

# introduction

Selecting the best articles from the last five years was quite a challenge—much more than I thought it would be when I first embarked on this project.

I began with the assumption that articles and activities that appeared in *L&L* were the best of the best. They had been reviewed by the staff and subject-matter experts, so the pedagogy and technology use was sound. Any concerns had been addressed before acceptance and publication. I also decided not to include news and new product announcements—these types of articles do not have a high archival value, and their worth is based more on the fleeting elements they cover than their writing.

With that in mind, I began narrowing down my selections. I decided to use a blog to help ISTE leaders and *L&L* readers nominate some of their favorites and discuss their nominations with each other. Based on the feedback I received, I added links to the PDFs of all of the articles to help blog visitors refresh their memories.

While readers were posting their comments on the blog, I also looked through the letters to the editor to see which articles had generated the most reader feedback over the years. I also went outside the ISTE universe and searched general education blogs to see which articles had generated discussion throughout the field.

I used nominations from my blog, feedback published in the magazine, and my careful reading of the issues to select a slate of nominations from each section of the magazine. The final step I took in making my initial selections was to ensure broad representation across volumes and issues. I wanted to avoid the trap of focusing solely on the newer articles. As the magazine and the field evolve, it is hard to argue that the most current information is the most relevant. But my goal was to ensure that this collection represented all five volumes. In the curriculum section, I also ensured that most curriculum areas and age groups were covered. I posted these on the blog for further feedback and help selecting the final articles for inclusion.

I wrote the chapter introductions to provide some background for the articles and columns. I also approached many of the authors included to see if they could provide short updates to accompany their articles. The author updates appear with the features, curriculum articles, and other articles as appropriate. They help provide a more recent context for some of the articles, which is useful in the fast-changing field of educational technology.

*Jennifer Roland*

## chapter 3

# Point/Counterpoint

We created the Point/Counterpoint column to broaden discussion. With the Issue Oriented column, we had begun a discussion between the magazine and the readers. With Point/Counterpoint, we were able to foster discussion among the readers. In addition to the monthly debate, we began offering a poll on the *L&L* website. Readers could simply tick a box describing how they felt about the issue, or they could offer a description of why they came down on one side or the other. These responses were then published in a later issue—I’ve included the reader poll results and responses to ensure a complete picture of the issues.

First, we take a lofty perspective: the goals of K–12 education. In “Is the Goal of K–12 to Produce Employees or Learners?” (September 2006) Francis D. Head and Randy Edwards debate the seeming opposition between educational goals. This question actually came up in response to a previous Point/Counterpoint entry in which Chris Stephenson and Trudy Abramson debated whether there was still a gender gap in science, math, and technology disciplines (“Has the Gender Gap Closed?” May 2006). We noticed that in addition to their difference in opinion about whether the gender gap had closed, they also seemed to have a difference in opinion about whether education should be focusing on teaching skills related to learning or to employment. We then asked Francis and Randy to elaborate on this issue. They brought up important points about how the U.S. job market is stunted because of the lack of prepared workers and about the danger of vocational tracking of students in an educational system focused on employability. Readers came down vehemently in support of creating learners in the poll, but in the responses, a few readers pointed out the false dichotomy of the question. When we set up the Point/Counterpoint column, we knew that in most cases, the real answer would be somewhere in the middle. We believed strongly in the value of the discussions, and Point/Counterpoint generated more reader feedback than we had ever received before.

February 2008

# READERS respond

## POLL RESULTS

### Is Chatspeak Destroying English?

Poll results and comments suggest that most feel chatspeak is not destroying English

#### No More Than Rock 'N' Roll

The fact that modern digital communicants utilize chatspeak is no more destroying English than rock 'n' roll destroyed music (though rap may yet—LOL). Savvy humans nuance their language style according to its effectiveness, and I'd wager that formal English will always have its place (Probs).

