

When it comes to publishing magazines, the Internet has changed many things. Hero Joy Nightingale demonstrates how.

Internet Is Hero's Window

NEWSPAPER ARTICLE BY MARA BELLABY

CANTERBURY, England
Hero Joy Nightingale lets the whole world know what's on her mind, though she's unable to speak or walk.

Nightingale puts together an Internet magazine that boasts readers in 77 countries and guest writers like U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan, Canadian author Margaret Atwood, and the leader of the Anglican Church, Archbishop George Carey.

Now on its 5th issue, *From the Window* began 2 years ago as a way for Nightingale to meet people beyond Canterbury, the fabled city where she lives.

It has evolved, however, into an acclaimed and award-winning project that led to a visit with Annan



Hero Joy Nightingale, who has a rare neurological condition, put together an Internet magazine that boasts readers in 77 countries and guest writers such as Margaret Atwood.

in his 38th-floor office at the United Nations headquarters in New York, a globetrotting journey to pick up a prize in Australia, and a rush of new friends.

"I can't find the superlative to describe it," says Wendy Clarke, head

GOALS AT A GLANCE

- Develop a form for evaluating Web sites.
- Analyse the structure and content of newspaper articles.

of occupational therapy for the East Kent Health Authority, who has worked with Nightingale since she was 2. "It has opened up the world to her."

Nightingale was born with what doctors call a "locked-in condition." It is marked by an inability to perform complex movements of any of her muscles, abnormally low muscle tone, and an unknown neurological disorder.

To communicate, Nightingale's arm must be supported while she scrawls letters into an assistant's palm. The "enabler," currently Nightingale's mother, must recognize the subtle movements of Nightingale's hand and transcribe her thoughts. It is a slow, arduous, word-by-word process.

"Writing is everything," says Nightingale. "Without writing I am nothing because everything I feel, think, and need must be conveyed through my spelling."

It is that love of writing—and meeting new people—that has made the Internet such a critical part of her life, she says.

Working with her mother in a cozy room overflowing with books, Nightingale spends all day in front of the computer screen. She hunts down potential essayists, sifts through contributions, and puts down her own thoughts.

It is nearly a full-time job—for Nightingale and her mother, who must type all of her dictation into the computer.

Nightingale, who also composes music and plans giant art installations, keeps a list of people she wants contributions from for the magazine. Successes so far: Annan, Atwood, and Helen Sharman, the first Briton in space. Among those on the wanted list: new British poet laureate Andrew Motion, writer John Mortimer, and tennis star Tim Henman.

"It's very difficult for me to explain or even understand why some small percentage of my targets respond and an even smaller percentage respond with an article," Nightingale says. "But it's very nice when it happens."

From the Window is graphically simple. But the heavy-hitting contributors who write first-person accounts of their experiences and Nightingale's blunt talk about being disabled—put the site in a category all its own.

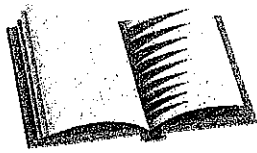
"I don't dwell on what I might have been like if I were not disabled, because it's too ridiculously silly to do so," Nightingale says.

It is her straight-talking descriptions about herself and her disability that make *From the Window* come alive.

"I have a lot to do and I have to get on with it," she says.

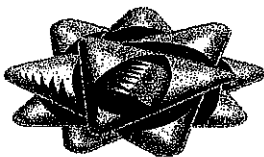
From the Window can be found at <<http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/hojoy/>>.

Web Tips: The Equation



#1: Content (is King or Queen!)

No matter how flashy or impressive a Web site is, it will ultimately be judged by its content. Is the text well written? Is it succinct and communicative? Is it tailored to the target audience? These questions are paramount for the design of a successful Web site.



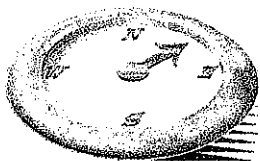
#2: Visual Appeal

Layout, image quality, and colour scheme each play an important role in the overall appearance of a Web site. The legibility of the text should be top priority—always try to have a high contrast between the text and the background.



#3: Creativity

Develop a theme or metaphor for the Web site. It is challenging, but well worth the effort. When the images and overall look of a site create "thematic glue," the site is an experience as opposed to a mere collection of information.



