

How Web 2 can help educators find and share great eTeaching ideas

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Overview

- The Dream of Education Sharing
- Problems
- The Rise of Collaboration
- Dream 2.0?
- Case Study: LAMS and the LAMS Community
- Reflections for the Future

The Dream of Education Sharing

- Many big e-learning projects over the past decade have been based on an often unstated dream:

“If educators shared online resources they have developed in their area of expertise, and these were available through a global collection, then education could be transformed by:

- Greater efficiency (through mass reuse of shared resources)
- &
- Improved educational effectiveness (through many educators using the work of experts – rather than each reinventing the wheel)

The Dream of Educational Sharing

- It is an argument for improving education and saving time/money
 - Very attractive idea.... in theory
- This dream is behind much of the work on Learning Objects, descriptive metadata, repositories, search protocols and many other related projects
 - And the strength of feeling during fights over these topics is hard to understand without a sense of the dream

Problems

- In all my time working in this field, I have rarely heard the dream stated clearly so that its assumptions could be questioned
- There is a strong tendency to just debate the “details”
 - For example, debates over which metadata fields to adopt rather than debates over when educators would want to reuse someone else’s content, and if they did, whether they would use metadata searching as the way to find it

Problems

- While there are considerable technical problems to be solved if the dream is to be achieved, there are also many “human” problems
 - Why would an educator go to the effort of sharing their work?
 - What are the rewards/incentives?
 - Are people sharing their work for free or for a fee?
 - If for a fee, how would an e-learning marketplace work?
 - Do we understand when educators want to build materials for themselves versus when they are happy to use others’?
 - Have we researched the failure of uptake for past projects based on the dream?

Problems

- Before moving on, two questions and a comment:
 - How did hundreds of millions of dollars get spent without deeply investigating what educators actually did with content from others, or what they wanted?

 - How did this area of work fail to recognise that there were several billion dollar education businesses based on similar assumptions?
 - Textbook publishers

 - Overall, I think the field mostly failed (with one unexpected exception – which we tend to “tut tut” about anyway)

The Rise of Collaboration

- In recent years, we've seen a greater emphasis on the benefits of collaboration using technology
 - In student learning (online discussion, wikis, conferencing)
 - In work and play (Web 2 tools & social networking platforms)
- Our image of knowledge work and learning is now less the “solitary thinker” and the “individual learner”, but rather team-based problem solving and learning
 - A key point from recent Gartner reports (thanks to Daniel Tan)
 - Both synchronous and asynchronous

The Rise of Collaboration

- Web 2.0 has come to mean different things to different people, but some key concepts relevant here are:
 - “The wisdom of crowds”
 - “User-generated content”
 - “Commons-based peer production”
 - “Cognitive surplus”
- Can we harness these concepts for the dream of educational sharing?

Dream 2.0?

- A new version of the dream focuses less on Learning Objects, metadata & search, and instead looks at how community processes can encourage sharing and adoption of educational resources
- And “educational resources” is too narrow – we are no longer talking about just content/multimedia, but also activity tools and collaborative learning experiences
 - Which has seen more use: educational content, or (content-free) educational platforms like LMS, Wikis, etc?

Dream 2.0?

- Educators are interested in know who else is using educational resources, what they think about them, and how they can edit/adapt resources to their local student needs
- Ideal for Web 2.0 approaches to education sharing
- So is it that simple?
 - Learning Objects 1.0 + Web 2.0 = Transformation of global education through sharing?

Conclusion

- Yes
- Any questions?

Not so fast...

- In theory this sounds promising, but reality is often far more complex and nuanced than big picture theory would suggest
- Example: Why did Facebook succeed when MySpace was more successful first?

