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# JoME

*Journal of Media Education*

 **BEA**  
BROADCAST EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



## MISSION STATEMENT

The Journal of Media Education is an editor-reviewed pedagogical journal published electronically four times each year by the Broadcast Education Association. Its mission is to provide resources associated with the education and employment of students in various media fields and to promote communication among educators and media professionals.

JoME is BEA's principal forum for articles on pedagogy pertinent to the various media, industry analysis, responsive essays, reviews of books and other instructional materials, and reports on research and other work that may not fit the editorial objectives of traditional scholarly publications.

## GUIDELINES

The Journal of Media Education is an interactive publication designed to provide readers with a broad array of resources, including audio, video, slideshows, multi-media and Internet links related to the articles published. JoME is an editor-reviewed journal published electronically four times a year by the Broadcast Education Association. As a non-refereed journal, JoME publishes: (1) articles or essays dealing with pedagogical issues in any aspect of media education including, but not limited to, class syllabi, tutorials, and case studies; (2) responsive essays-especially industry analysis-reacting to issues and concerns raised by previous Feedback articles and essays; (3) scholarly papers including those presented at conferences but not published in other publications; (4) reviews of books and other instructional materials; and (5) official announcements of the BEA.

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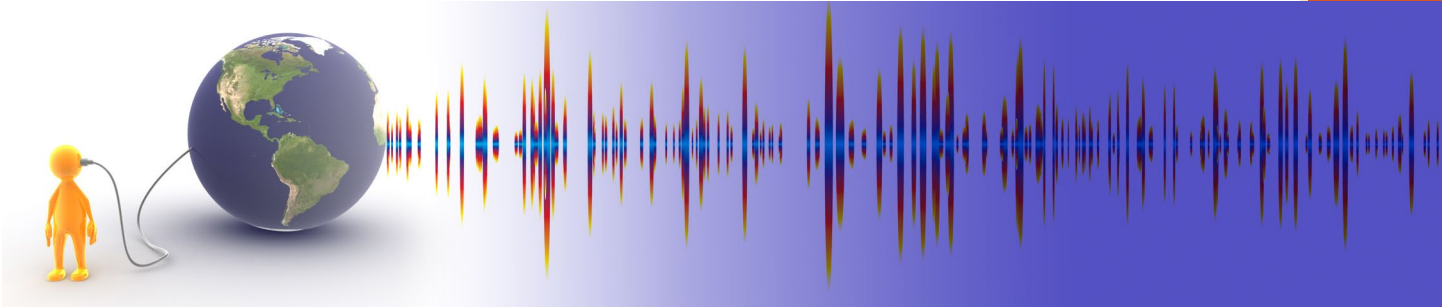
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# DIGITAL STORYTELLING, MEDIA CONVERGENCE AND THE NEW UNIVERSITY JOURNALISM CURRICULUM

