|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| *Abstract*This paper is the review, evaluation, and critique of the website [www.glogster.edu](http://www.glogster.edu). The objective of this review is to gauge the effectiveness of the website to deliver information, and the content which is delivered. Glogster as an educational initiative was launched in October of 2009. Speaking on the motives of the business which he co-founded, Patrik Pepsl says,“Glogster company is committed to providing the best Multimedia Tool & Expression Space for students, educators, and creative people worldwide through its innovative Glog format and new online phenomenon, Glogging” (Prepsl, 2011). Glogster is an interactive, blank slate, virtual poster making website that integrates technology with a student’s imagination. Since Glogster is privately funded, the appearance of paid advertisements are scarce and do not clutter the experience ("Glogster," 2012). Glog is short for graphical blog. Glogster EDU’s purpose is to serve the educational community allowing teachers and students a platform to create, edit, and share virtual posters within the confines of the teacher manifested, virtual classroom ("Glogster," 2012). From their homepage, visitors can read Glogster’s mission statement, “We are committed to our mission to creatively, productively, and collaboratively utilize technology to facilitate meaningful and safe learning experiences and sustain real educational change” ("Glogster," 2012).*Review* The website for this review is Glogster EDU. The site was originally constructed in 2009 as an educational initiative spawning from the original Glogster concept created in 2007. The growing list of educational and technological affiliates for Glogster include The International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE), Discovery Education, School Tube, and Teacher Tube ("Glogster," 2012). Private investors and co-founder Patrik Prepsl, affiliated with multiple educational and technological organizations, deliver an interactive experience which engages student creativity and utilizes technology within the classroom.  Glogster can be a useful online tool for students beginning with third grade. The site offers a clean slate in which a student may customize backgrounds, font, add pictures, sound, or even video. The multiple applications of Glogster lend the site useful at various ages for various skill levels. Teachers can create an interactive classroom for their students and enabling them to sign on and create their own Glog. These Glogs can be shared and commented on by classmates within the security of the teacher’s virtual realm.  The website is constructed to engage the creative mind of the student and allow them the freedom to explore different ways to present topics. Poster presentations are a staple within classrooms as a viable way to engage the creativity of a student. Glogster effectively eliminates the need for poster boards, glue, scissors, and magic markers, while incorporating the new valuable initiative of information technology fluency (IT fluency). IT fluency in schools includes the application of computers and other technologies by teachers in all subject areas at all grade levels (Maloy, Verock-O, Edwards & Woolf, 2011). The vast amount of computer literacy obtained through navigating Glogster make it an extremely useful site to subject students to at the third grade level. The construction of the student’s Glog meets with two of The International Society for Technology in Education’s new standards, demonstration of creativity and innovation, and the using of technology effectively and productively ("International society for," 2011). *Sunshine State Standards: (Florida Department of Education).*Grade Three-**RI.3.4.** Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a *grade 3 topic or subject area*.**RI.3.5**. Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.**RI.3.6.** Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.**RI.3.7.** Use information gained from illustrations (e.g., maps, photographs) and the words in a text to demonstrate understanding of the text (e.g., where, when, why, and how key events occur).**SL.3.5.** Create engaging audio recordings of stories or poems that demonstrate fluid reading at an understandable pace; add visual displays when appropriate to emphasize or enhance certain facts or details.**W.3.7.** Conduct short research projects that build knowledge about a topic.**W.3.8.** Recall information from experiences or gather information from print and digital sources; take brief notes on sources and sort evidence into provided categories.*National Technology Standards: (International Society for Technology in Education)*

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **1.** | **Creativity and Innovation** |
|  | Students demonstrate creative thinking, construct knowledge, and develop innovative products and processes using technology. Students: |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | Apply existing knowledge to generate new ideas, products, or processes. |
| b. | Create original works as a means of personal or group expression. |
| c. | Use models and simulations to explore complex systems and issues. |
| d. | Identify trends and forecast possibilities. |

 |
| **2.** | **Communication and Collaboration** |
|  | Students use digital media and environments to communicate and work collaboratively, including at a distance, to support individual learning and contribute to the learning of others. Students: |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | Interact, collaborate, and publish with peers, experts, or others employing a variety of digital environments and media. |
| b. | Communicate information and ideas effectively to multiple audiences using a variety of media and formats. |
| c. | Develop cultural understanding and global awareness by engaging with learners of other cultures. |
| d. | Contribute to project teams to produce original works or solve problems. |

 |
| **3.** | **Research and Information Fluency** |
|  | Students apply digital tools to gather, evaluate, and use information. Students: |
|  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| a. | Plan strategies to guide inquiry. |
| b. | Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media. |
| c. | Evaluate and select information sources and digital tools based on the appropriateness to specific tasks. |
| d. | Process data and report results. |