Case Study

- Learning Design is a new field of e-learning that focuses on sequences of student activities
 - Combining both content and collaboration
 - Step-by-step approach
- Educators can share the sequences they have built, so others can benefit from reusing or adapting them
 - Extends the concept of shared education content to shared “eTeaching ideas”
 - Sharing “how to teach” not just “what to teach”

Case Study

- My work in the field of Learning Design is on “LAMS” (see www.lamsfoundation.org) - open source
- Three main areas:
 - Teacher authoring interface for creating/editing sequences
 - Student environment for running all student activities
 - Teacher Monitoring area for tracking student progress
- Demonstration: “Predict – Observe – Explain”
 - Using www.lessonlams.com - new website for LAMS trials

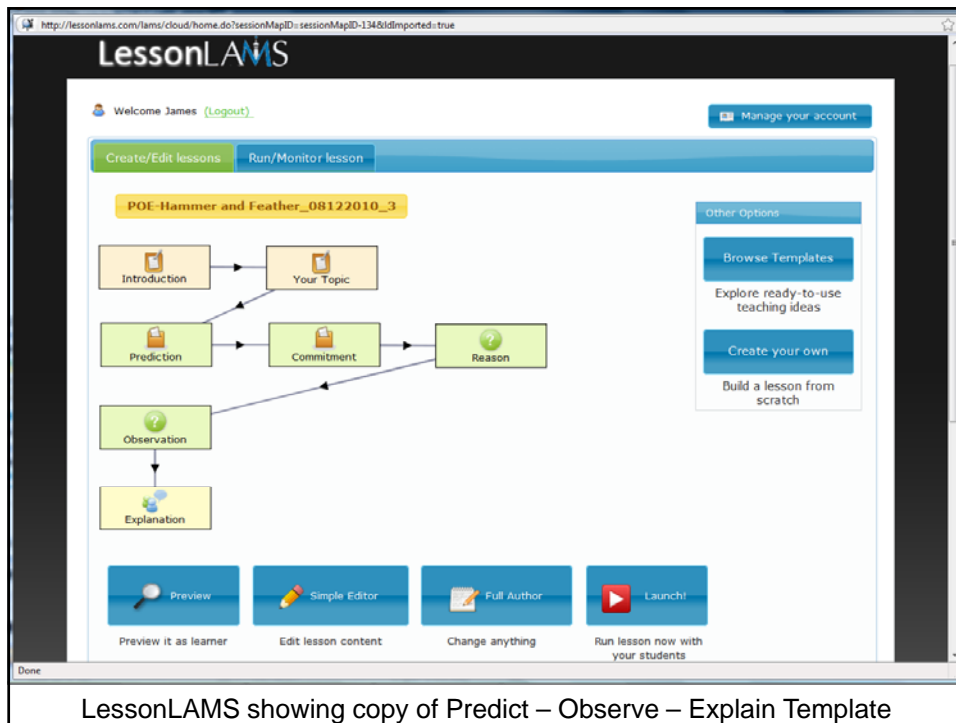
The screenshot shows a Mozilla Firefox browser window displaying a LAMS sequence page. The page title is "Predict-Observe-Explain" and the subtitle is "LAMS Sequence: POE- Hammer and Feather". The author is listed as "By: James Dalziel" with a Creative Commons license icon. The main content is a flowchart with the following steps: Introduction (yellow box) points to Your Topic (yellow box). Prediction (green box) points to Commitment (green box). Observation (green box) points to Reason (green box). Explanation (yellow box) points to Reason (green box). There are also arrows from Your Topic to Commitment and from Commitment to Reason. At the bottom of the flowchart, there is a "Zoom" icon and three buttons: "Preview", "Open in LessonLAMS", and "Full Info". On the right side of the page, there is an "About the Author" section with a photo of James Dalziel and his title: "James Dalziel is Professor of Learning Technology and Director of the Macquarie E-Learning Centre Of Excellence (MELCOE) at Macquarie University in Sydney, Australia." Below this is a "Resources" section with links to "LAMS", "LAMS Community", "Sequence Repository", and "LAMS International". The browser's address bar shows the URL "http://practicaleteachingstrategies.com/strategies/poe.html".