*Scott Merrick  
University School of Nashville and  
Vanderbilt Center for Science Outreach  
Nashville, Tennessee*

#### Chatspeak Enriches the Language

The English language, like any other, is subject to evolution caused by movements of people and now communications technology. There are about 540 million words in the English language, about five times the number that Shakespeare had to work with. Semantic compression has been a useful tool for Latin (et al.), modern English (etc.), Morse code (SOS), and cell phones (c u l8r). Does this destroy language? No, it enriches it, allowing it to adapt to the spirit of the times.

*Graham Brown-Martin  
Handheld Learning  
London, England*

#### Language Is Always Evolving

No, chatspeak is part of the evolution of the English language. It is facilitating better communication through a more succinct use of words. A new tool, Twitter.com, is a form of chatspeak where a message is delivered in 140 characters. Consider also the international perspective of what correct

English is. Already, different forms of English are accepted throughout the world; therefore, chatspeak can be considered an alternative way of communicating that identifies the user with their friendship and peer group.

*Julie Lindsay  
Qatar Academy  
Doha, State of Qatar*

#### Makes Me LOL

OMG, evry genRashun goes thru dis cuz da oldies don get it—hipEEz, valEE girlz, hlp HoP n ebonics, n now chatspk. All deez thangs R reking english but iTz StILL hErE cuz U hafta no it fer skool n jobz

*Scott Laleman  
Schertz-Cibolo-Universal City ISD  
Schertz, Texas*

#### It Can Be Used Inappropriately

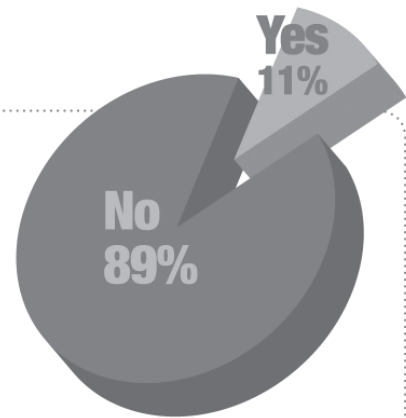
The problem with chatspeak is that students do NOT know when to code switch as Mr. Monfils talked about (Point/Counterpoint, Nov. 2007, pp. 8–9). Students have a hard enough time getting focused on writing—chatspeak only adds to the detritus that has to be shaken out of the rough drafts, which students are loathe to do unless under extreme duress.

*Bonnie Maye  
El Segundo Middle School  
El Segundo, California*

#### Consider Chatspeak a Useful Tool

I believe that text-messaging has proven itself a powerful tool in unifying many factions in a diverse population. The use or nonuse of social networking tools does not pose a degradation

L&L wants your opinion!  
Send comments to [letters@iste.org](mailto:letters@iste.org).  
Participate in our monthly reader poll at  
<http://www.iste.org/LL>.



of English skills, and does in fact increase student interest in written communication.

*Karon Tarver  
Fort Worth ISD  
Fort Worth, Texas*

#### Chatspeak May Be Counterproductive

When e-mailing friends, chatspeak, aka netspeak, helps to write more quickly. But I started with good writing and grammar skills. I believe that chatspeak undermines the kinds of writing we are teaching in schools that is being tested on high-stakes tests.

*Esther Bobowick  
Cooperative Educational Services  
Trumbull, Connecticut*

#### Formal Language Will Survive

Chatspeak is not destroying the English language. Younger generations may use it for simple e-mails, instant messaging, or texting, but that's about it. When it comes to the real world, businesses are not going to allow chatspeak in formal writings and documents. Chatspeak is also derived from Leetspeak, which originated in the mid '90s on IRC (Internet Relay Chat) servers. This has been around for 20 years and it will remain commonplace for small messaging.

