over the course of a year, carried out the survey research, and wrote the description of the parent survey results. The other two authors are grades five and six teachers who provided an authentic perspective for considering how teachers might use the survey results in their classrooms.

Using wikis and blogs in class and as homework

For three years, the teachers involved in the study used online technology to communicate with their students and with the students’ parents. They began with a blogging website (www.blogger.com) and found it worked well for activities in class and at home. The teachers created an account through which they could post class assignments and inform parents and students about homework, projects, and upcoming school events. They also included a “Highlights of the Day” section to give parents a glimpse into their children’s daily classroom activities. Highlights included information about classroom guests and photos and videos of students working collaboratively. Because they intended the homework blog to be used primarily as a place to post information for students, they modified the permissions so that students would not post their own comments on the parent information pages.

The teachers envisioned the homework blog as a home base for students. When they first logged on at home, students received reminders about the day’s events and assignments. From the blog, they were redirected to specific subject/project blogs or wikis. Here students could post comments to each other, upload relevant research to extend their in-class learning, and include links to other resources, all of which contributed to their collaborative online assignments. For example, in social studies students were engaged in a project-based learning activity focused on current national (grade five) and global (grade six) citizenship issues. The issues were selected by the students and related to the big ideas in the provincial curriculum document. The students researched collaboratively in small groups.

Figure 1 Screen shot from the student social studies wiki