< CS Discoveries 2018 / Web Development

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Lesson 1: Exploring Websites

Unplugged

Overview

Every website has a purpose, a reason someone created it and others use it. In this lesson, students will start to consider the purposes a website might serve, both for the users and the creators. Students will explore a handful of the most-used websites in the United States and try to figure out how each of those sites is useful for users and how they might also serve their creators.

Purpose

Unit 2 is all about the World Wide Web, with a focus on creating websites for self expression. To start students thinking about why they might want to create a website, they must begin to consider how websites are useful tools for both users and creators. The lesson starts with popular websites because they all serve clear purposes for a large number of users, but eventually students are asked to narrow their vision to simpler sites that might serve the needs of a smaller user group.

Agenda

Warm Up (10 minutes)
> **The Last Website you Visited**

Activity (45 minutes)
> **Websites We Use Frequently**
> **Finding the Purpose**

Wrap Up (5 min)
> **Web Development Goals**

View on Code Studio

Objectives

Students will be able to:

- Identify the reasons someone might visit a given website
- Identify the reasons someone might create a given website

Preparation

☐ Print a copy of **The Purpose of Websites - Activity Guide** for each student.

Links

> **Heads Up!** Please make a copy of any documents you plan to share with students.

For the Teacher
- **The Purpose of Websites** - Exemplar

For the Students
- **The Purpose of Websites** - Activity Guide
  Make a Copy ▾

Vocabulary

- **Website** - A collection of interlinked web pages on the World Wide Web

Teaching Guide

Warm Up (10 minutes)

The Last Website you Visited

Set Up: Have students take out their journal. In their journal have students answer the following prompt.

💡 **Prompt:** What was the last website you visited? Why did you go to that website?

💬 **Discuss:** Have students share out the last website they visited. Make sure students share why they went to that website and what information they were looking for. In addition you can ask students whether or not the website provided the information they wanted.

Activity (45 minutes)

Websites We Use Frequently

Prompt: With a neighbor, come up with a list of what you think are the top 5 most frequently visited websites. These can include websites that you visit often, but also consider which pages the other people in your life use frequently.

Share: Have groups share out their top 5 websites lists, keeping track of unique sites on the board.

💬 **Discuss:** Why do you think these websites are so commonly used? What purpose do they serve, or what problems do they solve?

Finding the Purpose

🎤 *Remarks*

> We came up with a lot of reasons why people might use some of the most visited websites, but that's only one side of the picture. The people who make websites also have their own reasons for doing so. In the next activity, you're going to start thinking about the purposes that various websites serve for both the user and the creator.

Group: Put students in pairs.

Distribute: Pass out a copy of **The Purpose of Websites - Activity Guide** to each student.

🖥 Direct students to the "Top Websites" level on Code Studio.

🖥 Code Studio levels

Top Websites 📄 | Student Overview

Top Websites in the US

View on Code Studio

The following are some of the most frequently visited websites in the United States. Each includes a brief description of the website's core function.

- Google.com - Search engine for websites, pictures, videos, and other media
- Youtube.com - User-submitted video site with ratings and comments
- Facebook.com - Social media community that allows users to share information with friends

- Amazon.com - Online shopping sites for all kinds of goods
- Yahoo.com - A search engine, email provider, and news source
- Wikipedia.org - A free encyclopedia with content generated by users

✎ *The Purpose of Websites*

Top Websites

This first page of this activity guide asks students to consider what purposes some of the most visited websites might serve. Using a list of the top ten websites in the US, student pairs select three sites that interest them and for each discuss:

- Why people might use that site (what purpose does it serve users?)
- Why the creators might have made that site (what purpose does it serve the creators?)

Encourage students to be as detailed as possible when brainstorming the purposes of these sites.

Share: Once everyone has had a chance to brainstorm about their sites, give the class a chance to share out their thoughts.

> **💡 Teaching Tip**
>
> The goal of this activity to get students to consider why different websites were created. They don't need to necessarily get it "right" for each site, but they should demonstrate that they have considered the potential purposes that a website might serve for the creator. If students struggle to identify the purpose a site serves its creator, consider asking the following prompts:
>
> - Does the web site sell goods or services?
> - Do users contribute anything (images, information, reviews) that might be useful to the creator?
> - Does the site include any paid advertising?

Personal Websites

The second page of this activity guide encourages students to transition from thinking about huge sites that serve the needs of millions of people, to the much smaller kinds of sites they could create, which can still effectively serve the needs of a narrower group of users.

Read through the personal website description with the class:

Website Description: Julia wants to become a better home cook, so she started a blog where she can post about the recipes she tries. Each week Julia attempts a new recipe and adds a page about it to her blog. Sometimes the recipes go really well and her blog readers leave her encouraging comments. Occasionally her recipe attempts don't go so well, but she still posts and usually gets some helpful advice from her readers. After starting to blog about the meals she makes, Julia has started to cook more often and is attempting dishes that she never would have tried before.

Discuss: Give students an opportunity to ask questions about this example site. Make sure they understand how a small site that is primarily a tool for individual self expression can also be a useful site for other people.

The final questions on the activity guide ask students to come up with potential purposes this website serves both for its creator and its users.

Share: Ask for volunteers to share the purposes they came up with.

Wrap Up (5 min)

Web Development Goals

Journal: At this point we've just scratched the surface of what websites really are, and we haven't even begun to create websites of our own. In your journal, come up with three goals for yourself this unit. These could be related to improving on one of our class practices, learning how to make a specific kind of web site, or creating a site that serves some purpose for you or others.

Standards Alignment

View full course alignment

CSTA K-12 Computer Science Standards (2017)

▶ **IC** - Impacts of Computing

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