

Week One Assignment: Digital Citizenship in the K-12 Classroom

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Learning Objects

As any instructor or teacher can attest, a considerable amount of time is spent creating learning experiences for students. The dual goals of presenting information in a clear and logical manner *and* making it engaging combine to create a challenging task. If a particular segment of this instruction can be reused or applied to a number of situations, veritable teacher gold will have been struck. This, in essence, is a learning object.

As Piskurich noted in 2006, learning objects are “small, discrete pieces of training that are reusable in a number of different circumstances” (p. 299). For example, a teacher might create a learning object to instruct middle school students on the basics of summarizing text: main ideas, shorter version, in your own words – that sort of thing. The learning object, safely stored on the teacher’s hard drive or posted on a class website, can be pulled out in a moment’s notice for use with different grade levels or subject areas. Piskurick (2006) also stated that learning objects are typically general and simple enough so as to be useful in a range of applications.

Needs Analysis Summary

In the last 15 years, the use of computers and the Internet in K-12 classrooms has revolutionized the way people teach and learn. Presently, in modern schools, technology is no longer just in the hands of instructors; children find themselves with access (both in school and outside of school) to the world through their devices. Therein lies the need – teaching young people to participate online in a safe, polite, and positive manner.

As Searson, Hancock, Soheil, and Shepherd wrote in 2015, digital citizenship describes a person’s behavior while engaged in online, interactive tools such as computers and smartphones.

The desire to promote positive, responsible, and safe online behavior for children has precipitated the movement for schools to train students in digital citizenship.

What does it mean to be a digital citizen? In 2017, the International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) provided the industry standard in terms of what knowledge and skills are required for students to be responsible digital citizens. The list includes:

- effectively utilizing the information found online
- safe, legal, and ethical online behavior
- understanding and respecting copyright laws
- maintaining digital privacy and security

One important positive was found during the needs analysis. First, while many teachers did not grow up in the online world, the students have. This means they are more comfortable and aware of the potential dangers that exist in cyberspace. It is much like a person who grew up in the woods would be more alert to the dangers found in the wilderness than a person who grew up in the suburbs. Our students are digital experts.

The Need for the Learning Object

In general, there exists a need for all students to learn about proper interaction in the virtual world. This need becomes even more critical for teachers who plan to utilize technology with greater frequency – for example, many teachers in this program. In addition, it would be imprudent for an educator to ask students to interact and explore digitally without providing them with the proper knowledge, guidelines and support. Teachers will not only help their students but will also inhibit classroom issues that might arise with irresponsible student computer use. The learning object will be reusable and relevant in many different situations and will provide an excellent standard against which students can measure their actions online.

Target Audience

The audience for the learning object will be high school students, ages 15-18. They bring considerable experience with online devices which means that basic information can potentially be skipped for more detailed knowledge. To access the learning object, the audience will need a device connected to the internet, preferable a computer. (Smartphones would be OK, but in schools today the phone is more of a personal device for social purposes and not typically used for work.)

The audience will likely be interested in the topic as long as the learning object offers them new and relevant information. Much of the content-specific terminology will be known by the audience, with the possible exception of legislation regarding copyright laws. As Lee and Owens pointed out, audience analysis lends itself, unfortunately, to making assumptions about the learners without valid evidence (2004). One means of overcoming this issue could be a class survey given to students at the start of a school year to assess their prior knowledge of digital citizenship.

Objective Analysis Summary

The learning object created for EDT 607 is to be a small segment of a larger course on digital citizenship that will include topics such as cyber safety, responsibility, legality, and ethics. For the purpose of this assignment, the learning object will focus on research skills required to quickly find and verify online resources. According to Lee and Owens (2004), performance objectives are “five-part objectives that eventually make up the terminal and lesson objectives” (p. 48).

Performance Objectives:

- 1) At the completion of the lesson, students will be able to identify strategies for effectively finding accurate information on the World Wide Web by verbally listing five search tips found in the lesson.
- 2) When given sample search scenarios, students will be able to demonstrate one or more of the search strategies by applying them to find the desired result in one minute or less.

Terminal Objectives:

- 1) At the completion of the lesson, you will identify effective online search strategies.
- 2) When given sample search scenarios, you will demonstrate effective search strategies.

Lesson Objectives:

- 1) At the completion of the lesson, students will verbally list five search tips from ideas found in the lesson.
- 2) Given sample search scenarios, students will apply effective search strategies to find the desired results in one minute or less.

References

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