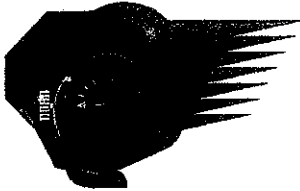
#4: Ease of Navigation

Is the information logically laid out? Would a novice user be able to navigate easily through the site? How deep into the site is the critical information? Always test the site with inexperienced Web users and use their feedback. Create a navigation scheme that makes sense for the novice but that doesn't annoy the expert. Use colour coding where possible and keep a consistent layout.



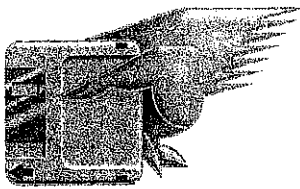
#5: Responsiveness

"If I don't see something in ten seconds, I leave!" Believe it or not, this is a very common statement among Web users. Sites that download quickly are sites that will be used at least once! Ensure that images appear quickly, but without compromising on image quality. Have the text download first and then let the images fill in.



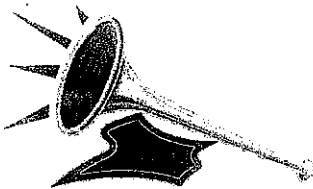
#6: Multi-Platform Compatibility

Does the site perform properly on the major browsers? On different releases of the browsers? Does the site work well on low-end systems (640X480 resolution and 256 colour-depth)? What about high-end systems? Does the site look great on Apple systems as well as PCs? These questions are critical since you have no way of controlling the user's environment.



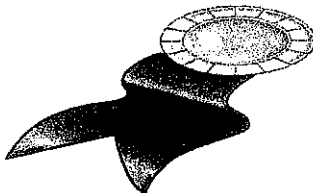
#7: Marketing

"Build it and they will come." This statement is a fallacy on the Web. The site must be easy to find from the commonly used search engines. All marketing materials, including print advertising, letterhead, and so on, should promote the site. Encourage repeat visits by ensuring that the site is not static. Keep it fresh by changing content regularly.



Result

An award-winning high traffic site!



1. RESPONDING TO THE SELECTION

- a. Why is the Internet a particularly important tool for Hero Nightingale?
- b. On the Internet, find an example of a personal Web site (or examine *From the Window*). Write a brief review of the site.
- c. The Web tips are written to help explain how to create a successful Web site. Explain whether you think this information is helpful.
- d. List the information on Web sites that you didn't understand. What resources could you use to find this information?
- e. What did you learn from this article about creating e-zines and Web sites? What more do you want to learn?

2. MEDIA MESSAGES WEB SITE EVALUATION

Web sites on the Internet use both print and visual media to convey information. They are organized with sections and subsections. Not all sites, however, are interesting, easy to follow, or comprehensible.

Create a report form that you can use to evaluate Web sites. For example, your report form could contain the subject or purpose of the site, how it is organized, how easy it is to get around or navigate, its use of graphics, and whether it is easy or difficult to read and understand. Use this form to assess several Web sites. Share this information with your classmates.

3. MEDIA MESSAGES ANALYSE NEWSPAPER ARTICLES

If you examine newspaper articles, you'll find they have many elements in common. Choose several newspaper articles and answer these questions:

- What does the first paragraph tell you about the article?
- How is the heading related to the first paragraph?
- Does each article answer the 5 W's of journalism?
- What is the average length of each paragraph?
- How does each article use quotations?

Summarize what you have learned about how newspaper articles are written.

SELF-ASSESSMENT: Choose an article that you've written and shorten it by half its length. Does it still convey the same basic information? Does it read better in the shortened version?

ELA B10 - "Internet is Hero's Window"

Before Reading:

How important is the internet to you? How often do you look in books, other than the novel that you're currently reading?

After Reading:

1. Why is the internet a particularly important tool for Hero Nightingale?

2.A) Examine *From the Window* (site: <http://atschool.eduweb.co.uk/hojoy/>) and evaluate the site using the 7 web tips. How would you rate this site out of 10?

B) Choose one of the articles in Hero's magazine to summarize. What is it about? Who is it by? Be prepared to share your findings with your classmates.

3. What did you learn from the article about creating e-zines and web sites? Is there more that you'd like to learn? If so, what?

4. Your next task is to go to the following site and choose ONE of the strategies used in writing in the New York Times: Cause and Effect, Compare and Contrast, Problem and Solution. Using the graphic organizer provided, examine one of the articles linked and fill in the organizer. Site: <http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/12/12/compare-contrast-cause-effect-problem-solution-common-text-types-in-the-times/>