

LOEX 2006
Moving Targets: Understanding our Changing Landscapes
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The theme of the conference included: changing needs of users, making assessment useful, coping with ethical issues, keeping up with change, and working with new technologies and environments.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER: Joan Lippincott, Associate Executive Director of the Coalition for Networked Information (CNI)

Re-thinking Information Literacy for Net Gen Students

Ms. Lippincott began her presentation with the typical description of the Net-Gen student, based on the Beloit College Mindset List. However, that's where the similarity to most other presentations on Net-Gens ended. She is an advocate of using our knowledge of the characteristics of Net-Gens to create techniques for achieving "deeper learning," a type of learning which is social, active, contextual, engaging and student-owned. She describes these students as concurrently blending their social and academic lives, physical and virtual worlds.

Some of the techniques for engaging Net-Gen students in "deeper learning" include:

1. Deeper learning is active; Net-Gen students are experiential. Use one of the personal response systems on the market periodically during a lecture to survey student understanding of the principles covered. To further self-discovery, follow-up by asking students to turn to their neighbor and try to convince him/her of the correctness of their answer.
2. Give students a sense of ownership while conducting an ongoing library services assessment by posting a "question of the week" on the library web site. Example: "Which style of library chair do you like the best?"
3. Offer the "assignment calculator" on your web site.
4. Net-Gens don't read the instruction manual. They learn by doing. Start an instruction session by immediately having them search for information on their topics and then share their experience. This is the essence of the scientific method.
5. Provide resources for their PDAs.
6. Deeper learning is contextual and locally owned; students are producers and consumers. Libraries should provide opportunities for students to not only access information, but to create and produce it by providing access to multimedia products and work space in which to use them. Include instruction on intellectual property.

7. Deeper learning is engaged; Net-Gens are visual. Install Grokker on public computers so that students can take advantage of information mapping.
8. Use a screen in the lobby to feature digital products available in the library.
9. Create screen savers that “advertise” library resources.
10. Develop digital information literacy games and offer virtual rewards.
11. Deeper learning is social; Net Gens are always connected and group oriented. Host blogs, wikis, Myspace, Facebook, podcasts, social bookmarking tools; provide presentation practice rooms.
12. Explore new areas of instruction: information policy issues, intellectual property, privacy, visual literacy.
13. Create an information commons. They promote the connection between library content and services, technology, and learning. Provide content, services, and technology to support learning and new types of student work
14. Libraries can accomplish these changes by:
 - Hiring/training new types of staff
 - Working in teams with students
 - “Reverse mentoring”
 - Experimenting, piloting
 - Adopting, adapting
 - Doing research, assessment
 - And letting go...

BREAKOUT SESSIONS:

Online Knowledge Surveys as a Means of Library Instruction Assessment Steven Baumgart and Elizabeth Hassemer, University of Wisconsin

The presenters teach in an instruction classroom with 21 computers. They created their own online web based assessment instrument using a locally created software program, “UW Do IT, although any other survey software, such as Survey Monkey, Zoomerang, or Survey Solution Express could be used. They see the following advantages to using an online survey administered one or two questions at a time throughout an instruction session:

- Engages students
- Encourages full participation
- Instructor knows immediately what everyone did and did not understand
- Gives students space to process information
- Instructors can tailor classes on the fly to what the students show they do not understand
- Connects students to the technology
- Easy collection of data
- Can include a fill-in question, such as “What was your biggest ‘aha’ moment?”

Example: Stop at the appropriate point in an instruction session and have students answer a question in the online survey requiring them to analyze three citations and pick

the most relevant one to their topic. If a substantial number get the answer wrong, stop and discuss citation evaluation further.

Grains of Learning: Learning Objects and Library Instruction **Deborah Diller, Madison Area Technical College**

The speaker defined a learning object as a “chunk of learning,” the smallest unit of learning. In this context, a learning object is any digital process that serves as a building block to a whole learning experience. They are reusable, portable, web-enabled, and self-contained. They can be used as part of assessment, lectures, case-studies, and other learning interactions. Their variety serves many different learning styles.

Learning objects can be used in an instruction setting to pre-test the learner’s prior knowledge of the content, as a progress check after content has been presented, and for retesting to check application of skills.

It occurred to me that these same learning objects, instead of being web-based, could easily be used with a personal response system in the same way.