Predict – Observe – Explain: Content example

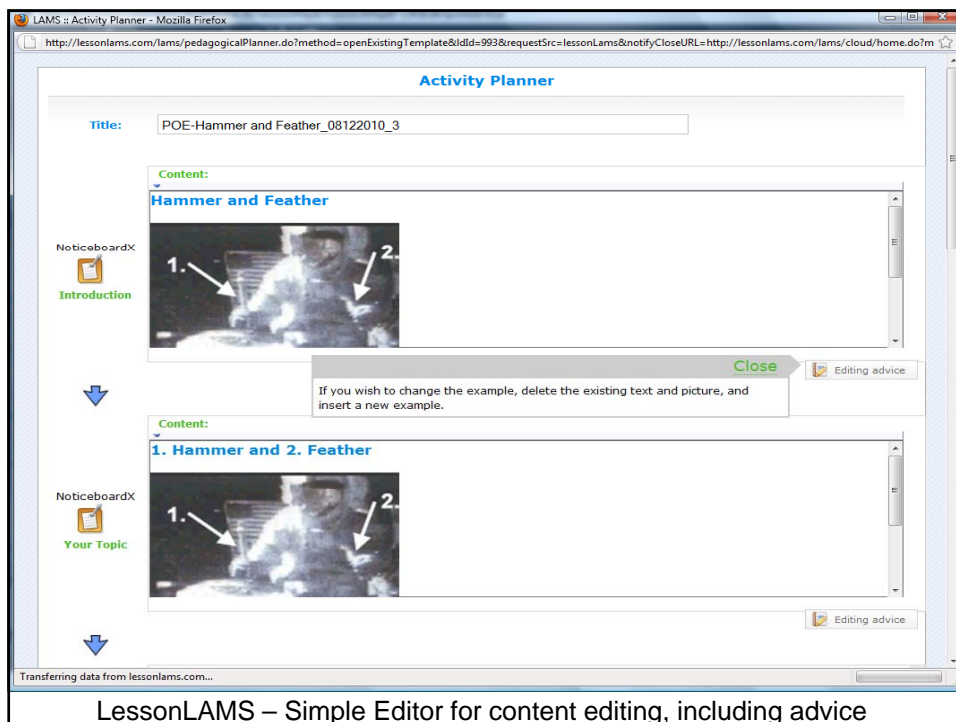
Predict – Observe – Explain: Preview (student view) of Content Example

Case Study

- While sequences can be shared and re-used “as is”, LAMS supports the Web 2.0 idea of every educator being a creator/editor
 - LAMS authoring provides features to change a sequence
- Also, templates can be created where the pedagogical structure is provided, and the educator only needs to add their own discipline content
 - That is, sharing “great eTeaching ideas”
 - Demonstration using Predict-Observe-Explain template



LessonLAMS showing copy of Predict – Observe – Explain Template



LessonLAMS – Simple Editor for content editing, including advice

The screenshot displays the LAMS Author software interface. The main workspace shows a flowchart with the following nodes and connections:

- Introduction (orange box) connects to Your Topic (orange box).
- Prediction (green box) connects to Commitment (green box).
- Commitment (green box) connects to Reason (green box).
- Reason (green box) connects to Observation (green box).
- Observation (green box) connects to Explanation (yellow box).

The left sidebar, titled 'Activities Toolkit', lists various activity types: Assessment, Chat, Chat and Scribe, Data Collection, Forum, Forum & Scribe, Gmap, Image Gallery, Mindmap, Multiple Choice, Notebook, Noticeboard, Pixlr, Q & A, Resources&Forum, and Share Resources. The bottom status bar indicates 'LessonLAMS – Full Author: Change anything about template'.

Case Study

- To complement the LAMS software, there is an online community of practice – the LAMS Community
 - www.lamscommunity.org
- Community environment for sharing sequences, including Web 2 style features such as tracking downloads, ratings, comments, etc
- Demonstration

The screenshot shows the LAMS Community website interface. The main navigation bar includes 'My Space', 'My Files', and 'Control Panel'. The 'NEWS' section is currently empty. The 'FORUMS' section is organized into several categories:

- Educational Community**
 - Weekly Newsletter
- Getting Started**
 - Educational Support
 - Getting Started
- Higher Ed & Training**
 - Higher Ed & Training Forum
- K - 12 Schools**
 - K - 12 Schools Forum
- LAMS @ MQ**
 - LAMS @ MQ Forum
- LAMS Lounge**
 - LAMS Lounge Forum
- Non-English Speaking Community**
 - LAMS alla Italiana!
 - LAMS en Español!
- Research and Development**
 - Articles and Presentations about LAMS
 - Teaching with LAMS - experiences

