

Web Connections in the Classroom

Honors Thesis Project
HONRS 499

By
Laura Gregg

Thesis Advisor
Glenn Peoples



Ball State University
Muncie, Indiana

April 1999

Expected date of graduation
May 1999

SpCo 1
Thesis
10
2089
.24
1997
.008

Purpose of Thesis

This discussion of Web connections in the classroom contains two parts: a sample classroom Web page on disk and a written discussion of the Web page. The sample Web page contains information and events of a fictional classroom, as well as links to other pages and sites. In order to open the program on disk:

- ❖ Go into Netscape
- ❖ Go to "File"
- ❖ Click on "Open Page"
- ❖ The file is called "Front Page."

The written portion of this project discusses the benefits of a classroom Web page, as well as steps to follow in creating a classroom Web page.

MISS GREGG'S CLASSROOM CONNECTION



Calendar:

a monthly calendar of school and classroom events to keep you on top of things!



News & Notes:

special announcements and reminders to be sure that you are never in the dark!



Assignments:

a list of daily assignments for every subject!



Activities & Links:

cool new links and activities for everyone to try!

Welcome! Our entire class is excited that you could visit our web site today. We hope that you find it to be interesting and useful! Please email us with any compliments or

suggestions!

Enjoy!



[Email Us...Click Here!](#)

Name of Pic

Miss Gregg's Class



April

<u>Sunday</u>	<u>Monday</u>	<u>Tuesday</u>	<u>Wednesday</u>	<u>Thursday</u>	<u>Friday</u>	<u>Saturday</u>
				1	2- Good Friday, NO SCHOOL	3
4-Easter	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13-Police Station Field Trip	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22-Science Fair	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	Return to Home Page

News and Notes

- Easter Break: Due to the Easter holiday, students will **NOT** have school on Friday, April 2nd. School will resume on Monday, April 5th.
- Field Trip: The students and I will be traveling to the local police station for a tour and fingerprinting on April 13th. The bus will leave the school at 9:00 a.m. and return before lunch. Chaperones will be needed, so if you are available, please let me know!
- Science Fair: The annual school science fair is being held on Thursday, April 22nd. If your student is interested in participating, he/she needs to see me to sign up. Projects will be judged at noon on the 22nd.
- "Fruit Juice Fridays": Since the weather no longer seems appropriate for "Hot Cocoa Fridays," the class and I have decided that "Fruit Juice Fridays" would be fun. Make sure that you receive the note from your student regarding this activity!

[Return to Home Page](#)

Daily Assignments

Monday:

- Spelling: Pretest
- Reading: Vocabulary and Author study
- Math: Subtraction Lesson
- Science: Electricity Lesson
- Music

Tuesday:

- Spelling: Practice
- Reading: Read together
- Math: Subtraction practice
- Science: Electricity Experiments
- Computers

Wednesday:

- Spelling: Spelling Bee
- Reading: Comprehension
- Math: Subtraction Game
- Science: Wonder and write about electricity
- Art

Thursday:

- Spelling: Spelling Practice with partner
- Reading: Independent reading
- Math: Subtraction practice
- Science: Research electricity questions
- Gym

Friday:

- Spelling: Test
- Reading: "Fruit Juice Friday"; Listening time
- Math: Build subtraction "robot"
- Science: Present electricity findings
- Technology Activity

[Return to Home Page](#)

Activities and Links

Math Activities

Activity One: Make a set of multiplication flashcards! On index cards, write each multiplication fact. Then, write the correct answer on the back of the card. Make sure you check your answers! Then practice your facts by holding up a card and giving the correct answer as quickly as possible. **NO PEEKING!**

Activity Two: Create your own restaurant! First, create a menu with appropriate prices. This restaurant will then be set up in our classroom with my approval. Each week, we will have a period of time in which the restaurant will be open. You will act as cashier, host, or even waiter/waitress! Be sure to practice your math skills in order to run your restaurant smoothly!

Math Links

- Math Baseball
- Brain Teasers

Science Activities

Activity One: What are water molecules and how do they affect each other? You will need a 12-inch square of waxed paper for this experiment. Place three or four drops of clean tap water on the paper. Draw the shape and color of the droplets on a piece of paper. Push the drops around with a pencil point. What happens to the water when the pencil point is pushed into it? What happens when several droplets are pushed near each other? Clean up your experiment. Now try filling a plastic cup with water. Place a bowl underneath this cup. Do you think you can add more water to the cup without spilling any? Using a medicine dropper, add water to the cup. Count how many drops you add before the water runs over the rim. Draw the shape of the water above the rim (at eye level) on your paper. Why does the water rise above the rim of the cup? Add a penny and see what happens. Add a paper clip and see what happens. Clean up your experiment and think about WHY!