[Gordon J. Murray](#)  
Kent State University

## INTRODUCTION

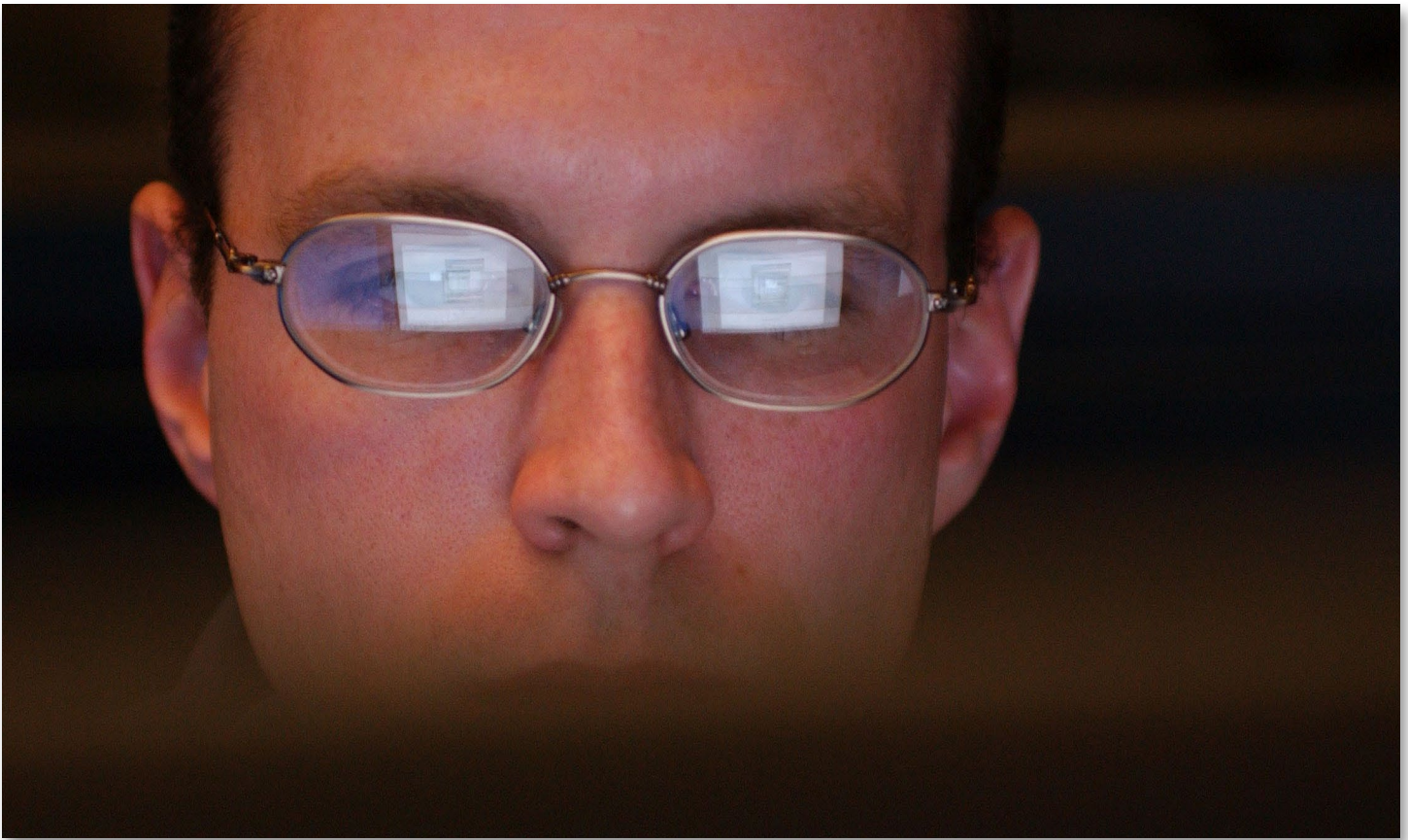
Technology changed journalism's audience. Now, the audience changes journalism. [The Pew Research Center](#) reported that in the years between 1993 and 2000 the number of people watching nightly

network news fell to 30% in 2000 from a high of 60% at the beginning of the seven-year period. The trend for local TV news viewers also slipped to 56% from a high of 77% in 1993 (Edmunds, et al 2004).

Currently, traditional newspaper reading is declining, newsprint costs are rising, and more people are gravitating to the Internet for the news they can use anytime. Journalism in the 21st century is, in a word, different. Now we access news and information via the Internet and our cell phones. We connect to networks from wireless municipal hotspots and LCD video screens in the headrests of airliner seats and taxicabs. For the first time in U.S. history, Internet video played a major role in presidential debates when [CNN](#) and [YouTube](#) partnered to produce a live forum broadcast with the online audience interacting with Democratic and Republican candidates (Terhune, 2007).

Today, news and feature stories are gathered, reported, edited and distributed digitally. The marketplace for journalists has changed remarkably, yet journalism schools have been slow to respond.





## TRANSPLANTING OUR ROOTS

Our pedagogical methods and basis for teaching journalists are literally rooted in the last century. The need to advance a beginning journalist's command of language and grammar will never change. Nor will developing their abilities to investigate, research and report. The journalism curriculum customarily has not kept pace with widespread exponential growth in the expectation for journalists to have high levels of technological literacy and competency.

Our conventional wisdom indicates journalists will increasingly need to communicate information to global audiences and diverse cultures in ways that previous generations of journalists could only have considered to be science fiction. It is no longer satisfactory for a new journalist to be able to think and write well in only one medium. A functional visual literacy across multiple media is desired and is, in fact, required in many new media organizations.

Technical competence, awareness and insight

are now imperative as digital stories are commonly transmuted into video, audio, animation, simulation and graphics. The published story is often accompanied by online interaction with the audience and newsmakers themselves. Information is communicated and distributed via social, commercial and private networks that challenge traditional concepts of audience and community.

