



Paper Websites

by Paul Walsh

Focus: Critical thinking, Tinkering, Group work

Language: Vocabulary to evaluate websites

Activity: Evaluating websites/ creating group website/ peer-evaluation

Level: All Levels.

Time: 90+ minutes (can be extended across two or more lessons)

Materials: Paper, Card, Pens (optional internet connection)



Preparation

Prepare a list of three websites that you want the learners to review. Choose two themes for the websites, e.g. supermarket websites, music download websites. It's a good idea to choose an excellent website, a mediocre one and a bad one.

If you have an internet connection: put people in small groups, pairs or threes work well on one computer or laptop. At the start of the class, make sure that everyone can connect to the net.

If you don't have an internet connection - that's no problem. Take a few screenshots from the three websites you have prepared (home page and one other page perhaps) and print them (if you have time you can laminate them). My favourite screenshot tool is [Paint.net](http://www.getpaint.net/).

Procedure

1. Introduce the topic of 'website evaluation'. What makes a good website? Brainstorm items.
2. Tell learners that they are going to review 3 websites.
3. Give them the rubric for reviewing websites and explain how they are going to rate their websites. The websites can be on any theme - I gave my group the choice of 'supermarket websites' or 'dating websites'. Guess which one they chose?
4. Go through the following vocabulary to describe websites:
it looks....., clear, user-friendly, easy to use/ navigate, etc.), crowded, professional, eye-catching, appealing, well-designed, well-laid out.

Also go over words and phrases to talk about quantity or intensity:
quite, rather, a little, really, too, (not) very, extremely, -ish (e.g. amateurish) etc.

5. Give out the task sheet where they will write their scores and write down notes about the websites. They will review the categories of Content, Layout, Graphics and Navigation. Give each category a score out of four (four is the best); that gives a top score of 16.
6. *If you have an internet connection:* learners go to the three sites and review them.

If you don't have an internet connection there are two possibilities:



i) Give each group the photos (that you prepared earlier) of one website. Then they discuss and fill in their rubric form. After a certain period of time (you decide), they 'pass' these pictures to another group. So the pictures of the websites 'circulate' round the classroom.

ii) Give each group ALL the photos showing the three websites. You might want to clearly mark the websites if it's not obvious. To save time and photocopying, they could just review the home page of each site.

7. Learners write down notes, discuss together and decide on scores for each website.

8. Feedback in open class. What were the good features and bad features of each website?

9. Tell learners that:

Now you know what makes a good (supermarket) website, and a bad website. You're going to use this information to design your own website. Try and improve on the websites you have reviewed.

Brainstorming

10. Give learners 10-15 minutes to just come up with ideas for their website. They should:

- talk about what basic elements they are going to have on their website
- make a visual representation of their website (on a piece of A3 paper)
- think of some special/ key features their website will have (e.g. slideshow, twitter feed)

11. Learners present their designs to the group. Other groups can ask questions, point out good and bad points.

12. Draw a 'button' on the whiteboard with 'Click' written on the button. Ask - what's interesting about this? Why do you want to know more? Elicit responses.

Answer: because behind every button on a website is a surprise. Like Christmas. Remember this for the next stage.

13. Tell learners are going to make a 'paper website' - a visual representation of their website. They are only allowed to use card, paper and tape to make their paper websites.

14. VERY IMPORTANT! Show learners examples of previous paper websites to give them an idea of what to do.

15. Give learners 35-45 minutes to create their finished website.



16. Learners then go round using the same criteria as in stage 5 and review each other's websites.

17. Add up the scores and award prize for the best paper website!

Follow up

Now that learners have created their website there are several ways to follow up the activity and create some integrated tasks:

Paper University websites: Have a 'fair' (e.g. university fair for prospective students). Learners go round asking questions to each group and then choose one 'university they'd like to speak to.

Paper Business websites: Learners have to come up with a marketing strategy to promote their product, or to break into a 'new' market.

Images

'Just Eat It'- Mama Jo's Food Transportation & Logistics Paper Website. TH Wildau, October 2014. Copyright Paul Walsh.



Category	4	3	2	1
Content	The site has a well-stated clear purpose and theme that is consistent throughout the site	The site has a clearly stated purpose and theme, but may have one or two elements that seem unrelated or superfluous.	The purpose and theme of the site is a little unclear or vague.	The site lacks a purpose and theme.
Layout	The Web site has an exceptionally attractive and usable layout. It is easy to locate all important elements. White space, graphic elements and/or alignment are used effectively to organize material	The Web pages have an attractive and usable layout. It is easy to locate all important elements	The Web pages have a usable layout, but may appear crowded or not user-friendly. It is easy to locate most of the important elements.	The Web pages are cluttered looking or confusing. It is often difficult to locate important elements.
Graphics	Graphics are related to the theme/purpose of the site, are unique and interesting, are of high quality and enhance reader interest or understanding	Graphics are related to the theme/purpose of the site, are of good quality and enhance reader interest or understanding.	Graphics are related to the theme/purpose of the site, and are of good quality.	Graphics seem randomly chosen, are of low quality, OR distract the reader.
Navigation	Links for navigation are clearly labelled, consistently placed, allow the reader to easily move from a page to related pages (forward and back), and take the reader where s/he expects to go. The user does not become lost.	Links for navigation are clearly labelled, allow the reader to easily move from a page to related pages (forward and back), and internal links take the reader where s/he expects to go. The user rarely becomes lost.	Links for navigation take the reader where s/he expects to go, but some needed links seem to be missing. A user sometimes gets lost.	Some links do not take the reader to the sites described. A user typically feels lost.

*rubric adapted from 'Website Evaluation Rubric' by Deborah Kalkman, 2003, using [RubiStar](#).

TASK

You are going to evaluate 3 websites and give them a score out of four categories: Content, Layout, Graphics and Navigation. Please make notes in the table below – you will also be given a rubric which tells you how to rate the websites (4 is the best, 1 is the worst).

Website	Content	Layout	Graphics	Navigation
1				
2				
3				