

September 16, 2011
CI 175, Tues 12:30
Sanger Cohort

Multimedia Portfolio: Web Resources

PART ONE – WEBSITE REVIEW

Lower Elementary Standard

Science Content Standard: Grade 3 – Earth Sciences

4d. *Students know* that Earth is one of several planets that orbit the Sun and that the Moon orbits Earth.

The Solar System – Astronomy For Kids

http://www.kidsastronomy.com/solar_system.htm



Key Science Concepts: This website covers the key concepts of the linguistic origins of the planets' names, one's weight on each planet, the planets' physical characteristics, location in relation to the sun, temperature, size and moons (if they have any). There is also a section that contains information about asteroids and comets. Science concepts such as thermonuclear fusion, convection, and sunspots are also discussed.

Accessibility: This website is laid out clearly and really easy to navigate through. All of the links work and load quickly. The website even has a printer-friendly link that contains all the important information about the planets on a white background and without pictures.

Accuracy: The website and all its content are copyrighted to the KidsKnowIt Network which provides free educational materials on a number of different subjects and topics. This learning network began as an elementary teacher's classroom website and is now a worldwide platform which provides free learning sites for students and teachers.

Comment [NL1]: Excellent!
Very thoughtful reflection and critical analysis of the web sites!
Google Docs: 10 points
Total: 50 points

Comment [NL2]: May I use your assignment as an example in the future?

Comment [NL3]: 5 points

According to the Network's website each of its websites are heavily researched and developed for accuracy and appropriateness by parents and educators.

Appeal: The website is definitely very kid-friendly. The color scheme of the site is bright blue, yellow, green and purple with a graphic of the Milky Way on one side and a side bar that has stars and planets on the other side. Every page of the website has some sort of moving graphic, whether it is a spinning planet or an interactive solar system that links to the different subsections of the site. The site does contain advertisements underneath the search banner, but they are only text ads and don't distract from the content. The information looks accurate and unbiased, but the correctness of the content might still need to be checked.

Appropriate: As the title of the website suggests, the intended audience is kids and based on the content, language and style it is quite age-appropriate. Some of the topics such as "Thermonuclear fusion" seem like they are too high for third graders; but even so, they are explained in kid-friendly words. The site has fun facts (in the "Did you Know?" section) about each planet that provide challenging thoughts for students.

Grade: A

Science Content Standard: Grade 3 – Earth Sciences

4d. *Students know* that Earth is one of several planets that orbit the Sun and that the Moon orbits Earth.

Solar System Exploration: Planets

<http://solarsystem.nasa.gov/planets/index.cfm>

Comment [NL4]: 5 points



Key Science Concepts: This website has information on the planets (their characteristics, location, size and origin of their names), moons, asteroids, the Kuiper Belt, latest news and events, a record of space exploration missions, an interactive multimedia archive and timeline, a kid-friendly solar system subsection, games, and educational resources.

Accessibility: This website is laid out very logically and is easy to navigate. There are hundreds of links to different pages, all of which work and load quickly. Some of the pages and larger images take a second to load, but it is because they are high resolution and detailed.

Accuracy: This website is created by official NASA team members, which are quite reputable sources for information about space and planets. The website also contains an “Awards and Recognition” page that names the site development team and also gives key information on the development of the website.

Appeal: This site is adorned with deep purples, blues and yellows, which are all content appropriate colors. There are a lot of visually pleasing elements to this website as well as student drawn images. The website does not contain any external advertisements of any sort.

Appropriate: The kid-friendly solar system section of the website is very age-appropriate for third grade students. Not only does it provide all the content that students need to know in an appropriate reading level, but it also challenges learners by providing opportunities for critical thinking and reflection. The rest of the site may be a little over the students head, but it can provide wonderful information and articles for teachers and parents.

Grade: A+

Science Content Standard: Grade 3 – Earth Sciences

4d. *Students know* that Earth is one of several planets that orbit the Sun and that the Moon orbits Earth.

StarChild: A Learning Center for Young Astronomers

<http://starchild.gsfc.nasa.gov/docs/StarChild/StarChild.html>

Comment [NL5]: 5 points



Key Science Concepts: The key concepts of this website are the solar system, the sun, the planets, the Earth's moon, the dwarf planets, the asteroid belt, meteoroids and comets. Each of the planets' physical characteristics, size, color and special features are also studied on this site. This website also contains a "Teachers' Center" which has different activities and lesson plan ideas that can be downloaded.

Accessibility: This website is easy to navigate through, well organized and loads quickly. All of the links to different pages and remote sites work. It has a large and clearly labeled "Home" button.

Accuracy: This site was compiled and is managed by a team of people that have worked at NASA. Dr. Whitlock developed the StarChild site while she served as the Education and Outreach Director for the Laboratory for High Energy Astrophysics at NASA's Goddard Space Flight Center. The information on the site looks accurate and reliable when compared to the NASA website.

