LIBR 287- Information Literacy

Screencast and Reflection –

Using NoveList K-8 Plus at Berkeley Public Library

Melissa Eleftherion Carr

July 5, 2012

**Screencast & Reflection - Using NoveList K-8 Plus at Berkeley Public Library**

<http://screencast.com/t/eLodsyAKG>

As a newly employed Children’s Library Assistant at Mill Valley Public Library (MVPL), I receive many diverse reader’s advisory questions and requests for recommended titles from parents, educators, and students for the K-8 set. In the few short weeks of my employment, I have observed/participated in numerous reference transactions that were prematurely truncated or required further assistance due to a combination of an overloaded reference staff and an abundance of complex RA questions that required further research.

Creating a screencast to guide users through the process of accessing NoveList K-8 through MVPL seemed like an opportune tool to aid users in their search. Yet, I was conflicted because it raised concerns about whether NoveList might be erroneously perceived by patrons as a stand-in for a librarian performing reader’s advisory, and how those misguided perceptions might adversely affect a loyal and recurrent patron base that is currently and historically print-based. However, I concluded that NoveList is simply another useful tool that parents, educators, students, and librarians can employ to best serve their resource needs, and that it does not pose a threat to the visual and tactile learning environment of MV children’s library.

My focus for the screencast was to guide users through the process of finding a book recommendation from NoveList K-8 based on interest by genre, as well as how to check for availability in the library catalog. My goal was to familiarize patrons with NoveList K-8 as a way to aid their search as well as provide them with a starting point for accessing children’s library resources remotely. I eventually chose to create a screencast for using NoveList K-8 through Berkeley Public Library (BPL) due to logistical access issues with MVPL as a new library user/worker and non-resident. I am planning to recreate the screencast for use at MVPL in coming months.

As a children’s library resource, I attempted to keep the screencast as simple as possible as a way to engage children and adults at various learning stages and avoid cognitive overload. I drafted a script based on the procedural steps involved in accessing NoveList K-8 through BPL, and inserted vocal pauses to allow time for users to process an instruction or concept before moving on to the next step or learning phase. As Tempelman-Kluit (2006) states, “by providing time between each segment, the instructional designer affords the learner the ability to process the information at hand before proceeding.” (p. 368) Unfortunately, due to Jing’s limited editing capabilities, I was unable to use these pauses as opportunities for user interactivity, which might have promoted transfer and higher –order critical thinking skills. The use of short quizzes or worksheets to summarize learning segments can facilitate transfer and serve as a bridge for users to shift to a new learning phase which allows them to retain more information.

Chodock & Dolinger (2009) stress the need for “simple and intuitive instruction” in their third principle of Universal Design as a way to appeal to learners at myriad stages. (p. 29) I “minimized the use of library jargon” (Cox & Housewright, 2001 as quoted in Reece, 2007), and also “eliminated unnecessary complexity” by refraining from tedious or rapid scrolling, as well as using the cursor solely for pointing to pertinent links throughout the screencast. I also used verbal signage as a way to help orient viewers by using phrases like “this is NoveList’s homepage” and “now we’re in the library catalog.”

In future screencasts, I would like to include captions and/or text boxes to visually present the narration as a way to “use active learning methods that engage multiple senses…and present information in multiple formats.” (Chodock, 2007, p. 27) This option was not available with the free version of Jing. Utilizing visual and verbal indicators employs the contiguity principle, which “asserts that when images and text are provided close together, connections linking the two types of information will be made more easily and mental models leading to meaningful learning will occur.” (Tempelman-Kluit, 2006, p. 366)

While I tried to compensate for this lack in my screencast by pairing place narration with visual cues like highlighting or pointing to said place on the screen, I recognize that there are several improvements I could make to facilitate “meaningful learning.” Including more concept-based instruction would help familiarize users with similar databases and build their confidence with experimenting with new technologies.

Despite my awareness, I found it difficult to avoid procedural teaching in my screencast due to the unique features of NoveList and my goal to simplify instruction to reach an all-ages audience at various stages of learning. After viewing additional sample screencasts, I recognize that there are numerous improvements I can make to help make my screencast more watchable and more useful.

Overall, I am pleased with the way the visual/verbal pairing of narration and animation present instruction in two or more ways, and hope this helps users retain information when accessing NoveList remotely. For future screencasts, I will consider using Camtasia for easier PowerPoint import and user interactivity.

References

Chodock, T., Dolinger, E., & O'Connor, L. (2009). Applying universal design to

information literacy: teaching students who learn differently at Landmark College. *Reference and user services quarterly*, *49*(1), 24-32.

Reece, G. J. (2007). Critical thinking and cognitive transfer: Implications for the development of online information literacy tutorials. *Research Strategies, 20*. 482 –

493.

Tempelman-Kluit, N. (2006, July). Multimedia learning theories and online instruction. *College & Research Libraries, 67*(4), 364-369.

**LIBR 287 Information Literacy**

**Summer 2012 Holschuh Simmons**

**Screencast assignment**

**Practice screencast due Wednesday, 6/13 via D2L dropbox**

**Instructional screencast with reflection due Thursday, 7/5 (delayed one day due to the holiday) via D2L dropbox**

**15% of final grade**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The project includes the following components:** | **Comments** |
| **Screencast:** The author explains a process or describes how to use a tool clearly, and the explanation is appropriate for the author’s chosen audience. | Great topic—you might consider using this topic for your instruction session too. |
| **Screencast:** The author has rehearsed the screencast sufficiently so that it is professionally done, both visually and aurally. Additionally, the screencast is less than five minutes in length. | Nice pacing, good voice, friendly tone. |
| **Screencast:** The author “frames” the lesson with objectives at the beginning, signposts throughout, and a brief review at the end. | Nice way to start and end with a ppt and explain how this screencast fits with others. |
| **Screencast:** The author displays a deliberate consideration of learning theory in the way that the screencast is organized and presented. | Nice systematic explanations. |
| **Reflection:** The reflection indicates substantial thought and consideration about the pedagogical decisions involved in creating the screencast, and it includes at least one reference to the literature. | Lots of smart applications of the learning theories. |
| **Written and spoken presentation:** The author demonstrates a facility with the conventions of written and spoken English. | Nicely done |
| **Total** | **30/30 (15% of final grade)** |

Great job, Melissa! Your screencast is really professionally designed and produced, and your reflection is thoughtful and smart. Thanks for your excellent efforts. I hope you hold onto this assignment for Comp K (teaching), Comp H (technology), and perhaps others for your eportfolio.