Digital Guilds: Online Learning Communities

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NOVEMBER LEARNING

Building Learning Communities 2005

Digital Guilds

Life in the Sixteenth Century

Most people got married in June because they took their yearly bath in May. Brides carried a bouquet of flowers to hide the bad odor. Baths were a big tub filled with hot water. The man of the house got the nice clean water, then all the other men, then the women and finally the children and babies. The water was so dirty you could lose someone in it! Hence the saying, "Don't throw the baby out with the bath water".

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**Life in the Sixteenth Century**

Houses had thatched roofs. Thick straw piled high, with no wood underneath. It was the only place for animals to get warm, so all the pets... dogs, cats and other small animals, mice, rats, bugs lived in the roof. When it rained, it became slippery and sometimes the animals would slip and fall off the roof. Hence the saying, "It's raining cats and dogs."

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Life in the Sixteenth Century
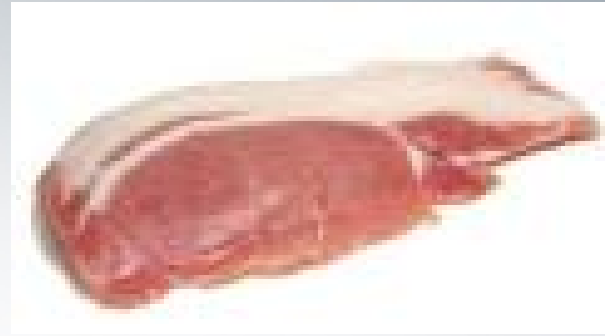
Sometimes they could obtain pork and would feel really special when that happened. When Company came over; they would bring out some bacon and hang it to show it off. It was a sign of wealth and that a man "could really bring home the bacon." They would cut off a little to share with guests and would all sit around and "chew the fat."

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Life in the Sixteenth Century

They started running out of places to bury people. So, they would dig up coffins and would take their bones to a house and re-use the grave. In reopening these coffins, one out of 25 coffins were found to have scratch marks on the inside and they realized they had been burying people alive. So they thought they would tie a string on their wrist and lead it through the coffin and up through the ground and tie it to a bell…..

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Life in the Sixteenth Century

Someone would have to sit out in the graveyard all night to listen for the bell. Hence on the "graveyard shift" they would know that someone was "saved by the bell" or he was a "dead ringer."

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In another age…..

Artisan Guilds
- Formed to refine a craft
- Built on common interests
- Determined standards of quality
- Negotiated standards of practice
- Supported one another
- Apprenticed new members

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In another age…..

Communal Standards:
- **Craft**
- **Business**
- **Cultural**
- **Regional**
- **Societal**
- **Technological**

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What were the realities of Renaissance

Society?

Culture?

Technology?

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What are the realities of today's

Society?

Culture?

Technology?

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Today…..

Digital Guilds
- **Interactive**
- **Built on common experience**
- **Constructing new understandings**
- **Providing professional practice**
- **Real world applications**
- **Performance assessment**

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Digital Tools

Asynchronous
[Blogs](#)
[Threaded discussions](#)
[Mailing lists](#)
[Web resources](#)

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Digital Tools

Synchronous
Instant messenger
Chat
MUVE
Video conferencing

Digital Guilds

Digital Tools

Multimedia

Podcasting

Animated simulations

Interactive tutorials

Streaming audio and video

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It's not about the tools…..

It's about the process!

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Three Models

Content Mastery

Community of Practice

Hybrid

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Content Mastery

       Asynchronous or Synchronous
       Dissemination of information
       Instructor centered
       Content-based assignments
       Individual projects
       Work product assessment
       Tapping into Multiple Intelligences

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Content Mastery

What's the pedagogy?

What's the process?

What's the pay off?

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Hybrid

Asynchronous and Face to Face
Sharing of ideas
Student centered online
Instructor centered offline
Process-based assignments
Collaborative projects
Performance assessments
Connected University

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Hybrid

What's the pedagogy?

What's the process?

What's the pay off?

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Community of Practice

Asynchronous or Synchronous
Sharing of ideas
Student centered
Process-based assignments
Collaborative projects
Performance assessments
Tapped In

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Community of Practice

What's the pedagogy?

What's the process?

What's the pay off?

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Communities of Practice

Develop around things that matter to people. As a result, their practices reflect the members' own understanding of what is important.

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Communities of Practice

Different from a team in that they define themselves in the doing, as members develop among themselves their own understanding of what their practice is about.

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Communities of Practice

Different from a team in that the shared learning and interest of its members are what keep them together.

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Communities of Practice

Different from a team in the sense that they are "about" something; they are not just a set of relationships.

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Communities of Practice

Internal Leadership in a CoP:
- **Inspirational – ideas**
- **Day to Day – management**
- **Classificatory – collect and document**
- **Interpersonal – social**
- **Boundary – connections to F2F CoPs**
- **Institutional – framework of the course**
- **Cutting Edge – technology**

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Communities of Practice

Community Facilitation:
- **Weekly greeting**
- **Suggested weekly pacing**
- **Wait time**
- **Questioning**
- **Validation**
- **Summary and Consensus**
- **Class scrapbook**

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Communities of Practice

Community Work Products:
- **Constructed understandings**
- **Critical friends**
- **Digital contacts**
- **Hotlists**
- **Lessons**
- **Units**
- **Projects**
- **Toolkits**

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Communities of Practice

Community Management:
- **Intuitive environment**
- **Organized discussions**
- **Course archives**
- **Water Cooler**
- **Links embedded in several places**
- **911 thread**
- **Contact information**

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Communities of Practice

Negative Strategies:
- **Responding to every post**
- **Interrupting learner discussions**
- **Establishing yourself as the authority**
- **Being non-responsive**
- **Atta-boys**
- **Sarcasm**
- **Condescension**

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Strategies

Challenge 1: Negative Spiraling

John: My school district can't afford all these new technologies you're discussing.

Guide: John, which technologies interest you the most?

John: It doesn't matter. I'll never have access to them.

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Strategies

    Challenge 2: Social Banter

    Susan: Ed did you get my email?

    Debra: I'm snowed in here!

    Ed: Want to have a virtual snowball fight?

    Susan: Ed did you get my email?

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Strategies

Challenge 3: Dominating Authority

Mark: I think rubrics are a waste of time.

Guide: I respect that, Mark. Anyone else?

Mark: Parents never accept them as grades.

Guide: Anyone else?

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Strategies

Challenge 4: Cricket Serenade

Guide: I look forward to hearing your input based on this week's readings!

Guide: Has anyone finished the readings for this week?

Guide: I'll be here when you're ready!

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Getting started:

- **Form a facilitator's CoP**
- **Identify mentors and apprentices**
- **Create climate for critical friendships**
- **Manage through facilitation**
- **Maintain a forum of ideas**
- **Promote community building**
- **Refer to CoP standards**

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Join the Digital CoP at the Surfaquarium!

http://surfaquarium.com/CoP/