Teaching Older Adults to Use a Computer

WebQuest Description: Guide teachers and instructional technologists on exploring issues that might affect how to teach older adults, age 65+, to use a computer.

Grade Level: College / Adult

Curriculum: Professional Skills

Keywords: elderly, older adults, teach, technology, lesson plan

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Introduction

Older Adults, age 65 and older, want to communicate with their grandchildren. But, it seems their grandchildren only want to communicate digitally. So more and more older adults are sitting down in front of computers and asking, “How do these things work?” And when their children and grandchildren try to show them everybody ends up frustrated and aggravated.&nbsp; So the older adult goes in search of a computer class. And it turns out that the people teaching them are significantly younger and have no experience working with older adults. You will address the issues involved in teaching computer skills to older adults. In this WebQuest you will learn what attitudes and/or illnesses along with any other obstacles exist that might cause a barrier to effectively teaching older adults.&nbsp; You will identify the obstacles and determine ways to overcome them in your instruction. In your quest for this knowledge you will develop a lesson plan and materials that you can use in teaching older adults to use computers.

Tasks

Discover ways in which an older adult could use a computer and how that might influence what and how to teach them. Explore online resources to understand health issues and other obstacles that older adults might encounter as they age and how that might affect an older adult’s ability to use or learn how to use computers. Discover what might affect the way older adults view and or approach the use of computers. Develop a lesson plan and instructional materials to teach older adults how to use computers.

Process

Break up into groups of 2 to 3.&nbsp; Each member needs to perform all the steps in this WebQuest.&nbsp; The students will compile their findings from the research and interviews and together produce the required documents as a team.&nbsp; Do NOT split up the assignments and allocate each team member to complete only certain sections. Review the following links: http://www.usabilitysciences.com/respect-your-elders-web-accessibility-for-seniorshttp://voices.yahoo.com/teaching-senior-citizens-computers-398697.html?cat=25Enhancing computer self-efficacy and attitudes in multi-ethnic older adults: a randomised controlled studyFind other articles that will help you address the following: Discover ways for which an older adult can use a computer and how its use in each way will benefit them Explore resources to understand health issues that older adults might encounter as they age. Think of ways you can work around, use assistive technologies, and work with these issues to teach them how to use a computer Investigate any obstacles, both real and perceived, that you might encounter when training an older adult to use a computer. Think of how you would overcome those obstacles Identify any trends in older adult’s use of technology that might influence the way you would teach them Identify any trends in older adult’s use of technology that might influence what you might teach them Research technology that was developed during the life of an older adult Note the technology Note what the technology was used for Note when the technology was adopted by adults that are now older. Note what training was involved in its use Research historical events that may have shaped older adults attitudes toward new technology Note the significance of the event Note how it affected adults that are now older Note how it might impact how adults view and or approach learning technology today Each group member must interview at least one older adult who doesn’t use computers or uses them only minimally. Ask them when they first learned about computers Ask them how they feel about computers Ask them how they felt about using some of the technology that was developed in their lifetime as discovered in the previous step Ask why they have chosen not to learn or use computers Ask any other questions that will help you in designing a lesson plan for them Compile the interviews in a paper of at least 3 single-spaced pages: Discuss ways for which older adults can use computers and how each use will benefit them Discuss any obstacles, both real and perceived, that you might encounter while training an older adult to use a computer and how you will work with, work around, or overcome them Compare learning to use a computer now to learning at least 2 technologies that were new in an older adult’s life-time Incorporate what you learned in your interviews with older adults Identify any historically significant event that might contribute to the way an older adult might approach computer training. Indicate what impact that might have on the training and explain what you would do to address it during your training Develop a lesson plan in which you will teach older adults how to use the computer. Make sure to address all the potential obstacles you may encounter and how you will deal with them. Include the training materials you would use for training and as reference. Be sure to use the knowledge you have gained from your research to focus your training to meet an older adult’s needs. You must include A clearly written objective The concepts you will be teaching The methods you will use to teach each concept and overall Actual training material you will provide The lesson plan should be developed using a step-by-step plan. Do not just answer the questions posed in answer/question format for the lesson plan part of the assignment.
The following rubric will be used to evaluate the project as a team. Each team member's final grade will reflect their participation based upon their self and peer participation evaluation. Excellent 3 points Average 2 points Poor 1 point Omitted 0 points Evidence of research 6+ unique references 3-5 unique references 2- unique references 0 unique references Identifies ways for which older adults can use computers and explains what benefit they will gain. Identifies 6+ ways they can use a computer and explains how its use in each way will benefit them. Identifies 3-5 ways along with benefits. Identifies 2- ways along with benefits or 5 or less ways they can use it but omits the benefit. Doesn’t identify any use or benefit. Identification of obstacles clearly identifies at least 2 physical, 2 emotional, and 2 cultural issues that impact an older adult’s ability to learn computers. Identifies 1 of each type of issues. Identifies 1 or 2 issues total or multiple issues of only 1 or 2 types. Identifies 0 issues. Explanation of how to overcome identified obstacles clearly explains how to overcome the issues identified. Explains how to overcome the issues identified. Doesn’t attempt to explain anything. Identification and comparison of new technology in their younger years to learning new computers today. Identifies 2+ technologies and compares them to learning computers. Identifies only 1 technology and compares it. Identifies 1 technology, but doesn’t compare it. Doesn’t identify any technologies. Incorporation of interview with an older adult. Clear evidence that the interview with an adult is taken into consideration. A single mention of the interview. No evidence that an older adult was interviewed. Identification of historical event and explanation of impact on training. Identifies 1 event and clearly explains how it will impact training. Identifies event, but omits impact on training. Doesn’t identify event. Lesson Plan - objective. Creates a lesson plan stating a clear objective. Objective is not clearly stated. Objected not stated. Lesson Plan - concepts and procedures. Creates a lesson plan stating clear concepts and procedures. Concepts and procedures are lacking. No concepts and procedures. Lesson Plan - research. Clear evidence of incorporating the research done for the paper. Some evidence of incorporating the research done for the paper. Minimal evidence of incorporating the research done for the paper. No evidence. Lesson Plan - training materials for class. High Quality training materials were created for both class and as resources. Adequate training materials were created. Training materials were inadequate. No training materials were created. General Grammar and spelling are correct. Grammar and spelling are mostly correct. Grammar and spelling are somewhat correct. Many Grammar and spelling errors are encountered. Resources Resources are included and use correct APA style. Most of the resources are included or resources included don’t use APA style. Not all resources are included. No resources are included.

