

Unit 6 Evaluating a learning website

Teacher's notes

Preparation

Before you use this lesson plan:

- Make one copy of each worksheet per student.
- Visit the proposed websites to check they are operational.

Warmers

Short (5 minutes)

Ask the students if they have ever taken an online course. If they haven't, would they consider taking one? What are the advantages and disadvantages of studying online?

Long (10 – 15 minutes)

Divide the students into small group. If possible, have at least one person with online learning experience in each group. Ask them to brainstorm the criteria they would use to decide whether a learning website is good or not. Ask them to divide their criteria into three categories: design, technical, content. After the brainstorming collect the ideas on the board. They should include the elements listed in the Task 1 research table.

Set the scene

(5 minutes)

Ask the students to read the *situation*. Explain that they are each going to look at one website in order to describe elements of it and to rate those elements from A to E: A means excellent and E means very poor.

Present the tasks

(5 minutes)

Explain the procedure:

- 1 Divide into small groups or pairs. Allocate one website per group or pair
- 2 Use the website to research and collect information, and describe and rate the elements; fill in the table.
- 3 Give their findings in the form of a short presentation.

Do the tasks

Research (20 minutes)

- If computers are available, allocate one to each small group or pair and let the students do their research.
- If computers are not available, set the research as homework to be performed at home or during free time at work. Emphasise to the students that they do not need to spend more than about 20 minutes collecting information.

Presentations (10 minutes preparation, 5 minutes for each presentation)

After the research, the research groups or pairs prepare their short presentations. Encourage them to use some of the phrases from the language box in Task 2. After the presentations, write the categories on the board and collect any of the elements from the three websites that the students had rated as A or B. If there is time, this information can be used to produce a draft specification to show the client.

Unit 6 Evaluating a learning website

Aims

- talking about website design
- presenting opinions

Situation

You work for a website design company. You have been asked to prepare a proposal for a new client. The client is a language school that specialises in teaching English to business people. They would like to have an online course to support their classroom teaching. You have decided to look at similar products in order to find out what you think works well and what does not.

Tasks

- 1 You are going to research online language courses on the Web.
- 2 You are going to present a short report explaining what you think is good practice for this type of online product.

Task 1 – the research

These websites will give you access to demonstrations of online language learning materials. Your teacher will tell you which one to research.

English Maze

<http://www.englishmaze.com/main/home.html>

Click on one of the light blue boxes labelled *Business English* then click on the free unit.

You can now explore the activities.

Linguarama Direct

http://www.linguarama.com/direct_demo/_welcome.html

Click on the *Forward* arrow in the bottom right of the window to start. On the next screen, click on *Core Units* and then *Present Simple and Continuous*. You can explore the unit using the *Forward* button or the menu on the left.

Vancouver English Centre – BULATS test preparation

http://vec.intuto.com/pub_BULATS.aspx

Scroll to the bottom of the page and click on *Free Demo*. You can explore the unit by clicking the *Page Forward* buttons or by clicking on the menu on the left.

Fill in the table.

Write a short description of each element in the table. Describe any problems you had and anything you really liked. Give each element a rating: A = excellent; B = good; C = ok; D = poor; E = terrible.

Website			
	Element	Description	Rating A - E
Design	Navigation		
	Usability		
	Presentation of information		
	Style of presentation		
Content	Useful		
	Interesting		
	Up-to-date		
Technical	Loading speed		
	Operation of plug-ins		
	Compatibility with browser		
		Overall rating	

Task 2 – presenting a report

Use some of the phrases in the language box to present your report on the website you researched.

We rated as excellent/ok/poor because ...
 The style of presentation was appropriate/not appropriate for business people because . . .
 The content was extremely/not very useful/interesting. One example was ...
 The website loaded quickly/slowly.
 We had a problem with ...
 We really liked ...
 We didn't like ...
 Our overall rating for this website is ...