

Discussion Activity

Context: *At this stage of the semester, students are familiar with the basic expectations of the discussions, such as due dates and content guidelines. I use Discord as a community-building discussion tool, rather than Brightspace, as Discord facilitates community-oriented discussions better than our LMS. Students are split into even/odd discussion groups and have roles that give them access to their specific channels in Discord.*

This week, we're practicing identifying audience needs through a new piece of usability testing: **writing tasks**. You'll go out into the world this semester and test with humans outside this course, so I want to be sure we have significant and thoughtful experience within our digital space before we do that. Class is a safe environment to get some practice in.

Tasks should relate to what you're trying to test for. If you're testing an app's interface, the tasks should have the user explore the app's interface. If you're testing a game's instructions, the tasks should relate to the player engaging with the instructions. If tasks are too broad or too narrow, you risk not getting the data you need to make improvements.

We've got some tips!

- Avoid biased phrases that lead users. For example, "Add to cart and click Buy Now to complete the purchase," leads users because it tells them what to do too directly.
- Include exploratory tasks that encourage the user to explore the website; this reveals unexpected usability problems.
- Make tasks actionable to help users understand what they need to do (find, add, move, subscribe, enter, complete, buy, etc.)

Posting

Using the Insomnia Cookies example from this week's video as a guide, choose a game or website from the list below and design three user goals and three tasks that address these goals.

Games:

- [Assessment Examination](#) (horror)
- [Please Answer Carefully](#) (horror)
- [Seedship](#) (sci-fi)
- [You are Jeff Bezos](#) (roleplaying)
- [All Hail the Spider God](#) (interactive fiction)
- [Parable](#) (roleplaying)
- [Drench](#) (puzzle)

Websites:

- [Smithsonian Magazine](#)
- [World History Encyclopedia](#)
- [The Pudding](#)
- [Wikipedia](#)

Responding

This week, you will respond to your peers by trying out their tasks and reporting back. Based on the stated goal, did you successfully complete the task? How does the task relate to the goal? Now that you've explored the artifact, what is a task that would also address one of the stated goals?