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<th>Category and Score</th>
<th>Excellent 3 points</th>
<th>Average 2 points</th>
<th>Poor 1 point</th>
<th>Omitted 0 points</th>
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<td>Evidence of research</td>
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<td>3-5 unique references</td>
<td>2- unique references</td>
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### Conclusion

Older adults can greatly benefit from learning how to use a computer. But, they have a few obstacles that are different and/or more prevalent than that of a younger learner. These obstacles must be taken into consideration when developing a lesson plan on how to teach them the use of computers. As a result of the work you have done for this WebQuest you now have a functional lesson plan with which you can teach older adults a beginning computer class. In addition you should be able to use the knowledge you’ve gained here to develop lesson plans to teach older adults more advanced computer skills and uses. In fact, much of the knowledge you have gained here can also be used to develop, or help others to develop, lesson plans in other topics not related to computers. You have also gained some wisdom in researching a target audience in order to tailor a lesson plan to their specific needs.

### Teacher Page

Students should be given at least 2 weeks to complete this assignment.

**Standards**

**Standard 1:**

Teachers understand student learning and development and respect the diversity of the students they teach.

**Standard 2:**

Content

Teachers know and understand the content area for which they have instructional responsibility.

**Standard 3:**

Assessment

Teachers understand and use varied assessments to inform instruction, evaluate and ensure student learning.

**Standard 4:**
Instruction
Teachers plan and deliver effective instruction that advances the learning of each individual student.

Standard 5:
Learning Environment
Teachers create learning environments that promote high levels of learning and achievement for all students.

Credits

Other