

Feb 7th, 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM

Everyone Has an (E)Book in Them: Teaching a Create Your Own Ebook Class

Lorena O'English
Washington State University, oenglish@wsu.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/onlinenorthwest>

Let us know how access to this document benefits you.

O'English, Lorena, "Everyone Has an (E)Book in Them: Teaching a Create Your Own Ebook Class" (2014).
Online Northwest. 5.

<https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/onlinenorthwest/2014/Presentations/5>

This Presentation is brought to you for free and open access. It has been accepted for inclusion in Online Northwest by an authorized administrator of PDXScholar. Please contact us if we can make this document more accessible: pdxscholar@pdx.edu.



Everyone Has an (E)Book in Them: Teaching a Create Your Own Ebook Class

LORENA O'ENGLISH
WSU LIBRARIES

OENGLISH@WSU.EDU * @WSULORENA

ONLINE NORTHWEST '14
(SNOWSTORM EDITION)

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/wsulorena/5795592578/>

Passion Projects and Desire Trails



<https://www.flickr.com/photos/wsulorena/8063542874/>

The Back Story...



- **Kindle for Christmas in 2009**
- **Smartphone in 2010**
- **Too many unread articles, documents, reports, etc.**
- **Desire to learn about ebooks and edocuments (edocs)**

- **...when I want to learn about something, I sometimes work on it and then arrange to teach it.**

The Prequel: Packaged Paper for Digital Devices



- Class taught through WSU's HRS service in 2011 and 2012: <http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/edocs>
- Content:
 - Devices and reading apps
 - Locating ebooks and edocs
 - Ebook formats and DRM
 - Converting documents **[TOO MUCH !!!]**
 - Organizing and reading documents
 - Creating and editing ebooks and edocs
 - Add-on tools and services

[A presentation on this from 2011](#)

Plot Problems: Issues with PPDD



- **Class was too unfocused – both ereaders/apps and basic-basic ebook creating/managing, and not enough of either**
- **Not enough hands-on ; too much, too fast**
- **Not enough concrete material for taking home and trying it out (how-to handouts)**
- **The software**

An Interregnum...



- Things happened and I didn't return to this project until late 2013...
- Thought about how to improve it and make it better, more focused
 - Emphasis on creating and managing basic (not professional) ebooks
 - Provide different paths, based on particular purpose
 - ✦ Some just wanted an overview
 - ✦ Some just want to save articles they found on the Web and read them later on their ereading device
 - ✦ Some wanted to convert new or previously-created material to ebook format(s)

Workshopping



- **Why Make Your Own Ebook or Edoc?**
- **What do I Mean by “Simple Ebook”?**
 - More like “basic” – not that its incredibly easy to create; more that it is amateur quality, but useful to you, your friends, co-workers, etc.
- **The Question of Coding...**
 - Taught class from my own knowledge
 - If you don't intend to try to make your ebook available through one of the ebook stores, don't need to have perfect code validation
 - Wanted to create a class where participants didn't have to know more than basic HTML
 - ...of course, the more coding, etc. you know the better!

The Classes



- **Campus Classes**
 - Ongoing partnership with WSU's Human Resource Services (HRS) to teach technology classes (Zotero, productivity tools)
 - Two classes taught in January
- **Pullman Parks and Recreation**
 - Classes taught by community members
 - Catalog sent out to all Pullman households in late December
 - Scheduled two classes in January

Teaching the Class: Ebooks Part 1



- Basic Overview of File Formats, DRM, etc.
- Focus on Freely Available Tools (some freemium)
- “Low Threshold” tools:
 - “Read it Later” services: [InstaPaper](#), [Readlists](#), [Pocket](#), [GrabMyBooks](#), etc. => sending edocs to your device (directly or via download and sideload)
 - On-the-fly converters: [2EPub](#), [dotEPUB](#), etc.
 - ✦ Issues of privacy, security, etc. because these documents are stored on someone else's servers...