Appeal: The StarChild main page has a black background with very colorful buttons, links and pictures. The Level 1 solar system link has a dark bluish-purple background with different planets on it. While the site does not include any moving or interactive media, the pictures it does contain are very fun and colorful for kids.

Appropriate: This website has two different versions (Level 1 and Level 2) which are appropriate for lower elementary and upper elementary students, respectively. There is also a link to "Imagine the Universe" – a website that is appropriate for secondary students. The site provides an auditory feature, which reads the content to the students if they click on the megaphone link at the top of the page. This feature is very helpful for struggling readers or even for students that are auditory learners. The descriptions of the different planets in the Level 1 version are a little briefer, but more appropriate for third graders. Each page also contains a comprehension question that the students can answer after they have read the content on that page. This site is also a great resource for teachers because it contains a teachers' center in the "In the Classroom" link which has activities and lessons that can be used in the classroom in conjunction with the StarChild website information.

Grade: B+

Upper Elementary Standard

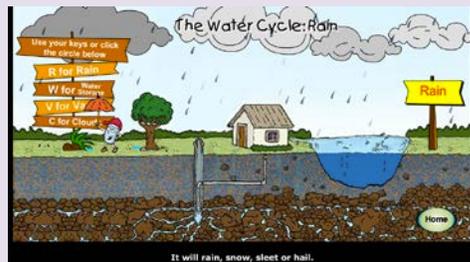
Science Content Standard: Grade 5 – Earth Sciences

3b. *Students know* when liquid water evaporates, it turns into water vapor in the air and can reappear as a liquid when cooled or as a solid if cooled below the freezing point of water.

Thirstin's Water Cycle

http://www.epa.gov/ogwdw/kids/flash/flash_watercycle.html

Comment [NL6]: 5 points



Key Science Concepts: The key science concepts from this website are rain, water storage, vapor, clouds as well as the key terms of the water cycle such as evaporation, condensation, precipitation, and transpiration.

Accessibility: This site is an interactive presentation of the water cycle. It is clearly and logically laid out. It is a single page without any links to remote sites, but there are linked menu items that will play different points of the cycle or an auto button that will go through the entire cycle. One can even use keys from the keyboard to make the site load different sections. This site loads quickly and works almost like a video clip.

Accuracy: The Thirstin's Water Cycle website is a subpage of the United States Environmental Protection Agency's website. Thirstin is the cartoon icon of a glass of drinking water that the EPA uses for the educational section of their website. Because of the government affiliation of the website, it seems like a reputable source for the content presented on this interactive site.

Appeal: This website is very colorful and visually appealing. Some of the graphics are slightly pixelated, but not very noticeable because of the video-like nature of the site. There are no advertisements or banners on the website.

Appropriate: The intended audience of the site is definitely elementary students. It might even be geared a little more toward lower elementary students, but the concepts and scientific vocabulary are appropriate for the fifth grade standard. The site has an auditory feature that tells the story of the water cycle but also provides closed captions

for visual learners. This would be a great way to introduce the concept of the water cycle to students.

Grade: B+

Science Content Standard: Grade 5 – Earth Sciences

3b. *Students know* when liquid water evaporates, it turns into water vapor in the air and can reappear as a liquid when cooled or as a solid if cooled below the freezing point of water.

The Water Cycle

<http://www.kidzone.ws/water/>



Comment [NL7]: 5 points

Key Science Concepts: The key science concepts presented by this website include: where drinking water came from, the water cycle, evaporation, transpiration, condensation, precipitation and collection.

Accessibility: It is easy to navigate through and loads quickly. All of the links and buttons work well. The site is laid out logically and each of the subsections are clearly labeled and separated.

Accuracy: This website is developed by a student with the help of her parents. The accuracy and credibility of the content should be checked, but it looks consistent with the other websites on the Water Cycle and it is the first website that comes up on Google when searching "The Water Cycle."

Appeal: The color scheme of the site is mainly blue, which is quite fitting for the water theme. It contains several full-color images that are visually appealing to students. Although the site does have an advertisement banner at the top of the page, it is not very distracting.

Appropriate: This website is made by a student (with the help of some adults) for students, and the content tone and reading level is appropriate for fifth graders. The style of the writing is very relaxed yet engaging and students will be able to relate to it.

There are even printable activity sheets at the bottom of the page that can be printed by students, parents or teachers and used to reflect and discuss the water cycle.

