent part of the wiki process.

Wikipedia is a living encyclopedia, so consensus can change.

The primary method of determining consensus is discussion, not voting.

Wikipedia is not an experiment in democracy, anarchy or any other political system.



IV. Wikipedia Has a Code of Conduct

- Act in good faith, and assume others are acting in good faith too.
- Be open and welcoming.
- Be civil.
- Respect your fellow Wikipedians even if you disagree with them.
- Avoid making personal attacks or sweeping generalizations.
- Never disrupt Wikipedia to illustrate a point.
- Avoid edit wars.
- Follow the three-revert rule.
- When a conflict arises, follow dispute resolution.



V. Wikipedia Does Not Have Firm

- Other than these five principles
- Be bold in editing, moving, and modifying articles.
- Perfection is a goal and not a requirement.
- As all previous versions of articles are kept, content won't be irrevocably destroyed by an editor's mistake.
- Don't worry about messing up.



Researching with Wikipedia

- Always be wary of any one single source (in any medium—web, print, television or radio), or of multiple works that derive from a single source.
- Where articles have references to external sources (whether online or not) read the references and check whether they really do support what the article says.
- In all academic institutions, Wikipedia, along with most encyclopedias, is unacceptable as a major source for a research paper.



Special research considerations concerning Wikipedia

Use multiple independent sources

- Examine an article's history
- Internal links
- Categories
- Take advantage of "what links here"
- Take advantage of "printable version"
- Understand Wikipedia's biases
- Use Wikipedia's social process
- Look for comprehensive review



New Literacies

- Reading online is different than reading traditional text
- Understanding and Heeding Wikipedia Messages
 - http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Wikipedia:Template_messages
- Start with Wikipedia
- Triangulate
- Teach students to be critical consumers and responsible producers



Don't believe everything
you read.