

Searching for and Managing Educationally Relevant Materials

Product Link: <http://groups.diigo.com/group/eme5050/content/user/REDACTEDUSERNAME>

Through my completion of the structured learning activity this week, I was able to enhance my ability to efficiently search the World Wide Web. I was also able to learn newer and more effective methods for storing and sharing the educational materials that I discover online. I enjoyed exploring new resources and learning from my peers this week. This activity impacted me in many ways. The most constructive effects of this activity were on my web search efficacy, simplifying the management of my online resources and learning how to share the resources with my peers in the Educational community.

This activity enlightened me as to how much I still need to improve upon my search habits. I definitely want to spend more instructional time teaching my students how to effectively search the web. The search engine and subject directory resources provided in the module this week were useful tools for practicing some new search techniques. I had never really believed that subject directories could be as useful as web searches, but I found many valuable resources through subject directories this week and I intend to continue using them in the future. The search tips provided by Dr. Thompson as links through Hootcourse also enriched my web search competency. I plan to share some of these resources with my students. I found the web-module for "Maximizing Google Scholar Searches" particularly useful, as I have had past frustrations with trying to locate appropriate research studies. I have been exploring Google Scholar more this week than I had in the past and I have been trying to improve my searches. I plan to utilize Google Scholar more frequently now that I have a better understanding of how to effectively search scholarly resources.

Another learning gain I made this week was successfully storing and managing web resources in new platforms. I had always relied on saving web resources through browser bookmarking and saving web pages and documents to my USB drive. I had never heard of Diigo before this course and I knew very little about bookmarking alternatives. I also thought that websites similar to Diigo would be too time consuming. My misconceptions were disproved this week. After downloading the “diigolet” toolbar, I enjoyed highlighting, annotating and bookmarking new web resources. It took very little time and the stored websites are easy to browse and edit once in Diigo. It will be easy to refer back to Diigo when looking for information and resources. I have also begun to explore other bookmark management websites and will continue to develop my practice of web bookmarking.

The best part of the assignment this week was the social aspect of bookmarking. I do not have much experience with sharing web bookmarks. I did realize that I had been socially bookmarking through Twitter and through Pinterest to some extent. It was beneficial to focus the bookmarking this week on the Educational field. I enjoyed obtaining resources from my peers and being able to share them in our class group. I certainly believe now that websites like Diigo are worthwhile for educators. Instead of searching the entire internet for educational resources, I can start by browsing or searching Diigo or other social bookmarking websites. For my blog this week, I reviewed a few other social bookmarking websites and found many exciting options. I started a class blog this year with my students, but I am also interested in trying social bookmarking with them. I could possibly have them bookmark current news stories and content links relevant to our units of study. I am definitely going to think more about implementing this idea.

While exploring the searching and bookmarking resources this week, I also became more experienced with the NETS-T standards. I reflected upon how to accomplish the second standard, to “Design and Develop Digital Age Learning Experiences and Assessments,” with the new resources

presented in this activity, particularly by considering plans for my students to use social bookmarking. In this course and during the completion of this project, we are achieving the third standard, "Modeling Digital Age Work and Learning." We are accomplishing the "Collaborate" and "Communicate" benchmarks for this standard by sharing our ideas and responding to each other's resources on Diigo. The copyright resources in this week's module improved our understanding of the fourth standard, to "Promote and Model Digital Citizenship and Responsibility." The social bookmarking of educational resources provided us experience with the fifth standard, to "Engage in Professional Growth and Leadership."

This week's activity forced me to reflect upon my web searching ability and to broaden my perspective on web bookmarking. I located some valuable resources that I can use for my professional growth and share with my students. I have begun to consider how to implement some of these resources in my classroom this year. Before I introduce Science Fair Experiment Research in my Science class, I am going to spend more time teaching my students how to effectively perform web searches and navigate research databases. I am going to continue to explore alternative social bookmarking resources and evaluate their potential for use by my students and in my own professional growth. As I become more comfortable with web searching and social bookmarking, the processes will become less time consuming and my stored amount of useful web resources will amplify.