Class website: <http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/creatingbasicebooks>

Creating Basic Ebooks

Last Updated: Mar 6, 2014 | URL: <http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/creatingbasicebooks> | [Print Guide](#) | [Email Alerts](#)

- Home
- What is an eBook?
- EDocuments
- The Cover
- Creating EBooks - 1
- Creating EBooks - 2
- Converting & Managing
- EBook Readers and EReading Apps
- Sharing EBooks
- Resources for Going Pro
- Me
- Demo Downloads

Creating EBooks - 1 [Comments\(0\)](#) [Print Page](#)

Search:

This Guide [Se](#)

Read It Later Services

- [InstaPaper](#)
- [Readlists](#)
Readlists is a Readability (read pretty) product; you can also send individual webpages to your Nook or Kindle directly from Readability once you create a free account.
- [Pocket](#)
- [GrabMyBooks](#)
Firefox and Android.
"GrabMyBooks is a firefox plugin that allows you to grab content from the web and easily convert it in an ePub file fully compatible with your reader." Note: weblinks are NOT live; you can edit as you go, i.e. adding your own notes/context.
- [Send to Kindle](#)
This works on some files that won't work with Instapaper - the file is immediately converted and sent directly to your Kindle device; it will download automatically via wifi.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

About This Type of Ebook/Edoc Creator

Most of the tools on this page will provide you with basic ebooks for your own personal or professional use, but they will not provide anything close to professional ebook files, i.e. books for sale on an ebookstore.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

Browser-Based ePub and Mobi Converters

Your content will be temporarily on someone else's server - don't use these tools for proprietary or sensitive information! All of these services allow you to upload documents for conversion - don't click on any Download buttons!

- [2EPub \(Firefox\)](#)
"2EPUB allows you to convert PDF, doc and other types of documents & books to ePub format..." 25 MB limit.
- [EPub2Go \(Firefox\)](#)
Users without an account are limited to 2 MB; create an account to convert PDFs less than or equal to 30 MB; Only non-vector images are converted; Tables are not converted.
- [iiiConverter \(iPod Touch, iPhone and iPad\) \(Firefox\)](#)
Converts to EPUB - can be read on other EPUB-reading devices as well.
- [dotEPUB \(Chrome\)](#)
Converts individual articles, blog posts, etc. to EPUB and saves on your computer. Limited to 3 mb per article.

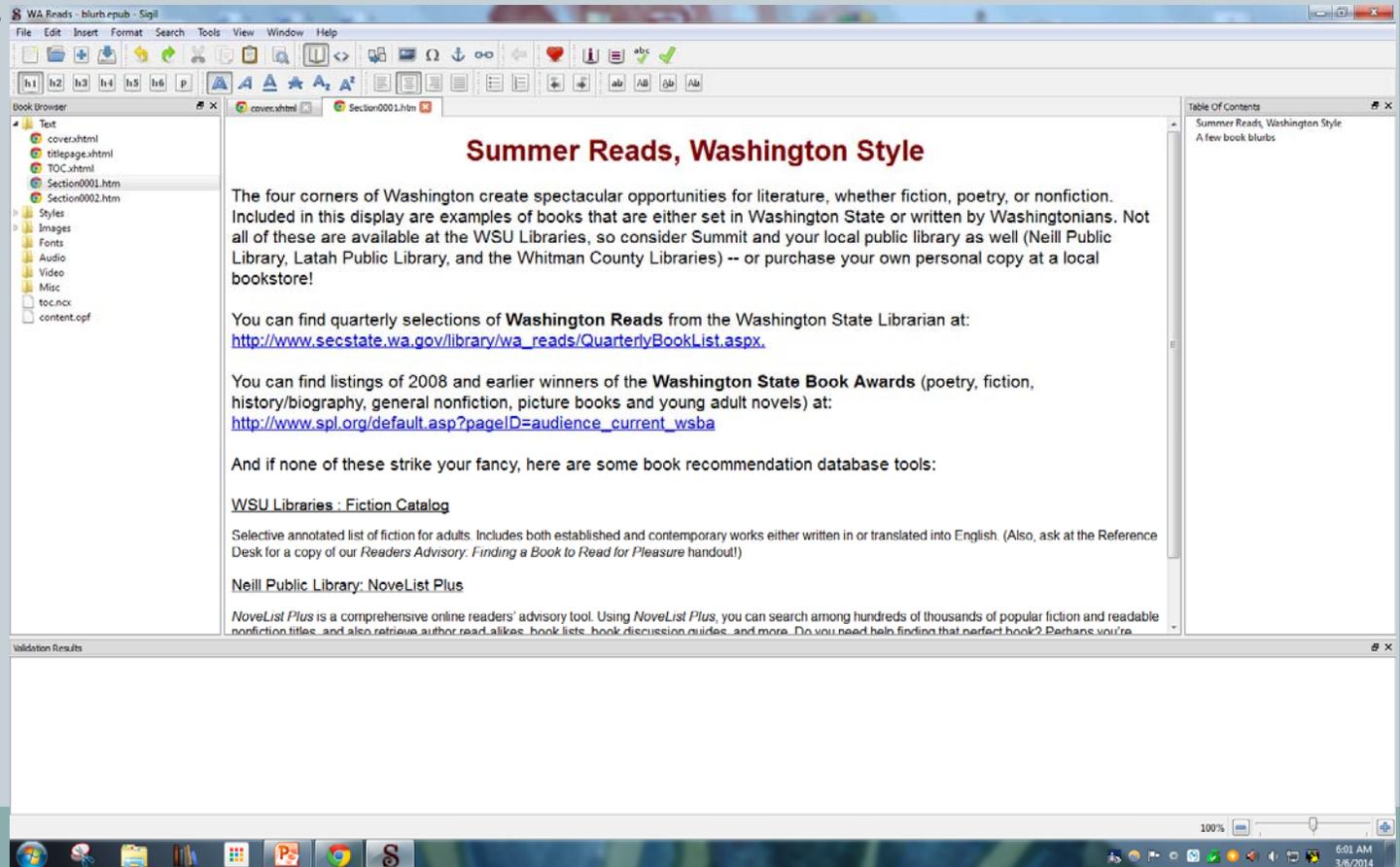
[Comments \(0\)](#)

