Synopsis of a Significant Information Literacy Project:

Open Educational Resources Research Guide

Link: http://researchguides.library.wisc.edu/openeducationresources

Context:

At MERIT library, I was responsible for assessing and revising the Open Educational Resources (OER) Research Guide. My supervisor, Jim Jonas, gave me the project to revise the guide due to our shared interest in OER. This presented me with the opportunity to broaden my knowledge of OER materials and the content manager Springshare. The research guide is designed to be used by students at the University of Wisconson-Madison with an emphasis on those pursuing degrees in Education who want to learn about Open Educational Resources.

Instructional Design

I started the project by looking over the initial assessment an employee at MERIT created and then interacting with the research guide on the library's webpage. The research guide was in rough shape. It contained only the barest of navigation options: Articles, Books, For Educators, and For Learners. I found For Educators and For Learners sections to be confusing, because based on the population that MERIT serves, the intended users would be education students or educators. With that in mind, I applied the Flaw, Frustration, Fix process outlined in Char Booth's chapter on Instructional Design in *Reflective Teaching, Effective Learning*. To do this, you make obvious the following process where "you find yourself frustrated by an experience or object, unconsciously locate its design flaw, and, whether it is a productive exercise or not, mentally troubleshoot the problem" by creating table where you list the frustration, design flaw, and a fix (Booth 84).

Table A:

Section	Frustration	Flaw	Fix
For Learners	Confusing	Understood users are educators	Remove section, integrate links in other sections

After assessing my frustrations with navigating the research guide, identified the design flaws, and brainstormed fixes for them, I used ADDIE to redesign the research guide in combination with the ACRL's Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education, and tips from Lori Mestre's "Effective Design of Learning Objects." ADDIE takes place in five steps: "Analyze – understand the core needs and characteristics of the products users. Design – create a strategy that addresses the needs and characteristics of these users. Develop - construct and revise the product. Implement – deliver the product to its intended audience. Evaluate - assess the impact and effectiveness of the product" (Booth 85). I have replicated my ADDIE plan here in Table B.

Table B:

Analyze	Design	Develop	Implement	Evaluate

The understood users of MERIT are educators who need information about OERs.	1)Add meaningful tabs. 2)Add useful content. 3)Add videos & infographics.	Create the new tabs for the research guide and fill them with relevant content.	Publish the changes to the research guide so that they are public to MERIT's users.	Takes place throughout the whole process:

From Mestre's work, I gathered general tips for what the layout of the material should look like to be effective for users. She explains "the application interface should be well structured so that it provides easy and efficient navigational methods as well as customization of content to suit learners' requirements (Mestre 104). I kept this in mind when I organized the information into categories for the tabbed navigation and how I placed boxes of content on the screen. I also considered this when justifying page space for short, informative videos on the research guide to give users a second (and possibly preferable option) for learning about OERs. Students might be more likely to click on a video to learn about something than open up a .PDF.

Mestre also draws on Steve Krug's work for web design, explaining the importance of making web pages "obvious and self-explanatory so that users do not need to think" (105). This reasoning is also why I provided infographics, so users could literally at a glance understand a concept. I also paid close attention to what I named information boxes so that it was obvious what the content they contained was about. And from the ACRL's Frameworks, I drew specifically on Information Creation as a Process where they suggest that "experts recognize that information creations are valued differently in different contexts, such as academia or the workplace." I considered what kind of information I was creating and that it bridges education and a movement for openly licensed materials.

In the end, I chose to delete both the For Educators and For Learners sections and redistribute their links across other sections. I created five new tabs in total. They are:

1. Advocacy – focuses on resources for advocating for OERs
2. Creative Commons Licensing and Copyright - links to the Copyright for Digital Media Assignments : What is Copyright? and Creative Commons Licensing Resources with two short video (aimed towards high school students about the Creative Commons).
3. Adopt, Adapt, Create, and Finding OER Resources – the most robust section with resources for each of these concepts and general OER resources.
4. Pre-K Through 12 – OER materials that are specifically aimed towards this group.
5. Open Education Events – Conferences and awareness events.

Reflection

Overall, I think the new version of the OER research guide is a much stronger representation of knowledge about OERs. If time were not a factor, I would like to have added more content to the section on Books and OER events. Books presented a problem, because they need to be linked to MERIT's collection and none of the books I'd like to add were in the collection. It might be a call to do some Collection Development around OER as a subject. OER events also presented a problem in that a lot of the events made webpages only for their current event (even if they were ongoing) which makes it hard to link to because they would quickly be outdated.

References

Booth, Char. "Instructional Design." *Reflective Teaching, Effective Learning*. Chicago: American Library Association, 2011. 83-89.

Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education." *Framework for Information Literacy for Higher Education*. ACRL, n.d. Web.

Mestre, Lori. "Effective Design of Learning Objects." *Designing Effective Library Tutorials*. Cambridge: Chandos, 2012. 103-139.