Grade: B

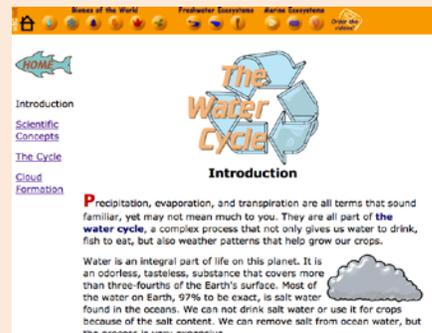
Science Content Standard: Grade 5 – Earth Sciences

3b. *Students know* when liquid water evaporates, it turns into water vapor in the air and can reappear as a liquid when cooled or as a solid if cooled below the freezing point of water.

What's it Like Where You Live?

<http://mbgnet.net/fresh/index.htm>

Comment [NL8]: 5 points



Key Science Concepts: The key science concepts from this site include: condensation, precipitation, evaporation, transpiration, water vapor, surface runoff, infiltration and cloud formation.

Accessibility: This website is not only very easy to navigate through, but it is also well organized and has plenty of information. The links associated with the page are in working order; there is a clearly labeled “home” button and the content of the site loads quickly.

Accuracy: This particular website is a subpage of the Missouri Botanical Garden website, thus making it more of a reputable source than something developed by a student. The information is detailed and balanced.

Appeal: Although the site is somewhat lacking an exciting color scheme, it does contain moving media as well as pictures and diagrams depicting the water cycle. The main Missouri Botanical Garden website has bright and vibrant colors. There is a ribbon at the top of the website that has icon links to subpages about the biomes of the world, freshwater ecosystems, and marine ecosystems. The website doesn't have any advertisements.

Appropriate: The content and the reading level on the website are appropriate for fifth grade students. While this website gives a lot of information, it presents the material in a kid-friendly tone and style that is engaging to the young reader.

Grade: A-

PART TWO – WEB QUEST REVIEW:

Science Content Standard: Grade 3 – Earth Sciences

4d. *Students know* that Earth is one of several planets that orbit the Sun and that the Moon orbits Earth.

Planet WebQuest

<http://olc.spsd.sk.ca/de/webquests/planetwq/webquest2.html>



Comment [NL9]: 5 points

Key Science Concepts: The key science concepts that are covered by this Web Quest are the solar system and all the planets in it, their physical size, characteristics, atmosphere, temperature, and moons. The WebQuest activity also connects the planets' information to different NASA missions.

Accessibility: This website is very thoughtfully put together. All of the sections of the site are clearly labeled, easily accessible, and load quickly. It is not only logically organized for teachers, but also for the third graders it is designed for.

Accuracy: The Planet WebQuest is an interactive lesson designed by teachers for a classroom setting and based on facts and information from other reputable websites such as StarChild, Astronomy for Kids, and EnchantedLearning.com. These websites are compiled and managed by either NASA members or people highly educated in this area of study. The WebQuest doesn't present any of the content information, it just provides the links to it.

Appeal: The site's night sky background and purple, yellow and blue color scheme is not only visually appealing but also very appropriate for the theme of the WebQuest. The

site also contains moving pictures of rockets blasting off and spinning planets all of which can capture young students' attention. Other than the embedded links to other website from which information can be gathered, there are no advertisements or banners on the site.

Appropriate: As the subheading of the WebQuest clearly states, the intended audience of the site is third grade students. The content, tone, style, task and activities on the site are developmentally engaging and appropriate for students that age. The concluding activity even connects science to language arts.

Grade: A+

Science Content Standard: Grade 5 – Earth Sciences

3b. *Students know* when liquid water evaporates, it turns into water vapor in the air and can reappear as a liquid when cooled or as a solid if cooled below the freezing point of water.

The Water Cycle: Introduction

<http://questgarden.com/62/58/7/080319140228/index.htm>

Comment [NL10]: 5 points



Key Science Concepts: This WebQuest site contains the science concepts of the hydrologic cycle (the water cycle), evaporation, condensation, precipitation, transpiration and also connects the science concepts into a writing project.

Accessibility: This website loads quickly and is organized in a logical order that is consistent with most WebQuests. All of the embedded links and resources work well and load quickly except for one, which redirects the user to the new site.

Accuracy: The information and resources of the WebQuest include reputable sights and sources such as the NASA website, Enchantedlearning.com, and the US Geological Survey website. The list of resources even includes a link of the water cycle translated into Spanish for English Learners.

Appeal: The WebQuest color scheme is mainly blue, green and yellow, which suits the overall purpose and design of the site. There is only one graphic on the whole WebQuest site, this slightly detracts from the site's appeal. The links that the students will be visiting, however, are all full of pictures and videos.

Appropriate: This website was made and modified to be appropriate fifth grade students studying the water cycle. The content and tone of the writing on the site is definitely appropriate for upper elementary students. This WebQuest is designed to take a week to complete. The task and process of the WebQuest are engaging for the learner, and the conclusion challenges learners with reflective as well as hypothetical questions to consider and answer. This is a very well rounded WebQuest!

Grade: A