Other Converters

- [Stanza Desktop](#)
Stanza also has apps for the iPhone/iPod Touch and iPad.
- [MobiPocket Reader/Creator](#)
The .Mobi format can be read by Kindles.
- [EasyReader/EasyProducer](#)
digital talking book creation and reading
- [How Can I Create EPUB Files for My Books \(via Stanza\)](#)
More options for creating/converting ebooks
- [Creating ePub Files with Pages \(Apple\)](#)
Can convert/create epub files
- [PdfMasher](#)
Free for the first 40 hours? Offers more granular PDF conversion options, including eliminating columns.
- [Scrivener \(\\$\)](#)
This software can be used for writing a novel, a script, or an academic paper. The convert-to-EPUB part is just a small piece of its functionality.
- [iBooks Author \(from](#)

Teaching the Class: Ebooks Part 2

- Using [Sigil](#) – “Free and open source software under GPLv3; Multi-platform: runs on Windows, Linux and Mac”



The screenshot displays the Sigil e-reader application window. The title bar reads "WA Reads - blurb.epub - Sigil". The interface includes a menu bar (File, Edit, Insert, Format, Search, Tools, View, Window, Help), a toolbar with various editing and navigation icons, and a "Book Browser" sidebar on the left. The main content area shows the text of a book chapter titled "Summer Reads, Washington Style". The text discusses literary opportunities in Washington and provides links to quarterly selections and award listings. A "Table Of Contents" sidebar is visible on the right. The bottom of the window shows a "Validation Results" pane and a Windows taskbar with the system clock at 6:01 AM on 3/6/2014.

WA Reads - blurb.epub - Sigil

File Edit Insert Format Search Tools View Window Help

Book Browser

- cover.xhtml
- titlepage.xhtml
- TOC.xhtml
- Section0001.htm
- Section0002.htm
- Styles
- Images
- Fonts
- Audio
- Video
- Misc
- toc.ncx
- content.opf

Summer Reads, Washington Style

The four corners of Washington create spectacular opportunities for literature, whether fiction, poetry, or nonfiction. Included in this display are examples of books that are either set in Washington State or written by Washingtonians. Not all of these are available at the WSU Libraries, so consider Summit and your local public library as well (Neill Public Library, Latah Public Library, and the Whitman County Libraries) -- or purchase your own personal copy at a local bookstore!

You can find quarterly selections of **Washington Reads** from the Washington State Librarian at:
http://www.secstate.wa.gov/library/wa_reads/QuarterlyBookList.aspx.

You can find listings of 2008 and earlier winners of the **Washington State Book Awards** (poetry, fiction, history/biography, general nonfiction, picture books and young adult novels) at:
http://www.spl.org/default.asp?pageID=audience_current_wsba

And if none of these strike your fancy, here are some book recommendation database tools:

WSU Libraries : Fiction Catalog

Selective annotated list of fiction for adults. Includes both established and contemporary works either written in or translated into English. (Also, ask at the Reference Desk for a copy of our *Readers Advisory: Finding a Book to Read for Pleasure* handout!)

