



Networking the Classroom: Nurturing Discussion in Large Groups

The Wild Project



Findings

“student participation approaches 100%” (Guthrie & Carlin, 2004)

“this type of system ensures that all the students think through questions, without leaving it to the vocal minority” (Birdsall, 2002)

“If most of the class answers a question correctly, the students answering incorrectly may be motivated to read or think more deeply about the subject matter.” (Woods and Chiu, 2003)

Motivation



- Somnambulism in Education

Idea



- Wouldn't it be nice if students were able to contribute to my presented slide content whilst it was being presented?
- Clickers ('Who Wants to be a Millionaire')
- Projects in Germany, Australia, UK and USA



A Tool to Facilitate Interactive Lectures

- Active involvement in learning scenarios aids student learning effectiveness (Jonassen, 1994; Wilson & Cole, 1991; Ramsden, 1992)
- Learning through Discussion
 - Socratic Dialogical Approach to teaching
- *“Thalheimer (2003) states that unless a student cognitively processes a question and participates in answering it (even if mentally), that learning does not take place.” (as quoted in Guthrie & Carlin, 2004)*



Findings from Interactive Technology

- “student participation approaches 100%” (Guthrie & Carlin, 2004)
- “this type of system ensures that all the students think through questions, without leaving it to the vocal minority” (Birdsall, 2002)
- “If most of the class answers a question correctly, the students answering incorrectly may be motivated to read or think more deeply about the subject matter.” (Woods and Chiu, 2003)

WILD - Version 1



- Inserted modifiable web content within web formatted PowerPoint slides
- Basic application generated to insert interactive slides
 - Java based
- Portability questions and wider usage questions
 - Proof of concept

WILD - Version 1 Findings



- Tested in two modules in 2008, one with Arts based students (~25), the other with Science based students (~34).
- The Student View
 - *“encouraged participation”*
 - *“a great idea that may encourage deeper research and discussion”*
 - *“I prefer to share ideas and contribute to what is being learnt”*
 - *“omg they now expect me to buy a pda to complete the module”*
 - *“Its another way to interact”*

