

**Internet Information Literacy Lesson Plan**  
**Loretta Klamik**  
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**Problem (Purpose):** Use a reading strategy (historical study of author) to help with comprehension of a poet's works. Use knowledge of website quality to locate facts about the author. Learn to cite websites using MLA style. Analyze and summarize the effect these facts had on the author's works.

**Description of Learner Characteristics:** Four classes of freshman English completed this activity. These eighty high school freshmen students (male and female) who had limited knowledge of reading strategies and limited training in identifying quality web sites were our target audience. This was a rather homogenous group – same ethnicity, same grade level, etc. Class personality played a role in the attitude with which students approached this assignment/experience. One class was extremely open to learning about the task and the skills related to it. The teacher was pleased with the learning that took place in this class. Another class was closed to the concept and vocal in their claims that this was neither helpful nor new (they felt that they already knew it all). The teacher voiced concern that this attitude may have interfered with the learning that was intended. (A confrontational project (like an evaluation of the OvaPrima site) was proposed as a way to teach this class about the importance of Internet literacy.) The other two classes fell between these two extremes.

**Goals:**

- To have students search for relevant sites
- To have students evaluate the quality of relevant sites
- To have students collect facts about the author
- To have students cite their websites using MLA style
- To have students use a reading strategy promote understanding of the reading selection

**Objectives:**

- Students will extend current online searching skills to locate specific sites.
- Students will be able to evaluate the quality of online sites
- Students will list valid facts about the author
- Students will cite websites using MLA style
- Students will write a paragraph on how the facts they found affected the author's works

**Learning Methods and Strategies:**

- Guided learning
- Problem solving
- Analysis
- Synthesis

**Materials:**

- Computers with Internet connection
- Internet Detective handout
- Project handout
- IMSA citation wizard
- Vivisimo search engine
- Internet Explorer
- Rubric for evaluation

**Bibliography:**

- Jones, Raymond. *Strategies for Reading Comprehension*. [online]. (VA, USA): ReadingQuest, 1998, updated 29 October 2002 [cited 1 December 2002]. Strategies Page. Available from <<http://curry.edschool.virginia.edu/go/readquest/strat/>>.

- Steele, Kathy. *Four Reading Strategies for High School Students*. [online]. (Chugiak, AK, USA): LitSite Alaska [cited 1 December 2002]. Available from World Wide Web: < <http://litsite.alaska.edu/workbooks/readingstrategies.html> >.
- ESD 105 Secondary Reading Cadre. *Before Reading Strategies*. [online]. (Yakima, WA, USA): ESD 105 [cited 1 December 2002]. Graphic Organizers Page. Available from World Wide Web: < <http://www.esd105.wednet.edu/ReadingCadre/BeforeOrganizers.html> >.
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- (will be updated with more relevant sites later)

#### Description of Activities:

- Ms. Nelson quickly introduced the assignment the day before proceeding to the lab. After this explanation, students were told to write a few sentences about how they could determine the quality of websites.
- On Dec. 6<sup>th</sup> the students worked in the computer lab during their English class. Students worked independently and completed worksheet provided to them. The sheet (see appendix) provided directions. Students were to find 5 facts (one from each of 5 sites) about a given author; cite the websites using correct MLA style; and describe why they considered it a quality site. After reviewing these facts, students were to write, on a separate piece of paper, a summary about how these facts influenced the author's writings.
- Most students initially struggled with the concept of the assignment and did not finish during the 45-minute lab time, so students were told to finish the assignment as homework.
- The following Monday the class discussed (the author's) Edna St. Vincent Millay's life. They then read the poem "The Courage My Lesson" by the author and discussed how her life may have influenced this writing.

#### Assessment Device:

- A rubric has been created:

Criteria	Score				Points
	1	2	3	4	
<b>Students will find facts about Edna St. Vincent Millay</b>	Students find 2 or fewer different facts	Students find 3 different facts	Students find 4 different facts	Students find 5 different facts	
<b>Students will correctly cite their sources</b>	Students correctly cite 2 or fewer facts	Students correctly cite 3 facts	Students correctly cite 4 facts	Students correctly cite 5 facts	
<b>Students will successfully analyze the quality of each site</b>	Students use given criteria to determine quality of 2 or fewer sites	Students use given criteria to determine quality of 3 sites	Students use given criteria to determine quality of 4 sites	Students use given criteria to determine quality of 5 sites	
<b>Total</b>					
<b>Additional teacher comments:</b>					

#### Learning Standards:

- **National Education Technology Standards**
  - Standard 3-1: Students use technology tools to enhance learning, increase productivity, and promote creativity

- Standard 5-1: Students use technology to locate, evaluate, and collect information from a variety of sources
- Standard 5-3: Students evaluate and select new information resources and technological innovations based on the appropriateness of a specific task
- **Mid-Continent Research for Education and Learning**
  - Language Arts Standards:
    - Standard 5(IV)-6: Understands the philosophical assumptions and basic beliefs underlying an author's work (e.g., point of view, attitude, and values conveyed by specific language; clarity and consistency of political assumptions)
- **Illinois State Board of Education**
  - Standard 1.B.4a Preview reading materials, clarify meaning, analyze overall themes and coherence, and relate reading with information from other sources
  - Standard 1.C.4a Use questions and predictions to guide reading
  - Standard 5.B.4a: Choose and evaluate primary and secondary sources (print and nonprint) for a variety of purposes
- **Providence-St. Mel School Technology Standards**
  - Standard 2.A.2: Develop grade appropriate skills and abilities to use technology in ways that support learning, collaboration, personal pursuits and productivity.
  - Standard 3.B.4: Select and apply technology tools for research, information analysis, problem solving, and decision making in content learning.

