Why and How to Adapt and Publish Texts as Ebooks for Extensive Reading

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Summary: Lost, unreturned, and damaged books are a significant problem for Extensive Reading programs. Ebooks are about to emerge as an affordable alternative library for ER that solves these problems. When educators or institutions publish ebooks, they can be copied, shared, and never need to be returned. This will be a practical presentation showing teachers how to create and distribute ebooks with stories they and their students wish to share and learn from. The main focus will be on adapting existing Open Content, but can also be applied to original writing projects.

Books

In an ER program at a private university 300-400 books or more were not returned each year. Fines or collecting deposits was not allowed by the university. Annual budget of approximately ¥400,000 allowed purchase of 500-600 graded readers. Considering wear and tear along with losses, the physical library will likely never grow to allow true choice. Students also purchased readers. Total per pupil annual cost of around ¥1,500.

Ebook readers

Prices are rapidly dropping to or below the ¥10,000 threshold. Besides Sony, Kindle, Nook, and other dedicated hardware, any of these can be a handy ebook reader: Android phone, Blackberry, iPad, iPhone, iPod Touch. More and more people carry devices which double as ebook readers. Ebooks ride for free.

Write

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• Cobb, T. Compleat Lexical Tutor Vocabulary Profiler. <lextutor.ca/vp/eng>.
• Edit Central. <editcentral.com>.

Create

Three ways to turn a graded text into an ebook

•Sigil. A WYSIWYG ebook editor. Cross-platform. Free. <code.google.com/p/sigil>.
•Feedbooks: A place to discover and publish e-books. Simple online editor and store.
• <feedbooks.com>.
•iWork. Mac OS page layout software that creates sophisticated ebooks. Commercial software. <www.apple.com/iwork/pages>.

Publish

Get ebooks into the hands of your students

Email an attached file

• It really can be that simple.

Web-based storage

• Boxnet: Simple online collaboration: Online file storage, FTP. <box.net>.
• Dropbox. <dropbox.com>.
• Droplr. <droplr.com/hello>.

Course Management Systems

• Use Moodle, Blackboard, or other systems to distribute ebooks and track downloads.

Self access center or library

• Calibre. Manage a library of books and connect them to any reader/any number of devices. Free Open Source software for Mac OS X, Windows, and Linux. <calibre-ebook.com>.

Further reading: Notes and sources

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