 |

 |
| *Glogster EDU – Evaluation Rubric* |
|  |  |  |  |  |
| Category  | ***Four*** – ExcellentWould Not Change Much | ***Three***- GoodWould Change Some | ***Two***- PoorMany Opportunities for Improvement | ***One***- UnacceptableRequires Fundamental Overhaul |
| Content | The website and the provided information are accurate and remain consistent throughout the site. The content is free of grammatical errors and is stated clearly for the grade level of the student utilizing it.  | The information is accurate and consistent. Free of grammatical error although difficult for the student’s grade level. Requires teacher explanation. | Content is difficult to comprehend on many grade levels. Accurate information containing some grammatical errors and confusing organization. | Content is mostly inaccurate and littered with grammatical error. Site is without proper organization and is confusing to the student. |
| ContentValidity | The website discloses the origin of information while citing alternative resources to validate it. The site provides an ‘About Us’ section and is clear in their mission statement. Information is provided with educational motives. | The website discloses information for educational purposes and provides the student with alternate resources. The ‘About Us’ section is available. | The website is without an ‘About Us’ section or mission statement. Information’s origins are revealed without alternate resources. Validating information requires diligence and additional researching. | Information found to invalid and origins are not provided. The site is without an ‘About Us’ section and mission statement. The motive of the site is slanted away from educational purpose and reveals an advertising agenda. |
| Format or Layout | All elements of the website are easy to locate and the layout flows seamlessly. Positioning of material is well planned and reveals a concise layout. Images, white space and icons effectively align and organize the site. | Elements within the site are easy to locate although placement could be better. Adequate use of images, white space, and icons to align the site. | Some elements of the site are confusing and haphazardly placed. The layout of the site requires view and review to locate fundamental material. Mostly absent use of images, white space, and icons to structure the site. | The site is confusing and without proper structure to the layout. Easy to become lost and misplace information. Difficult to find key elements amongst clutter and poor use of images and white space.  |
| Ease of Navigation | Consistent and clearly marked links and icons seamlessly navigate the user through usage. Movement from task to task is user friendly and ‘help’ material is available to clarify navigation. Methods were employed to customize movement and understanding throughout the website. | Clearly marked links and icons adequately navigate the site. Additional help material is not provided although methods were employed to assist movement throughout the website. | The websites navigation is not consistent from page to page. Ideas and navigation tools are somewhat confusing because of changes throughout the site. Methods were not used to ensure smooth navigation. | The controls to navigate the site are confusing and were devised without forethought for the user. Easy to become confused and lost amongst the clutter and lack of tools to maneuver from one section to the next. The user is left to guess and learn how to navigate the site. |
| Appearance | Free of clutter, organized images, and appealing fonts serve to make the site pleasing to the eye. Background color schemes do not detract from content and everything has a place and intention on the pages. Consistent themes allow the user to be engaged in the site. There site is without deviation from its set theme. | Organized and free of clutter with appealing font. Backgrounds and images along with the theme are not consistent and change as the user navigates. | The website has a cluttered quality that remains consistent throughout the site. The background and images add to confusion and content is lost because of it. Themes distract more than engage. | Poorly designed site that is not pleasing to the eye. Material is lost among the cluttered format without a consistent theme. The theme is inconsistent which makes the user feel lost and question if they are still on the site. Methods to beautify the site are not present. |
| Support & Site Assistance | Online support is available during certain hours via telephone or online chat. The website provides a help icon for multiple topics. Explanations are clear and concise regarding site issues. The site offers a tutorial to familiarize the user with the use of the site. | Explanations for site assistance are available online using a help menu. There is no telephone or online chat technical support although there is a tutorial to gain familiarity.  | The site does not offer technical assistant via phone or internet. There is a help menu to search for issues with clear instructions to ratify problems. There is no tutorial available. | The website does not offer a tutorial or a help section to search for answers. There is no technical support provided and the user is left to figure out the issues. The site does not offer any additional assistance. |
| Currency | The site has been updated this year and material is current and applicable to the learning objectives without being outdated. | The site was updated last year with mostly current material that pertains to the applicable learning objectives. | The website has not been updated for awhile and the some material is still useful.  | The website has never been updated and the material is very old (three plus years). Most of the information is outdated and useless. |
| Images | All images inclusive of those used to navigate the site have an ALT tag that clearly describes the image and its link. The site is built to accommodate the visually impaired. | The images required to navigate the site are equipped with an ALT tag that clearly describes the image and link. The site accommodates the visually impaired. | Some images accommodate the visually impaired with an ALT tag with description. The site is inconsistent with the selection of images with ALT tags. | The site is not equipped to accommodate the visually impaired. Mostly all images are without ALT tags and the sites images are poorly selected. Inconsistent with descriptions and relevance. |
| Cost & Value | The cost of the site is conducive to the services it provides creating an excellent value. The usefulness of the site, multiple applications, and available technical support provide reasonable justification for purchase. | The cost of the site is somewhat reasonable and considered a bargain only if the site is incorporated into the curriculum. The sites technical support and multiple applications provide some justification for purchase. | The cost of the site is pricey even if utilized in a curriculum. The site provides useful applications and technical support at an expensive price. The site is not justified in its pricing based on current market standards. | The site does not provide a good service or technical support and should be free of charge if used at all. Based upon similar products, the applications can be found less expensive and more efficient through another site. The site is not worth the money and not a bargain. |