At the turn of this century a new type of journalist emerged, the "mojo"—or, mobile journalist. These individuals routinely pack compact high-definition video cameras, digital audio recorders, wireless microphones and a laptop computer with them on investigative and reporting assignments.

With the right technology and connectivity, mojos often function as one-person news bureaus. Digital stories are almost entirely produced, written, recorded and edited in the field. The audio, video, photo and text "assets" are then uploaded via the Internet, satellite-phone or a cellular connection to be packaged and distributed in broadcast, multimedia, print and mobile

formats. With news, features and investigative stories now being framed as much for the mobile display screen as the broadsheet, it is important for journalism schools to adapt to converging media models and educate students accordingly. Journalism schools need to reinvent strategies to teach journalists to think critically, report thoroughly and write effectively across all media, rather than for any single medium in isolation. High utility, usability and interaction with content via blogs, online polls, podcasts and streaming video are becoming more important as the news is distributed in multiple venues simultaneously.

Journalism students must gain a comprehensive knowledge of producing digital stories for organizations that are transforming themselves. Old institutions are now being reconstituted into multimedia information utilities that distribute news and publish in many forms. Remember when CNN used to be the cable television news network? Now, CNN's broadcast stories are concurrently packaged with text, graphics and photos for distribution in cyberspace. The network's Internet presence competes head-to-head with former print-only publications that have likewise, launched their own online services. Virtually all former single-medium institutions now create and distribute news, information, video, audio, photo essays and features online. Newly emerging social networks market and promote the ubiquitous content augmented by user commentary and contributions from participants.

## NEW MILLENIUM MEASURES

The following prescription focuses on six potential strategies for reinventing the journalism curriculum. The strategies evolved from my

research interests to develop an innovative approach that could be easily applied in teaching practice. I wanted an approach that would have high value for both the professor and the student. What emerged was a partnership between

the Kent State University School of Journalism, Apple's successful worldwide professional certification program, and Lynda.Com, an award-winning provider of state-of-the-art training materials.

Primary objectives include: a) Improve current pedagogical practices; b) Introduce new methods and materials to significantly

enhance teaching in a converged media environment; c) Amplify student learning and; d) Increase the comprehensive knowledge and technological literacy of our students so they may perform well in their service to inform the public interest.

This effort targets the convergence journalism curriculum for improvement. But the approach and methods may also benefit interdisciplinary courses and fields of study where technical mastery of computer software applications and sophisticated hardware in applied settings is desired. These methods will enhance teaching at both the undergraduate and graduate levels. When applied within a theoretical framework and in combination with best practices for a particular course or discipline, it is expected student learning will improve and faculty stress will diminish.

## REINVENTION STRATEGIES

### 1. Use a digital textbook.

Take advantage of evolving online services that must continuously update their multimedia resources to remain competitive in the market-

**The marketplace for journalists has changed remarkably, yet journalism schools have been slow to respond.**

place. Integrate these resources with teaching to facilitate your students' mastery of current software.

I used to spend several weeks preparing custom content for each semester's Cybermedia Design, Nonlinear Editing and Multimedia Techniques courses. Now, I let an online service provider worry about keeping tutorials up-to-date with the incessant upgrades and revisions for each software tool I use in class. This permits me to focus on teaching. I can spend more time improving craft, developing integration concepts across tools, and helping students build a good narrative storytelling technique to compliment their developing technical skills.

After reviewing several free and fee-based online tutorial services, I chose the courses distributed by [Lynda.Com](http://Lynda.Com). The subscription price was competitive and the online instructors who record the video tutorials are generally above average. Many have significant experience and are well known in their respective fields of expertise. The tutorial content is delivered via an inexpensive Internet subscription. This "live" textbook can be watched as any video might from a broadband connection.

The hardcopy textbooks, software manuals and printed tutorials I formerly used were frequently out-of-date before they shipped to the university bookstore. Often, these resources would drain upwards of \$180-\$200 from each of my students' savings accounts. These books are now replaced with a semester-long subscription to five complete software course titles containing an average of 30 hours of instruction. The cost to the student for everything is about \$36.