### **Summary of Teaching Results:**

Date in lab: December 6, 2002

Students made some progress as a result of this project. (Teacher comments will be added in the final report.) Students completed a “pre-assessment”, a worksheet, and a “post assessment”. One class’ documents have been reviewed to determine the effectiveness of this project. (The class was chosen by the teacher because they seemed to lack the attitude problems noted earlier and seemed more open to the experience.) These documents, in addition to teacher reports, indicate the project was useful. There were ways the project could be refined.

The day before the project (Thurs.), students were asked to write a paragraph about how they determine if a site is a “quality site”. The responses focused primarily on usefulness (provides information needed), level of site appeal (interesting look), level of title appeal (interesting title), popularity (has heard another student mention it), usability (clear/precise), and amount of information (a lot of words is good). There is diversity in appreciation for the quality of information widely available on the web, however, that is easily illustrated with 2 particular entries: “I don’t use the Internet for my research because anybody can make a website. There is no certainty that the information will be accurate.” and “...I chose the Internet for my research because the Internet lets you type and look up anything you want and I think that’s good...(indicating that everything online is quality information).”

The worksheets were done the day (Fri.) the project was actually presented and completed. Most students were able to complete (or nearly complete) the 5 requested facts/citations/quality checks. In this case, however, quantity isn’t necessarily quality. After proofreading their responses, I think the students need more work in the area of citing and determining quality. The sites they found tended to be ones I had also identified as quality sites, but they failed to cite the sites correctly (though they were instructed to use the wizard) and their arguments for the quality of the sites still tended to focus on aesthetics and usefulness/features, rather than critical evaluation. I, however, am pleased to see the sites that they tended to select. Many were from information databases (online encyclopedias, infoplease, etc.) and a few discussed the accuracy of information in their defenses of the quality of their sites. This is a sizable improvement from previous online research I’ve observed in the lab.

The day after the project (Mon.) students were again told to describe a quality site. They were also told to reflect on what they had learned from the experience. A few students reported not having learned anything, but most kids reported an increase appreciation for methods of searching and the quality of sites available. A few students commented appreciation for the search engine we required that they use (vivisimo.com). I don’t know what they had used prior to this exercise, but have students recognize that not all search engines are equally useful (for research purposes, anyway). A few also mentioned appreciation for introduction of the process of recording website addresses (though no one cited the sites correctly). One student said, “I already knew [to browse and use more than one site] but what I didn’t think

about was to write down the address that I visited". Speaking of recording urls, it was nice to see that they included the true urls, rather than the "framed urls" often recorded when viewing a site in a frame of another site. Most students, however, discussed an increased appreciation for the need and process of validating the information on a site. I think their sentiment is well expressed in one student's report, "I learned a lot about internet research that all sites are not accurate. What I plan to do now is look for more sites and see if all the sites kind of connect in some type of way. If they do, that's when I will right it down, instead of the first thing I come to." Another student adds, "Before I truly learned how to search on websites, I didn't pay as much attention to the quality of sites. Now I understand that all sites are not filled with helpful information, because the person that wrote them may have not known what they were talking about." This sentiment was repeated by another student, "...It's very important to select a website that has true information. If not, your data would be all messed up...." A final student summarized the sentiment in this way, "...What I would do differently is read all the information carefully to make sure I'm getting what I actually need." These are just four of the many students that referred to increased critical thinking practices as a result of this exercise.

We would, however, make a few modifications on this project. More emphasis (before hand) would be placed on presenting the components of a quality website and the proper MLA citation format for useful websites. It would also help to have students complete the worksheet on a separate piece of paper, rather than on the worksheet itself so they don't feel justified in resorting to short, non-specific answers (particularly with regard to site evaluation). I think the pre- and post- assessment helped in the learning process and should be considered by anyone attempting to replicate this activity.

# Searching for Understanding

**Purpose:**

To gather facts about your author by searching online and using quality websites. To discuss how your author's life influenced his/her writings.

**Directions:**

- 1) Use <http://vivasimo.com> to search online for 5 facts about your author. (You must get each fact from a different website.)
- 2) Then complete the form on the right (use more paper if necessary). List the fact, cite it according to MLA style (you can find information on how to do this at <http://wizard.imsa.edu/cite/>), and list why you consider this a quality site (use the Internet Detective handout to determine the quality of sites).
- 3) Write a paragraph about how the author's life influenced his/her work. (Create this using a word processor and staple it to this sheet to hand-in.)



1. Fact: \_\_\_\_\_

MLA website citation: \_\_\_\_\_

Why is this a quality site? \_\_\_\_\_

2. Fact: \_\_\_\_\_

MLA website citation: \_\_\_\_\_

Why is this a quality site? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Fact: \_\_\_\_\_

MLA website citation: \_\_\_\_\_

Why is this a quality site? \_\_\_\_\_

4. Fact: \_\_\_\_\_

MLA website citation: \_\_\_\_\_

Why is this a quality site? \_\_\_\_\_

5. Fact: \_\_\_\_\_

MLA website citation: \_\_\_\_\_

Why is this a quality site? \_\_\_\_\_