

Blogging with children: readingiscool.xyz

Abstract

In this presentation I will show a wordpress blog (<http://www.readingiscool.xyz>) created by a class of 13 year old learners. The purpose of the blog is to recommend great books to their peers, both in their own school and outside or even abroad. The learners create short video-presentations in order to share their favorite books and encourage their peers to read them as well.

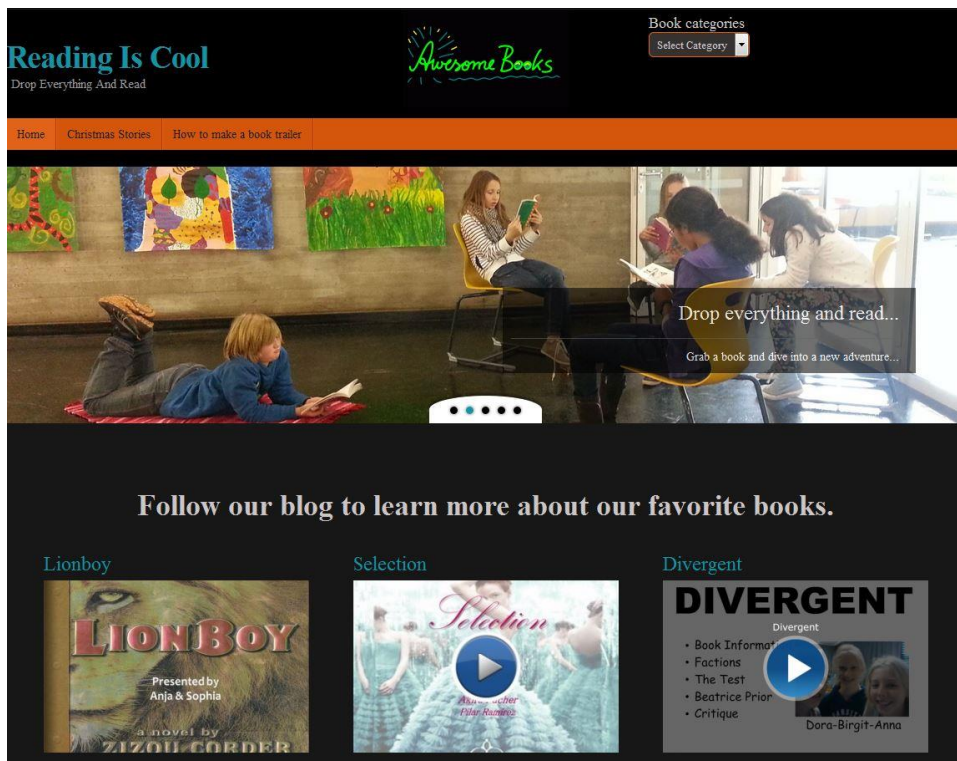
Producing this blog involves a variety of language skills such as extensive reading, speaking to an audience and writing a review.

The videos are produced with free and easy-to-use web 2.0 tools and are uploaded by the learners themselves. No specialized computer skills are necessary.

Creating this blog has had very positive effects on the learners' motivation for reading young adult literature. Knowing that their work will be shown publically has also increased the learners' motivation to use fairly advanced language and work on their pronunciation in order to sound as professional as possible. Seeing themselves online gives the learners a chance to reflect critically on their performance and has had a very positive effect on their motivation to produce high quality work. The learners are proud of their work and feel that they are actually making a meaningful contribution to the world wide web.

On the receiving end the blog can be used by ESL teachers to motivate learners to read the latest and "coolest" young adult fiction.

As a next step contributions from students of other schools and countries will be invited. Interested teachers can join with their classes.



The screenshot displays the homepage of the 'Reading Is Cool' website. At the top left, the logo 'Reading Is Cool' is accompanied by the tagline 'Drop Everything And Read'. To the right, there is a 'Book categories' dropdown menu. Below the header is a navigation bar with links for 'Home', 'Christmas Stories', and 'How to make a book trailer'. The main banner features a photograph of children reading in a library, with the text 'Drop everything and read...' and 'Grab a book and dive into a new adventure...'. Below the banner, a section titled 'Follow our blog to learn more about our favorite books.' highlights three featured books: 'Lionboy' (presented by Anja & Sophia), 'Selection' (with a play button icon), and 'Divergent' (with a play button icon and a list of content: Book Information, Factions, The Test, Beatrice Prior, and Critique, presented by Dora-Birgit-Anna).