Neill Public Library: NoveList Plus

NoveList Plus is a comprehensive online readers' advisory tool. Using *NoveList Plus*, you can search among hundreds of thousands of popular fiction and readable nonfiction titles, and also retrieve author read-alikes, book lists, book discussion guides, and more. Do you need help finding that perfect book? Perhaps you're

Table Of Contents

- Summer Reads, Washington Style
- A few book blurbs

Validation Results

100%

6:01 AM
3/6/2014

Sigil



- Can use to edit a previous document into ebook format (requires conversion to as-clean-as-possible HTML)
- Can use to create an ebook from scratch
- Creates and supports in EPUB2 format
- Edit in book view (WYSIWYG) and (with more control) in code view
- Has a community of users at [MobileReads](#)
- Can be used to create professional-quality ebooks – though that is not what we were doing

Creating Basic Ebooks

Last Updated: Mar 6, 2014 | URL: <http://libguides.wsulibs.wsu.edu/creatingbasicebooks> | [Print Guide](#) | [Email Alerts](#)

- Home
- What is an eBook?
- EDocuments
- The Cover
- Creating EBooks - 1
- Creating EBooks - 2
- Converting & Managing
- EBook Readers and EReading Apps
- Sharing EBooks
- Resources for Going Pro
- Me
- Demo Downloads

Creating EBooks - 2 [Comments\(0\)](#) [Print Page](#)

Search: This Guide

EPUB Validators

In order to make your ebooks available for sale/free in public marketplaces such as those operated by Amazon, Barnes & Noble, Apple, etc., your ebook must meet certain standards. To test your ebook, you will use a Validator. Sigil has a built-in validator, but you probably should (or will have to) test your book with an external validator and/or the validator associated with each particular ebookstore. Note: In this class we are making basic ebooks, not intended for distribution/sale through these sources, so validating is not as important.

- [epubcheck](#)
"EpubCheck is a tool to validate EPUB files. It can detect many types of errors in EPUB. OCF container structure, OPF and OPS mark-up, and internal reference consistency are checked. EpubCheck can be run as a standalone command-line tool or used as a Java library." From Smashwords [How to Fix epubcheck Errors](#)
- [International Digital Publishing Forum EPUB Validator \(beta\)](#)

[Comments \(0\)](#)

Sigil

Sigil can be used by beginners (like us!) but it is also used by professionals. We're focusing on free or low-cost tools; many professional ebook creators/publishers use Adobe InDesign (very expensive!).

- [Sigil](#)
- [Sigil Users Guide - online format](#)
- [Sigil Users Guide - in EPUB ebook form](#)
Includes tutorials to walk you through creating a Sigil ebook. Has more advanced material than we covered. Tutorials start [here](#); Useful tips start [here](#).
- [Mobilereads Sigil Forum](#)

[Comments \(0\)](#)

Resources for Further Study

The more you know HTML/XML coding and CSS (cascading style sheets) the better your ebooks and edocuments will be. If you want to sell or distribute your created ebook on a ebookstore like Amazon, iTunes or B&N, you *must* be proficient in these to be able to write code that will pass through ebookstores code validators.

- [W3Schools Online](#)
A great resource for learning HTML, CSS, etc.
- [Webmonkey - The Web Developer's Resource | Wired.com](#)
More on learning HTML, etc.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

Other Tools

- [iBooks Author](#)
Create ebooks optimized for the iPad/iPhone; supports multimedia
- [Scrivener \(\\$\)](#)
Can check it out with a free trial - can export writing to various formats, including MS Word, EPUB, and mobi.
- [Pages \(Apple\)](#)
- [Writer2EPUB and LibreOffice](#)
Writer2epub allows you to take any file created in (open source Word alternative) LibreOffice (or that can be read in LibreOffice) and convert it to EPUB. The file can then be edited in Sigil and converted to other ebook formats using Calibre.
- [ePubPack](#)
I haven't used this one, but it is a free, open source tool that will create an EPUB file from files in a folder. *Requires .NET framework 4.0*
- [eCub](#)
- [eCub Portable](#)
- [MobiPocket Reader/Creator](#)
"Create Content for PDA and Smartphone users" - this creates edocs and ebooks that can be read on a Kindle or using Kindle readers.

[Comments \(0\)](#)

Teaching the Class: Managing Your Ebooks

- Using [calibre](#)

About calibre

Features

History

Contact

Contributors

Press

calibre is a free and open source e-book library management application developed by users of e-books for users of e-books. It has a cornucopia of features divided into the following main categories:

- **Library Management**
- E-book conversion
- Syncing to e-book reader devices
- Downloading news from the web and converting it into e-book form
- Comprehensive e-book viewer
- Content server for online access to your book collection
- E-book editor for the major e-book formats

Included in class

calibre

- Viewed our ebooks created in Sigil (and discussed issues of how different devices display the same code)
- Used to convert created EPUB files to .mobi (for viewing on Kindle)
- Looked at metadata options within calibre, including genre, tags, ratings, series, etc. (mostly for personal use, vs Sigil metadata)
- Moved ebooks to devices; discussed use for managing all ebooks