The tutorials are organized and delivered in bite-size video chunks and are keyed to particular techniques and processes within a given application. Clip durations vary with particular titles. The typical range is around 3-12 minutes per video clip. I rarely use the tutorials in the live classroom. Instead, I assign about a dozen tutorials each week to coincide with material we

are covering. This maximizes interaction time in class. Regardless of when they watch the videos, student progress is tracked automatically. Complicated software processes and tasks in the tutorials can be reviewed and repeated as necessary for mastery by the student in the classroom, lab or dorm.

Using video tutorials has the extra benefit of catering to the needs of a wide variety of students with varying skill levels. The advanced student who wants to move quickly and experiment with a more sophisticated process is provided with a full menu of possibilities and no limitation on how fast, or how far to progress through the software titles. Conversely, for the student who may be intimidated by technology, or just needs more time with basic techniques, the tutorials provide a means for low-stress remediation and an opportunity for controlled repetition to learn a basic concept. In short, the learner has greater control over the potential outcome than in a traditional lecture-bound course.

## **2. Develop multiple competencies.**

Look for ways to help students integrate and combine media from multiple analog and digital sources. Teach them to first seek out and discover the limitations of particular software – overcoming limitations in one tool, often means creatively resolving it with another.

There will never be just one piece of software that does everything for a journalist, so it is important to learn how to intermingle processes and tools to maximize efficiency and achieve the desired results. While students are learning to use specific techniques between a few applications, I am helping them understand an efficient workflow to deploy among all of the software tools in combination.

For example, in a typical digital storytelling or narrative multimedia assignment, students write a first draft with an analog pen on paper. They may revise the story or compose it directly with Microsoft Word. From there, the writers



head into an audio suite to record a narration track in their own voices using Audacity. Since this software is freely available on the Web, some students download it to a laptop to record and edit at home. Other audio source material and interviews might come from MP3 recorders and require file conversion with the software tool, Switch.

Photographs are captured via a flatbed scanner and imported into Photoshop for scaling and color correction. Other images and video may be downloaded from a camera disk, ingested from hard drives and DV tape or gathered from Internet sources. Music is often acquired from Creative Commons Web sites like, [www.jamendo.com](http://www.jamendo.com) or [www.soundclick.com](http://www.soundclick.com).

For more sophisticated stories, the music, images, video and audio are composited, edited and mixed in Final Cut Pro. Titles and text effects might be created with LiveType. Video is exported and converted for the Web with the Flash Video Encoder or batch processed with Compressor. Simple photo/audio essays may be created and exported directly with SoundSlides and uploaded with Fetch, or incorporated into a custom Web site design with Dreamweaver.

Intermediate media resources might be captured directly from the computer monitor with SnapZ Pro, or Grab and previewed in Firefox and Safari, or presented via Preview and Quicktime players.

It is important to build the student's proficiency with a lot of applications, and the online tutorials are a good way to help achieve this goal. Can't remember how to build an alpha-channel effect in Final Cut Pro? Play the video tutorial in one window and follow along with the actual application in another. Eventually, each software tool becomes just one of many possibilities from which the journalist can select to solve a problem, while optimizing output for as many users as possible.

### 3. Standards based assessment and profes-

### sional industry certification.

Consider developing relevant curricula in concert with objective standards-based assessments and professional certification criteria recognized by the industry.

Even in a down-market, demand for tech-savvy journalists is high. Competition for graduates with technical skill and journalistic talent is keen among potential employers.

I am presently using Blackboard to model certain online quizzes and tests to approximate Apple's [Pro Certification Exams](#) for some of the technology courses I teach. This helps to prepare students to sit for an external Level One comprehensive exam for a particular software application that coincides with completion of the university course. The examinations are administered by [Prometric](#) and are proctored by local third-party providers. Using this strategy, students choose to be trained to professional certification standards with specific technology tools in concert with their university education as a journalist. The extra credential and recognition help to distinguish students in the job interview with future employers.

### 4. Use current resources to experiment and practice.

Provide students with access to the most current resources available and leverage assets to use inside, and outside of class for experimentation and practice.

For example, in the context of my university course, Nonlinear Video Editing, students work with raw commercial video content produced for National Geographic, SeaWorld, and the syndicated network television program Monk. As a working director and videographer, I also bring my own raw footage and content to class for students to use. If you don't have anything of your own to share, talk to colleagues and professionals in your field and ask them for multimedia, video files, scripts, audio and sound bites, animations and images for students to use in a particular





assignment. Students learn from seeing what you and your colleagues are doing and they will benefit from interacting with professional work-product, resources and techniques.