Activity Two: Create a shoe-box guitar! Cut a medium-size hole in the lid of a

shoe box. Carefully stretch several rubberbands across the hole and attach them underneath the lid using tape. Make sure the rubberbands are tightly stretched! Now put the lid back on your shoe box and decorate it. Notice the different sounds that your rubberband "guitar strings" make. What creates this difference in sound? Enjoy playing your guitar!

Science Links

- Cool Science for Curious Kids
- Forensic Files

Language Arts Activities

Activity One: Write your own fiction story! First think of topic for your story. What do you want to write about? Next think Who (who will be the characters)? Where (where will the story take place)? When (when will the story take place)? What (what is the story about)? How (how will the story turn out)? After you have each of these ideas written down, think of five events that might occur in your story. Write these events in complete sentences on sentence strips. Now, arrange your sentence strips in the order that you want them to occur. You can now use this special outline that you have created to write your story. Do a rough draft first and worrying about your spelling and grammar later, after you have your story written. Be creative!

Activity Two: Read a special book and tell us about it in a Book Talk! First, pick a book that you enjoy and read it carefully. Then begin preparing your Book Talk. You should include the title and author of the book, briefly tell what the book is about, and explain what you liked about the book. Your mission is to get your classmates to WANT to read this book. Make sure you practice your Book Talk many times before presenting it to your group. Good Luck!

Language Arts Links

- The Prince and I
- Spiderman in Amazing Adventures

Return to Home Page

WEB CONNECTIONS IN THE CLASSROOM

The World Wide Web has become an integral part of society and its dominance in the career world will continue to become more and more important. Since knowledge of and skilled use of the World Wide Web is so essential, students must begin to learn this information at the elementary level. Many school systems now have web pages for use by anyone wishing to know more about the system. However, there are not many web pages created for use in a single classroom. One way to teach children about the World Wide Web, and provide practice using it, is by doing just this: creating a web page for your own elementary classroom.

BENEFITS OF A CLASSROOM WEB PAGE

Creating a web page for your classroom has many benefits for everyone involved in the educational system. It can benefit the parents, the teacher, as well as the students themselves. This project is not a difficult one to complete, but rather can be done simply by following a series of steps. The web page, once it is up and running smoothly, has many, many uses in the classroom.

A classroom web page would benefit parents in several ways. By accessing the web page, parents can easily gain information such as assignments and school or classroom calendars. The web page links can also be very useful to parents. Activities and links listed on the page provide a home-school connection. Through these additional activities, knowledge that is learned in the classroom will be reinforced in the home environment. Learning will be an ongoing process, not just something that is done at school. The web page also gives teachers an additional mechanism for communication with parents. Both the knowledge parents receive through the web page and the enhancement of parent/teacher communication creates more parent involvement in the education of the child. This parental involvement is one key to success in a child's education.

Communication between parent and teacher is essential in the classroom setting. One benefit of a classroom web page for parents was the addition of a

path for communication between teacher and parent. This is also a benefit for the classroom teacher. Rather than, or in addition to, sending a note home with the child, the teacher can post a message on the web page to inform parents of an important meeting, for example. This way, the note doesn't get lost or left on the bus, and parents can read it at their convenience. Another benefit of the classroom web page for the teacher is the links that may be added. These links can allow the teacher easy access to other web pages. Other web pages, then, provide additional activities, new ideas, and important information quickly and easily. This, in turn, helps a teacher to meet the individual needs of all students.

Meeting these individual needs is a huge benefit for the students, as well. Each child is unique in his/her learning. Being taught according to a child's individual needs ensures the success of every child. Another benefit for the students is the amount of exposure to and use of computers they will receive. Computers will be a regular part of their daily lives forever. Helping the students to become comfortable and familiar with these essential tools now will be a huge asset to them later in life. Students can also stay "on top of" their schoolwork by accessing classroom calendars and assignments through the web page. They can retrieve practice and/or more challenging assignments through links on the page and may even get new ideas for experiments to try at home or on the playground.

