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|  | ENG 375 |

Memo

To: Professor Doug Eyman

From: Nicole A. Roth

Date: February 17, 2016

Re: Final Project Proposal

 Purpose

Several years ago I sat in a panel and became inspired by a group of artists who advocated for the use of graphic novels and comics in the classroom. While my experience had been limited I was inspired to pursue a way to advocate for accessible texts that children and young adults can feel connected to and bring an alternative approach to literacy. My hope is that the website I create will function as a repository of titles recommended for use by both non-profit organizations and academics.

 Product

The surface plane will be comprised of the many images of texts with comic-themed coloring.

The skeleton plane will begin with a homepage that will then separate out into areas of interest. There are several options here covering age appropriate texts, topics of reader interest (ex: gender, disability, diversity studies) and assigned reading levels. The last item may be difficult to gauge as not all books will be associated with a reading level, but I would still like to investigate the possibility of pursuing this option. Separating works between reader interest will possibly break out into disciplines as there are several emerging works that teach (with as much accuracy as standard texts) history, science, and beyond. It would serve my site to highlight these areas.

The structure plane, will map out much like Garrett proposes in his text. Simply framed, the site will start out from the home page and extend to themed pages regarding the reader interest. They should be cross-linked where appropriate but not to the point of a matrix approach, which seems beyond the time requirements for this class.

The scope plane holds the map to those pieces of the structure plane. My intention is to arrange topics in a clearly accessible way that the users won’t have to have too many clicks to get to their intended information. Many users may not know what they are looking for, but will hopefully not become frustrated by a complex maze of approaches to the information.

The strategy plane is summarized in this document.

 Audience

**Primary audience:** While I would like to say the readers themselves would be the primary audience, my education around children’s literature is enough to tell me that it will be parents and teachers researching these texts. Therefore, while careful to maintain a tone that is accessible to young readers, the content will more than likely “sell” the idea of graphic novels to adults. Like walking into a bookstore, this site will draw them in and impress upon them the need for literacy and the value of a medium that uses both text and images to tell a story. I hope to use a longtime friend as well as her daughter to assess the user experience and expectations. I have also discussed and worked with a graduate student in education at Marymount University for the last two years on incorporating graphic novels into her curriculum where it was permitted. If time permits, I may attempt to have an adult with negative opinions towards graphic novels review the site for feedback.

**Secondary audience:** The secondary audience would be comprised of those interested parties seeking a repository of texts. When looking for a text on disability in children’s graphic novels, it is difficult to identify those works that are appropriate. The secondary audience will potentially be using the site for academic research or personal interest. Either way information should be complete and thorough. At this point in time, anyone with an interest in the use of graphic novels to encourage alternative reading or with an interest in broadening their perspective on graphic novels would be an appropriate measure of the site’s success.

 Functional Specifications and Content Requirements

I intend to encourage the use of graphic novels with academic support. The most appropriate place for this explanation would be in an “About the Project” space that sets up the importance of reading initiatives specifically centered around comics and graphic novels. I plan to incorporate a section directing users to ways to engage with organizations that are working to bring graphic novels and comics into the hands of children and young adults. I envision a homepage design that would be recognizable to the average user (similar layout to other sites) with a very small click to product number.

 Similar Sites

*I Love Libraries Article*

<http://www.ilovelibraries.org/article/best-graphic-novels-children#K-2>

While I appreciate that a list has been compiled here, this is an article on a site. I am seeking to dedicate my website to this very thing. The compilation is good, however it links to Worldcat which is not necessarily helpful for non-academics seeking to bring their reader an alternative approach. I plan to utilize this list to build my own.

*Good Bad Ok*

<http://goodokbad.com/kids/>

This site rates graphic novels based on the author’s assessment. This list is more thorough than the previous site. I do not anticipate fueling the site with my own opinions on individual texts, merely listing and linking to each one that has been highly reviewed.

Similar Sites continued

*Association for Library Service to Children*

<http://www.ala.org/alsc/graphicnovels2013>

Another article listing texts. While many of these sites have strong book lists, none are marketing to at-home consumers. I hope to make my site appealing to consumers and bring direct avenues to purchasing opportunities.

Tentative Project Timeline

2/17: Final Project Proposal Due

2/24: Engage with the Strategy Plane: Identify project objectives and User needs. This will involve reading current articles in the area to locate the particular user requirements of the project. Establishing personas will be the most effective tool for this.

3/2: Begin structure design and content acquisition.

3/9: Continue to develop structure, coding pages.Content acquisition continues.

3/16: Have finalized pages set and place content.

3/23:Continue to adapt code to meet structure requirements.

3/30: Begin development of CSS for site.

4/6: Continue CSS and display graphics for site.

4/13: Troubleshooting site issues.

4/20: Finalized site produced.

4/27: Backup date for finalized site completion.

5/4: Completed site and project report turned in.