The 'GROUPS' section lists several communities:

- Educational Community
 - Getting Started
 - K - 12 Schools
 - Higher Ed & Training
 - Research and Development
- Technical Community
 - LAMS Lounge
 - LAMS @ MQ
 - Non-English Speaking Community

The 'FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQS)' table is as follows:

Name	Group
Authoring and Monitoring	K - 12 Schools
General Tech Questions about LAMS	Technical Community
Getting Started	Getting Started
Learner's view	K - 12 Schools
Teaching and Learning	K - 12 Schools
Using LAMS	Getting Started

LAMS Community – View of various communities & forums

The screenshot displays the 'LAMS SEQUENCES' repository page. It features a search bar and a table of public sequences. The table is organized into sections for different community groups:

- Public Sequences (14 sequences)**

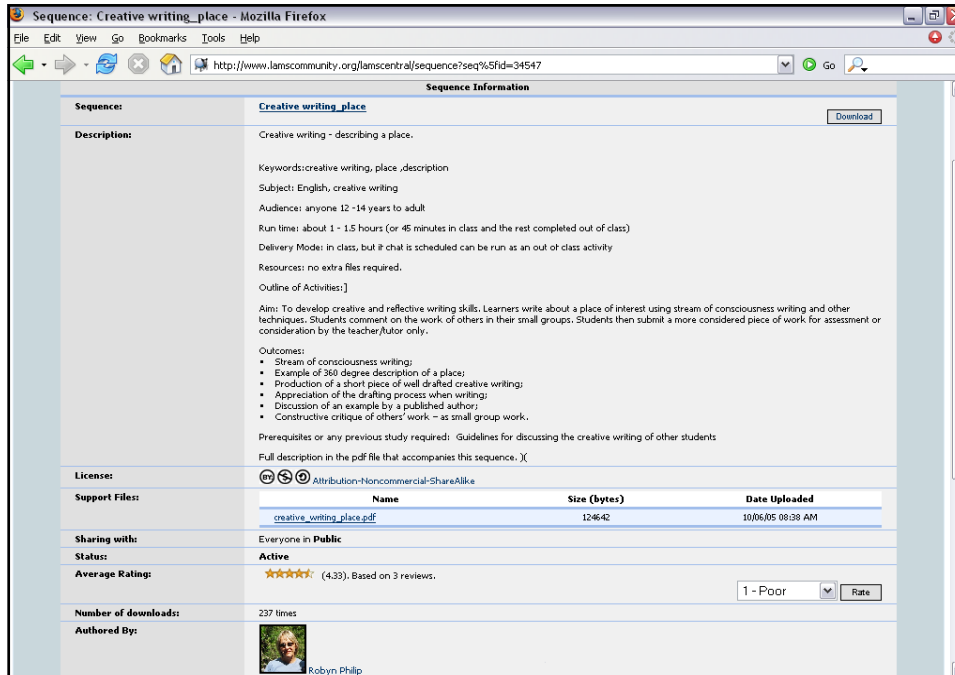
Title	Ratings	Downloads	Author	Date
History of Electricity	★★★★★	41	Debbie Evans	21-May-2006
Displaying...	★★★★☆	9	Jun-Dir Liew	4-May-2006
Mural Design	★★★★★	88	Andrew Lovell-Simons	2-Feb-2006
Choosing a Moodle 1.9	★★★★★	150	Donna Gibbs	5-Dec-2005
Creative writing place	★★★★★	237	Robyn Philip	24-Nov-2005
- LAMS @ MQ (1 sequences)**

Title	Ratings	Downloads	Author	Date
Managing Community	★★★★☆	7	Angela Voerman	11-Oct-2005
- Getting Started (2 sequences)**

Title	Ratings	Downloads	Author	Date
Workshop Discussion &	★★★★☆	11	Karen Baskett	2-Mar-2006
Introductions	★★★★☆	102	Karen Baskett	21-Sep-2005
- Higher Ed & Training (22 sequences)**