Finally, students can also communicate more easily with the teacher in a more private atmosphere. By communicating through email, students need not worry about other students hearing a question or comment and believing that it is "stupid" or "insignificant."

A classroom web page will not only benefit the students in the class, but the parents and teacher as well. Discussed above are only some of the benefits of having a web page for a single classroom. Many more will surely be discovered as you create your own classroom web page.

HOW TO CREATE A WEB PAGE

There is a simple step-by-step process that can be followed in order to create a web page. I used this process myself to create this classroom web page. However, since I have no "class" to gear the page towards, mine was based on a fictional class. The information used in the web page is all made up for use in this project.

Web publishing tools are "programs that help you create Web pages and manage a Web site" (Smith and Bebak, 1998, P. 196). Netscape is one company that has a large site devoted to Web authoring, *Netscape Composer*. In order to use this tool, you need not know HTML (HyperText Markup Language, the link between the text file and what people see when they look at you Web page with a browser), but you'll be a much better Web author if you have a basic understanding of the language before beginning. I used this tool in creating my Web page and found it to be very beneficial.

Step one in creating a Web page is to plan the page on paper. Decide on a purpose for your page, the structure and layout of your page, what links you would like between pages within your site, and what links you would like to include to external web sites. It will be easier to work with your page when you know what it

will consist of. Keep it simple; too much information on one page scares people away!

After your Web page has been planned, get started creating it on the computer by opening a blank page in Netscape Composer. Creating the page is then very similar to using a word processing program. Text font and size can be changed, along with style and color. In addition, columns can be created and alignment can be manipulated.

Accurately creating links is also easy using the Composer tool. First, highlight the text that you want to become the link. Then click the "Link" button on the tool bar at the top of the screen. Enter the URL of the address you want to link to in the box that pops up on the screen. The text is then shown as a link by its color and underline. Links to other pages on your Web site may also be created. In order to do this, again highlight the text that you want to become the link. Click the "Link" button and, in the box that appears on the screen, type the filename of the page being linked to. Click "Ok" and the text should appear as a link on your screen. Now, when you click on any linked text, you should automatically connect to the new page or Web site.

Graphics are a must in a good Web page. In order to add images to your Web page, click on the "Image" button on the tool bar at the top of the screen.

When the box appears on the screen, click on the "Choose File..." button. Select the file where the image is stored and click "Ok." The image should then appear at the insertion point on your screen. Several of the images used in my Web page came from a free clipart site on the Internet, *clipart.com*. Other images came from a clipart CD-ROM. Be sure that all images are in GIF or JPEG format or they will not open in Netscape Composer!

Now that you have created your Web page, the next step is to publish it! Although, it would be a good idea to have several people look over what you have created and make suggestions first. In addition, you should test your site to be sure that each of the links work and downloading is not too slow. Make any revisions necessary, then follow these steps to publish your Web page.

Netscape Composer has a built-in *Publish* function to make publishing easier. Simply click on the "Publish" button on the tool bar at the top of the screen. Enter the Web site to which to upload the files. You can obtain this information from the Web service provider or other party that will be hosting your site. Enter your user name and password, if any, and click "Ok." The files will be transferred and you can go surf them!

WEB AUTHORING TIPS

Bud Smith and Arthur Bebak list ten Web publishing Do's and Don'ts in their book *Creating Web Pages for Dummies* (1998). I found each list very useful and would like to share them with you.

- ❖ Do think about your target audience.
 - ❖ Do use good sites as models.
 - ❖ Do get permissions for content.
 - ❖ Do use links to outside sites.
 - ❖ Do use graphics and multimedia.
 - ❖ Do think before you create.
 - ❖ Do ask for feedback.
 - ❖ Do test your pages.
 - ❖ Do publicize your site.
 - ❖ Do update your site.
-
- ❖ Don't inadvertently limit your audience.
 - ❖ Don't abuse netiquette.
 - ❖ Don't "borrow" content without asking.
 - ❖ Don't make your site hard to navigate.
 - ❖ Don't abuse graphics and multimedia.
 - ❖ Don't forget ALT tags and text-equivalent menus.
 - ❖ Don't forget the basics.
 - ❖ Don't start by setting up your own web server.
 - ❖ Don't forget the "World" in World Wide Web.
 - ❖ Don't be afraid to learn more.