The screenshot shows the Calibre Library application interface. The top toolbar includes icons for Add books, Edit metadata, Convert books, View, Get books, Fetch news, Help, Remove books, Calibre Library, Save to disk, Connect/share, and Preferences. Below the toolbar is a search bar and a list of ebooks. The left sidebar shows navigation options like Authors, Languages, Series, Formats, Publisher, Rating, News, Tags, and Identifiers. The main area displays a table of ebooks with columns for Title, Author(s), Size (MB), Rating, Tags, Series, Publisher, and My own Info. The first book, 'Pump Six and Other Stories' by Paolo Bacigalupi, is selected. A detailed view of this book is shown on the right, including its cover image and metadata.

#	Title	Author(s)	Size (MB)	Rating	Tags	Series	Publisher	My own Info
1	Pump Six and Other Stories	Paolo Bacigalupi	0.4		science fiction		Night Shade	
2	Zoo City	Lauren Beukes	0.9		africa, animalled, Fantasy, huron, pu...		Angry Robot	
3	Conspiracy	Lindsay Buroker	1.6		steampunk			
4	Encrypted	Buroker, Lindsay	0.4		Fantasy, indie, steampunk			
5	Flash Gold (a steampunk novella set in the Yukon) (The Flash G...	Buroker, Lindsay	0.2				Lindsay Buroker	
6	Hunted [The Flash Gold Chronicles]	Lindsay Buroker	0.4		indie, steampunk		Lindsay Buroker	
7	Graceling	Cashore, Kristin	0.5		Fantasy		Houghton Mifflin ...	
8	Learning Perspectives 2010	MASIE Center	3.9		teachingandlearning		Public Domain Books	
9	Pirate Cinema	Cory Doctorow	1.9		IP, tech		A Tom Doherty Ass...	
10	Your Guide To Google Analytics	Ryan Dube	2.8		google, tech			
11	The Civic Potential of Video Games (John D. and Catherine T. M...	Joseph Kahne;Ellen Middaugh;Chris Evans	0.7		Nonfiction, politics, tech, videogames		Public Domain Books	
12	Agatha H. and the Airship City	Phil Foglio; Kaja Foglio	0.4		Fantasy, Fiction, General, Humorous...		Night Shade Books	
13	Informing with the Case Method	Grandon Gill	3.7		Nonfiction			
14	Sigil User Guide - 0.6.0 draft	Dave Heiland	8.6		ebook, editor, EPUB, Sigil			
15	Young People, Ethics, and the New Digital Media: A Synthesis fr...	Carrie James	0.7		Nonfiction, tech		Public Domain Books	
16	The Secret World Chronicle	Mercedes Lackey	2.9		Mercedes Lackey, Nazi, superheroe...			
17	A Short History of EBooks	Marie Lebert	0.1		ebook			
18	Of Blood and Honey	Stina Leicht	0.6		Fantasy		Ford Street Publishi...	
19	Magic for Beginners	Kelly Link	0.5		Fantasy, science fiction, Short Fiction		Small Beer Press	

Title: Pump Six and Other Stories
Authors: Paolo Bacigalupi
Formats: MOBI
Tags: science fiction
Path: [Click to open](#)

The Classes



- **Campus Classes**

- Taught two, more to be scheduled (after rush of semester start and in future semesters – add as part of my ongoing HRS suite of classes)
- Quite successful!

- **Parks & Rec Community Classes**

- No interest for the first one (too early? People had barely received the class catalog mailed by the City of Pullman)
- One person for the second class...
 - ...but I caught the flu and had to cancel ☹

Reviews



- **Class participants**
 - People liked it and indicated they were likely to use the tools in their professional/personal lives
 - Wanted more on producing a better quality, more professional ebook (in an additional, advanced class)
 - Wanted more information on how to share ; share securely
- **Me**
 - Make a basic how-to handout for calibre
 - Make a basic how-to handout for the “read it later” services
 - Learn more myself so I could teach more advanced concepts in an advanced class
 - Add more resources to the LibGuide

Planned Sequels

- **Keep Offering the Classes**
 - Campus
 - Pullman Parks & Recreation – but schedule later in the season!
- **Expand My Knowledge Base**
(going beyond “Basic” to offer an Advanced class later)
 - More HTML, XML
 - CSS
 - Regular Expressions
- **Practice!**



Coda...



Questions? Contact me!

oenglish@wsu.edu

@wsulorena



Photo by author