Title	Ratings	Downloads	Author	Date
TIP Stats Course ...	★★★★★	61	Bilal Barakat	19-Oct-2005
TIP Stats Course ...	★★★★★	18	Bilal Barakat	19-Oct-2005
TIP Stats Course ...	★★★★☆	4	Bilal Barakat	19-Oct-2005
TIP Stats Course ...	★★★★☆	10	Bilal Barakat	19-Oct-2005
TIP Stats Course ...	★★★★☆	9	Bilal Barakat	19-Oct-2005

LAMS Community – Repository Summary



The screenshot shows a web browser window with the title 'Sequence: Creative writing_place - Mozilla Firefox'. The address bar shows the URL 'http://www.lamscommunity.org/lamscentral/sequence?seq%5fId=34547'. The main content area is titled 'Sequence Information' and contains the following details:

- Sequences:** Creative writing_place (with a 'Download' button)
- Description:** Creative writing - describing a place.
 - Keywords: creative writing, place ,description
 - Subject: English, creative writing
 - Audience: anyone 12 -14 years to adult
 - Run time: about 1 - 1.5 hours (or 45 minutes in class and the rest completed out of class)
 - Delivery Mode: in class, but it chat is scheduled can be run as an out of class activity
 - Resources: no extra files required.
 - Outline of Activities:]
 - Aim: To develop creative and reflective writing skills. Learners write about a place of interest using stream of consciousness writing and other techniques. Students comment on the work of others in their small groups. Students then submit a more considered piece of work for assessment or consideration by the teacher/tutor only.
 - Outcomes:
 - Stream of consciousness writing;
 - Example of 360 degree description of a place;
 - Production of a short piece of well drafted creative writing;
 - Appreciation of the drafting process when writing;
 - Discussion of an example by a published author;
 - Constructive critique of others' work - as small group work.
 - Prerequisites or any previous study required: Guidelines for discussing the creative writing of other students
 - Full description in the pdf file that accompanies this sequence.)
- License:** Attribution-Noncommercial-ShareAlike
- Support Files:**

Name	Size (bytes)	Date Uploaded
creative_writing_place.pdf	124642	10/06/05 08:38 AM
- Sharing with:** Everyone in Public
- Status:** Active
- Average Rating:** ★★★★★ (4.33). Based on 3 reviews. (Rating dropdown: 1 - Poor, Rate button)
- Number of downloads:** 237 times
- Authored By:** Robyn Philip (with profile picture)

LAMS Community – Detailed view of individual sequence

Case Study

- Observations on the LAMS Community
 - Provides a working example (in a modest way) of applying Web 2.0 ideas to the original dream
 - With the dream extended to include collaborative learning
 - Downloads are popular, ratings are somewhat problematic
 - New users often have unrealistic expectations of our collection (“why haven’t you got anything on X?”)
 - Sharing is still hard to encourage – educators worry about the judgements of others, and the effort needed to share
 - Sharing with known colleagues vs the whole world

Case Study

- Observations on the LAMS Community
 - We have tried several approaches to sharing eTeaching strategies, but more work is needed on adoption
 - Do educators want more advice (eg, book to accompany templates?)
 - Do educators want discipline-specific examples only, not generic (or other discipline) examples?
 - Do educators just want to see good ideas that they can use next time they build their own sequence (inspiration rather than direct re-use)?
 - Or.....?

Case Study

- Observations on the LAMS Community
 - Little things matter – 2 examples
 - The process for previewing a sequence (student view)
 - Old: 3 clicks + account creation; New: 1 click
 - The process for getting and editing a sequence
 - Old: 10 clicks plus file download & upload & login;
New: 1 click + login
 - Benefits need to be obvious quickly, otherwise educators are unwilling to invest a lot of time up front
 - Need a graded model of user interest and involvement

Reflections for the Future

- We are still a long way from achieving the dream (with one notable exception)
 - But I think it is a worthy dream, despite its challenges
- Web 2.0 approaches are essential to the dream, but human factors matter too (incentives, psychology, etc)
- Little things have a big impact on uptake
 - Considerable fine detail work is needed in addition to an overall vision