*Jason Roussin  
Windsor C-1 School District  
Imperial, Montana*

## authors' update

## Mike Ribble and Gerald Bailey

Since the publication of the articles on digital citizenship in September and October 2004, there have been some updates/modifications to some of the information. The most significant changes were in the nine elements that provide the framework for digital citizenship. When evaluating the original nine elements it became apparent that some of those concepts could be combined while yet other elements were needed. These changes provide a more adequate coverage of the issues within digital citizenship. Today the nine elements and definitions of digital citizenship are:

**Digital Access:** full electronic participation in society

**Digital Commerce:** electronic buying and selling of goods

**Digital Communication:** electronic exchange of information

**Digital Literacy:** process of teaching and learning about technology and the use of technology

**Digital Etiquette:** electronic standards of conduct or procedure

**Digital Law:** electronic responsibility for actions and deeds

**Digital Rights and Responsibilities:** those requirements and freedoms extended to everyone in a digital world

**Digital Health and Wellness:** physical and psychological well-being in a digital technology world

**Digital Security (self-protection):** electronic precautions to guarantee safety

We are constantly evaluating the nine elements to determine if additional work or modifications need to be made. Feedback from educators and district representatives confirm that many users are pleased with the way the elements are organized at this time.

In summer 2007, two events coincided to help support and expand the concept of digital citizenship. First, ISTE refreshed the National Educational Technology Standards for Students (NETS•S). The Social, Ethical, Legal, and Human Issues standard was changed to Digital Citizenship. This change helped to show the importance of the digital citizenship concept. Second, ISTE published the book *Digital Citizenship in Schools*, which included updated content and materials on this topic. These events have helped digital citizenship to continue to develop in schools and districts. In 2008, the NETS refresh continued for teachers and it includes digital citizenship as one of the updated standards. ISTE also published the book *Raising a Digital Child* on digital citizenship for parents under its new imprint, HomePage books, in early 2009. We believe that this move into educating parents about digital citizenship will support the work in schools and create more communication between these groups about appropriate technology use.

March 2006

# Avoid the Plague

Tips and Tricks for Preventing  
and Detecting Plagiarism

By J.V. Bolkan



**P**lagiarism is an ugly word. Copying someone else's work and attempting to claim credit for one's self is an act that involves a number of ethical failings—thrift, laziness, coveting, and lying among others. Even in a complex world where many behaviors can be described as falling into ethical gray areas, few educators (or editors) have any tolerance for plagiarism. Yet, according to some studies, more than half of all college undergraduates admit to engaging in plagiarism. (*Editor's note:* Find these studies and other resources on p. 13.)

Many educators blame the Internet for what they perceive as the rise of plagiarism. Although the Internet certainly enables more efficient plagiarism, blaming it for widespread copying is akin to blaming a bank robbery on the presence of cash in the building. It is a factor, of course, but not the root cause of the behavior.

Just as with bank robbery, the solutions to plagiarism must be multifaceted. Efforts must be directed at prevention as well as detection and punishment. Banks don't leave piles of

cash stacked by the front door. Educators should take care to make assignments that hinder plagiarists. It is also important to remember that it isn't just vaults and security guards stopping bank robberies. The vast majority of people wouldn't rob a bank even if they could. They understand that it is illegal and unethical. ISTE's NETS for Students includes an ethics standard:

#### *Social, Ethical, and Human Issues*

- Students understand the ethical, cultural, and societal issues related to technology.
- Students practice responsible use of technology systems, information, and software.
- Students develop positive attitudes toward technology uses that support lifelong learning, collaboration, personal pursuits, and productivity.

Educators should strive to reinforce the ethical ramifications of plagiarism. Setting a tone is important. "I establish my disdain for plagiarism early in the course and therefore (hopefully) set a tone for academic integrity, which will be reiterated each time research is required for an assignment,"

says Carlan Kephart, an English Instructor at North Eugene (Oregon) High School.

#### **Deterrents**

In-depth discussion of plagiarism has another deterrent benefit. It is a popular misconception that the reports and papers available from online "paper mills" are easy A's. In fact, the quality of papers offered online for plagiarists is quite uneven. It can be an extremely effective lesson to actually download a few sloppy examples and critique them with your class—a student willing to cheat to get a good grade may not be so eager to take the risk and spend the money just to get a mediocre or poor mark.

Although emphasizing ethics will diminish the instances of plagiarism, unfortunately, it isn't always enough of a deterrent. Fortunately, other methods of prevention are available. According to University of Oregon Journalism School instructor Mark Blaine, "I try to design assignments so that they have as much of a fingerprint as possible. The more unique each student's work is, the less likely they'll

*Continued*