Some useful web sites suggested by the speaker are:

- Center for International Education
<http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/CIE/AOP/learningobjects.html>
- LoLa Exchange: Learning Objects, Learning Activities
<http://www.lolaexchange.org/>
- Multimedia Educational Resource for Learning and On-Line Teaching (MERLOT) <http://cats.merlot.org/Home.po>
- Wisc-Online <http://www.wisc-online.com/default.asp>

Let the Games Begin!: Changing Our Instruction to Reach Millennials! **Bee Gallagos, Tammy Allgood, Karen Grondin, Aaron Rostad, and Marisa Duarte** **Arizona State University**

The ASU presenters reported on several activities they have created to promote information literacy to their students.

1. Learning objects called WebQuests for their first-year Learning Communities. They focus on the differences between open web searches and subscription database searches. They are linked to specific courses and assigned by the instructor. You can view them at <http://library.west.asu.edu/learning/webquest/> . They are very similar to a short online tutorial.
2. Fletcher’s Great Library Race gets students, working in teams, out into the library to acquaint themselves with library as physical and virtual space. The activity is outlined at <http://library.west.asu.edu/subjects/eng/WAC101.html> .
3. A similar activity was translated into the locally created board game “Race Through the Library.” It focuses more heavily on resources rather than the library as place. The lesson plan incorporating this group activity is found at <http://library.west.asu.edu/subjects/ENG/eng101.html> .

4. ASU librarians plan to not only revise the board game, but create an online version for Fall 2006. All of these games appear to require a great deal of manpower and money. The board game looks very much like any commercially produced board game; they have about six copies of it so that classes can be broken down into small groups.

Finding the Inner Gamer in You: Adapting Instruction for Digital Natives
Robin Ewing, St. Cloud State University and Justine Martin, Minnesota State University, Mankato.

This interesting presentation was not about creating games to teach information literacy, but focused on applying the gaming techniques that attract today's students so our instruction. The learning style of the gamer thrives on:

- They are millennials – they must be engaged in order to learn
- Informal instruction – gamers resist formal instruction
- Trial and error – they have no fear of failure; they just start over
- Peer learning – they are very social
- Just-in-time – point of need instruction

They are motivated more by the promise of fun than by the technology. Engagement is more important to them than context.

The features of engrossing games

- Flow – they are in the moment and totally absorbed
- Rules & goals – they get immediate feedback
- Challenge – there is suspense and surprise
- Control – the responsibility rests with the player
- Fantasy – they have the freedom of being detached from reality

The benefits of gaming include the fact that it is interactive, participative, and requires the ability to interpret multiple elements at the same time.

So how does all this apply to library instruction? Here are some ideas for teaching to the inner gamer:

- Integrate narrative - encourage students to experiment rather than lecturing
- Power ups – give them an unexpected tool, such as showing them truncation symbols
- Feedback & reflection – help them make connections between what they did and why the results happened, and to rethink the original strategy when necessary.

H-ITT Me With Your Best Shot: Implementing Classroom Response Systems
Debbi Renfrow, University of California at Riverside

I attended this session because I use the PRS classroom response system in my teaching and hoped to get some new ideas for ways to use it. The speaker offered the following list of products, with links to the appropriate web sites:

- Hyper-Interactive Teaching Technology: <http://www.h-itt.com>
- CPS Higher Education Online: <http://www.einstruction.com>
- IML Question Wizard: http://www.iml.ltd.uk/question_wizard.htm
- Interactive Presenter: <http://www.interactivepresenter.com>
- InterWrite PRS student transmitters:
<http://www.gtcocalcomp.com/interwriteprs.htm>
- Qwizdom Q4 Student Transmitters: <http://www.qwizdom.com>
- Reply Systems: <http://www.replysystems.com>
- Turning Point: <http://www.turningtechnologies.com/inputdevices.htm>

The speaker suggested using the system for assessment, which I already do. However, she also suggested asking a question at the end of a discussion of one topic or sub-topic, simply to see if the students “get it” at a point where you can still go back and reteach unclear concepts. Another suggestion was to ask a question and then divide students into pairs, asking each one to try to convince their partner that their answer is correct. This will build critical thinking skills and hopefully enable them to see how successful students think their way through the choices they make.

Advantages of using classroom response systems are:

- Because answers can be anonymous, students are not inhibited by shyness or fear of failure.
- They are fun, appealing to the millennial mindset
- They are interactive, also appealing to the millennial mindset
- They enable the instructor to quickly gauge student understanding
- Seeing the cumulated responses on the screen generates interesting discussion

Summary

This was the best LOEX conference I have attended. The keynote speakers and the breakout sessions were of uniformly high quality and covered a wide enough variety of topics to appeal to everyone. I appreciate the help that LIBRAS gave me so that I could attend.