WILD - Version 1 Findings



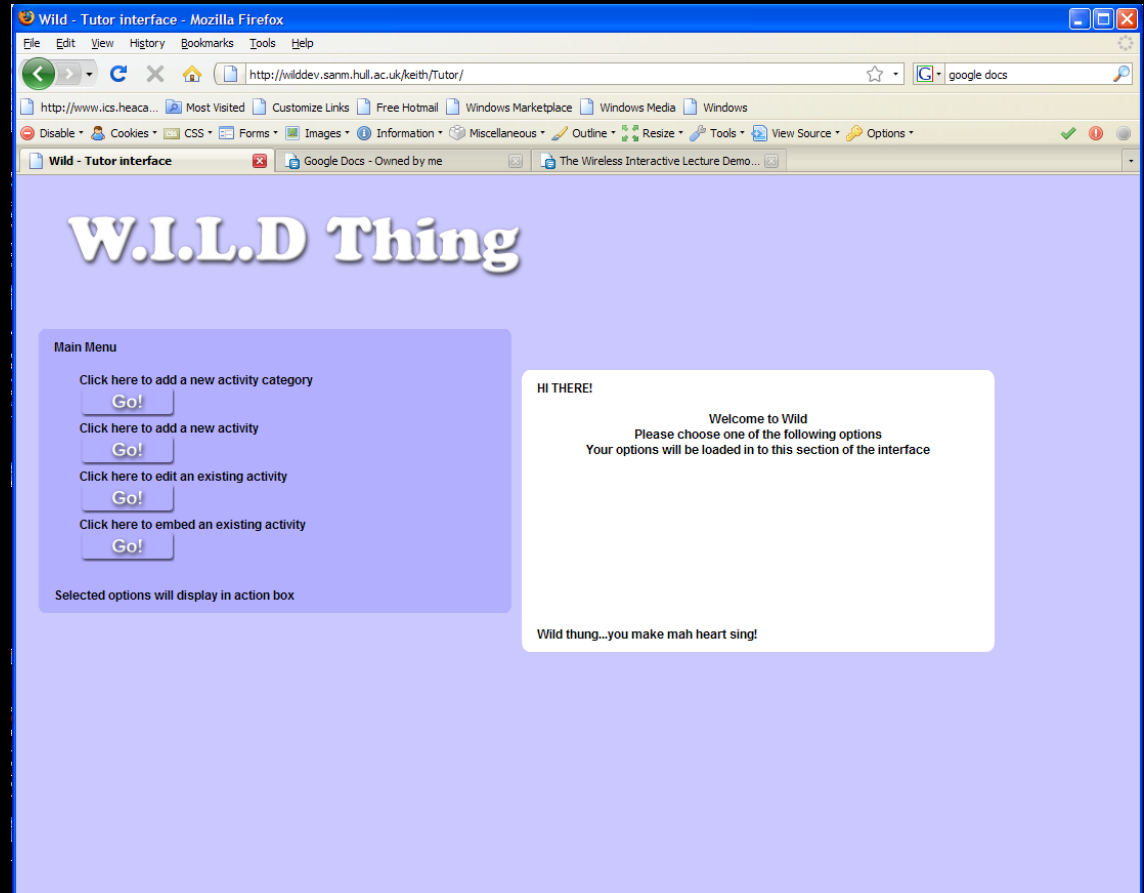
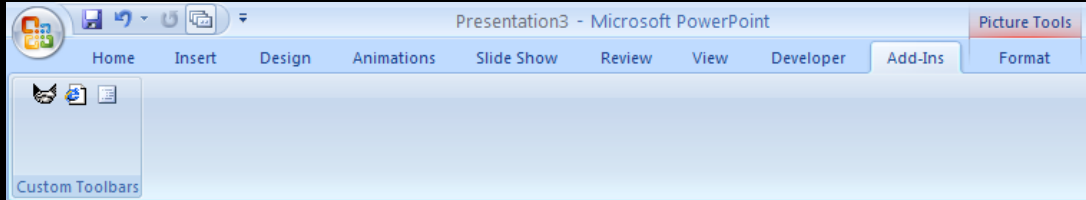
- Technological Problems
 - Mobile devices
 - Tool foibles
- A critical practitioners view
 - More free and open response
 - Can allow for responses that would not necessarily be aired verbally in the classroom environment
 - Effect of anonymity
 - Still many more uses
 - Concerns over abuse of trust

WILD Version 2



- Supported in June 2009 under the JISC Rapid Innovations Grant Call.
- Transform present prototype into an open source version which is extensible and can be widely used across the sector.
- Complete re-think
 - Questioned the Initial Challenge

Wild





Activity 56 : Wild Demo

Whats the weather like today?
Show the responses

Fetch!

This is a Text activity

Side Effect



The screenshot shows the BBC website homepage. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for 'Display Options', 'Accessibility Help', and 'Mobiles'. The BBC logo is on the left, and a search bar is in the center. On the right, there are links for 'Make this my Homepage' and 'Take the tour', along with a clock showing the date 'Monday 26 October 2009'. Below the navigation bar, there are buttons for 'Add more to this page', 'Set your location', and 'Reset homepage'. The main content area is divided into several sections: 'News' with a featured article 'Talks target post strike solution', 'Sport' with 'Strachan named Middlesbrough boss', 'Weather' for 'London, Central' showing a five-day forecast, and 'BBC iPlayer' with 'Teaching Awards' highlighted. A large image of two women eating pizza is featured in the center, with the headline 'How the recession affects our eating habits'.



WILD Version 2 Plan



- JISC grant provided for the purchase of 30 iPod touch devices and 4 other mobile devices
- Test in a couple of modules personally and promote the use of and trial of the Wild project amongst sector staff
 - Large groups of students
 - One module 94 students
 - Small groups of students
 - One module 30-40 students



Issues Raised

- Privacy & Anonymity
- Censorship and Filtering
- Student Participation and Involvement

Where to find Wild!



- JISC,
 - <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/whatwedo/programmes/inf11/jisc/wildthing>
 - <http://www.jisc.ac.uk/news/stories/2009/10/wildthing.aspx> (press release)
- University of Hull,
 - <http://wildthing.sanm.hull.ac.uk/>
- SourceForge,
 - <http://thewildproject.sourceforge.net/>
- Full source and tool available end November 2009