

Prototype Evaluation

Article: GPS and geocaching in education

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Type of Evaluation: Think Aloud (in-person and phone discussions), also asked for feedback from Twitter contacts

Prototype Weaknesses:

1. Very small geocaching logo seems all alone over on the right next to such a small amount of text. Suggested left-alignment instead. (from Cathy Arreguin)
2. Some readers may not know what Google Earth is or what it can do. (from Susan Taylor Brown)
3. Initially, a user may not understand the GPS satellites constellation image as it is labeled. (from Lisa Glenn)
4. The arrows that indicate a link to an external site don't indicate opening in a new tab or window. Rather, linked pages replace the EET page in the current tab or window. Can this be changed? (from Lisa Glenn)
5. What is a GPS receiver? This is not clear. Also, the later title about "using GPS" should include the word "receiver." Consider including an image of a GPS receiver at this early stage to clarify. (from Lisa Glenn)
6. It might be helpful to clarify whether or not each student needs to have his or her own GPS receiver, or just one for the class, or can groups of students share the devices. (from Lisa Glenn)

Plan to address weaknesses:

1. Instead of changing the alignment of the logo (since I want to more or less alternate left and right with visuals), I added another sentence of introduction in the first piece on geocaching. This made the text go all the way to the right side of the page, up against the logo, and made it look less isolated.
2. Added a link in the "For more information" section of the Resources. It takes the user to the Google Earth home page, where users can also download the program.
3. I added some words to the caption to make the purpose of the constellation diagram clearer.
4. I looked through all kinds of MediaWiki help and FAQs, and I determined that it's not easy (and is almost impossible) to have external links open in new windows or tabs. The reasoning behind this refers you to etiquette from 1999, which does not really help me eleven years later. So I can't change this.
5. I figured out how to add an image I found of a hand holding a good GPS receiver on which you can clearly make out the face with the navigation tool operating. I was not sure I would be able to have both left-aligned and right-aligned images around the same text, but it worked. I also modified the subtitle to make it clear we're talking about GPS receivers.
6. I am going to add in text that explains this in the "What do I need to know about using GPS (receivers)" section.