

Nicholas Westbrook
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Analysis of Learners and Contexts

Nicholas Westbrook

Dr. Kim, Instructional Design Principles

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Introduction:

This analysis is to better understand the nature of the learners that the instruction will be designed for. Through observations and personal experiences, various aspects of the learners will be understood in order to better instruct the perspective students. From there, the design will be able to take on characteristics of the audience in question. Learners will then have to understand a few basics before entering the instruction, which will ultimately be determined by a short questionnaire before “entering” the course.

General Characteristics

The intended learners will be young, twenty-something-year-olds fresh from college. These are individuals who have been taken the time to write some work that they believe is ready for publication. These individuals come from various cultural backgrounds, as well as various genders. While age is a factor in publication choices, the instruction is mostly designed for 22 to 26 year old individuals who have never been published before. The program should work for learners older than this determined age group, but the instruction will benefit individuals within the specified age limit. Factors like knowledge of technology and ability to use email and word processor programs.

Economic factors may play an important part in the instruction. Most of the learners will need enough of an education to read and write, but theoretically this will be in place before entering the course since they will need some formal education in order to have written the work in the first place. Jobs may vary, but the primary audience will most likely be individuals who have part-time work. Socioeconomic factors are important, mainly to determine those who would be interested in seeking out self-publishing options.

The most important factor of the audience is that they have a piece of writing that they believe is ready for publication. The learners in the course are interested in getting their work published and are interested in seeing the options that are available to them as an author.

Specific Entry Competencies

The skills before entering the instruction will be decided by a brief questionnaire the learner will have to take before taking the instruction. For the best possible results, the knowledge required would be mostly writing based. The ability to use word processing computer programs and an understanding of the Internet is important for options that are primarily digital publishing interests.

Questions on the entry questionnaire would include questions such as:

1. How familiar are you with word processing programs on the computer (such as Microsoft Word or TextEdit)? Do you know how to use email for corresponding with individuals in the industry?
2. Is the manuscript already completed? Is the manuscript edited properly?
3. Are you familiar with Internet browsers? How familiar are you with searching the web for companies or services?
4. Do you often consult friends about your writing? Do you have an editor?
5. How familiar are you with the options of publishing?
6. Have you tried to publish through one medium of publication before?

These questions (and others) will determine if the individual is prepared to examine options for attempting publishing. By determining these factors, the instructor will better understand the learner's needs going into the project.

Learning Styles

The number of methods that people learn varies with each individual. It is difficult to narrow down a single learning style that applies to every individual. However, for the most part, the learners in question are mostly visual learners. The ability to read and write has had an impact on the crowd and most have developed their style through writing as well as reading other writers. As far as Gregorc's model is concerned, the most valuable style would best be marked as Concrete Random. In this particular instruction, the learners will discover their options by examining their situation and learning about each of the methods in question. Perspective authors work best alone or in small workshops, so the instruction would probably be beneficial if it could be taught in small groups or as something the learner could experience alone.

Motivation

Learners will have attention on the instruction because it could directly impact the success or failure of their manuscript. The instruction will have a direct effect on the learners because it will provide them with more information about their options when it comes to choosing the appropriate method of publication. The instruction will give the learners confidence when approaching their publishing options as what they truly feel is best for their manuscript. With the instruction completed, the students will receive immediate rewards from the knowledge that they gain. Less immediate rewards will come when they have the confidence to attempt their preferred method of publication, whether that means gaining more knowledge about publishing options they already know or gaining new information about methods they were not already aware of.

Learners will also be motivated by the grades of the test units. This would motivate them to maintain knowledge of the course, so they can present their final argument in an intelligent manner and so they can actively contribute to group discussions.

Analyzing of Learning Contexts

Learning Environment:

The instructional activities will mostly take place in the individual's home as well as (in some cases) a small classroom setting. Learners can develop an understanding in the comfort of their own home or in a small group. They will also have the quiet needed to work at their own place. Somehow, in the course of the instruction, the learner will have to be able to access the Internet in order to research their options for publication. They will also, most likely, need access to a library in order to further research their options (particularly concerning agents, where resources are available at the library).

The students will have to develop an understanding of technology (most of which will be further explained as the instructor goes through the course). The learners, by the end of the course, will have the ability to decide what method of publication they would like to use. This means that they will have to understand the options available of digital and self-publishing websites.

Site Constraints:

The instruction would have to occur somewhere with access to computers and access to some form of Internet. Students will need to access the sites and also have access to email for contacting agents. Most of this will depend upon the individual, but can also be found at the local public library for reference materials. At the library,

individuals can access books and websites related to publishing options. It also provides a quiet space for individuals to work.

At a public library, it's possible for people to gather all of the information that they need, while also having the space needed to work. As far as timing is a factor, learners will be able to work at a pace that makes them comfortable so they can absorb all of the information needed to make a properly informed decision concerning their options.

Analyzing the Performance Context:

Compatibility of the site with instructional requirements:

The site can be very flexible, since the work is mostly done alone. The learner will be able to work and research alone, but there are also options for group work.

Groups can meet in the library and cooperate in small meeting groups.

Adaptability of the site to simulate workplace:

The author's "workplace" is difficult to understand because many authors have different workplaces. One author may prefer to work alone in their office, while another may prefer the hustle of a coffee shop. However, the option of the library presents a few options for different types of workers. Authors can work in silent, small areas or work in a public area where the bustle will resemble the coffee house enough. The library (as a site) offers a number of options for workplace adaptability.

Adaptability for delivery approaches:

The delivery approach will mostly be individual work. The instruction will be something that the perspective author will read and possibly interpret in a small group.

The approach, however, can also be transformed into a one-on-one atmosphere or a

slightly larger lecture setting. The information will be the same, but the delivery can change to fit the learner needs as they arise.

Learning-site constraints affecting design and delivery:

The site shouldn't affect the design or the delivery. Most likely, the instruction will be formatted as a fair amount of individual work. The learning-site should provide a range of levels of noise and private. Depending on the learners preference, the site can adapt to their needs while still being an effective method of delivery.

Pre-Instruction Questionnaire

1. Do you have a completed manuscript? Describe it (length, type of writing, part of a series).
2. Have you edited the manuscript? Have you used a professional service or trusted your friends and family to edit it?
3. Are you familiar with word processor programs like Microsoft Word or TextEdit?
4. How familiar are you with Internet browsers? Can you perform basic functions online (web searches, email)?
5. Describe your previous experiences with publishing. Have you ever successfully been published?
6. Are you familiar with all options of publishing? What options are you aware of?
7. What are some of your goals for your finished and published manuscript? Do you care more about making money with the work or do you care more about being seen by a wide audience?
8. Describe what you know about traditional publishing methods. Do you know anything about agents?
9. Describe what you know about digital publishing.
10. Describe what you know about self-publishing.