### **5. Motivate with digital stories and narratives.**

Encourage students to produce their own digital stories and experiment with forms of narrative non-fiction. The first-person narrative is an excellent means to introduce new journalists to converged technology processes because the student starts with a personal story that is meaningful, compelling and immediately accessible. Consider using the techniques developed by the [Center for Digital Storytelling](#) (Also see Lambert, 2006) as a jumping-off point for an assignment. One method provides students with a post-card sized piece of paper and ten minutes to complete a personal story with a beginning, middle and an end.

Ideas get modified in a “story circle” with

other authors and then each writer must turn their text into a digital story with moving images, narration and music. When properly motivated to create a successful narrative story in a digital format, the production and post-production techniques, as well as the overall converged media processes become more relevant, useful and satisfying. The experience gained transfers to other forms of news writing, reporting, story development and production.

### **6. Web delivery with portfolio and peer review.**

Integrate all story production with Web delivery and never complete a course without an opportunity for peer review, or some form of portfolio-based evaluation. The peer- and portfolio-review process provide a context and a means of comparison for each student to assess their success. The portfolio can be a simple container for the semester’s work, or a comprehensive record of the best efforts in an

academic career. In either case, the common denominator is that the portfolio needs to be online to facilitate review by faculty and peers. When student work is available on the Web, it is easy to share, compare, comment upon and analyze relative to intended goals and expectations.

I teach a PMI (Plus, Minus, Interesting) technique developed by De Bono (1994) to my students for use during in-class critiques. Each student presents their own work via the same video screen at the front of the room and we discuss the relative success of concept, approach and execution in common terms. The PMI technique helps to focus student attention in particular areas and structures the overall discussion in a productive format. It is also very important to encourage students to expand the scope and utility of what they produce beyond class assignments. Suggest incorporating work within popular podcasts, streaming video and blogs to solicit feedback and comments from peers and the general public.

I recently started requiring students to distribute their work product to contests and social media sites as an alternate means of feedback. The simple act of submitting their own content to outside review serves to break down the barriers between class assignments and work in the real world.

Regardless of the outcome, the biggest win comes from students being exposed to a larger sample of work from their peers and others who may be competing for the same job. Upon completion of their degrees, the Web-based portfolios students have developed over time may be further refined to become a crucial part of the new graduate's overall job-seeking strategy.

## SIGNIFICANCE

The particular methods employed here have a high degree of fidelity with learning science that consistently demonstrates students learn more when they interact with material, with each other, and with faculty. (Oblinger, 2005).

The pedagogical basis of this approach breaks with conventional "talk, teach, test" methods that research shows are not highly effective with most learners. Students do best

when they actively construct their own knowledge. In addition, there is a positive correlation between student interaction and knowledge, and a positive correlation between interaction and student retention. (Kuh, 2000). The combined approach and networked technology of these strategies makes it possible to provide learners with anytime, anywhere content and interactions if desired. The content and processes closely model the practical convergence and application of media in a meaningful and useful form that will benefit students' occupational competency.

The strategies acknowledge the social nature of digital natives, and the NextGen students' desire for experiential learning. That the practices and processes also closely reflect the convergence of media in society is an entirely useful and expected outcome. This benefits students directly and meets the goals of the journalism school in several ways. It supports the overall objective for an interdisciplinary ethos; encourages innovation in learning and underscores the values of professional journalism. Students will gain tactical insight into how media converge to communicate facts and information to a broad audience. Combining this approach with traditional methods will allow us to educate future leaders of the profession rather than simply providing students with a recipe for clever use of software

**Students learn from seeing what you and your colleagues are doing...**

applications. Huesca (2000, p.14) for example, encourages faculty to be “flexible, creative, and open-minded experimenters who are not wedded to given conventions of journalism,” and he advocates against “mere incorporation.” He argues instead, that the academy must be willing to reinvent journalism education and experiment with “practices that are congruent with the imputed properties of cyberspace.” Likewise, journalism scholarship must be professional, and include being “committed to important social ends” and “testing theory in the field” (Cohen, 2001, pp. 6-7).

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## MANUSCRIPT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES

(Pedagogical Articles/Essays, Responsive Essays, and Scholarly Papers)

1. One electronic copy of the manuscript must be submitted for initial review. Authors should submit a copy via e-mail as a Microsoft Word document to David.Byland@okbu.edu.
2. The manuscript text must be double-spaced, and if research is cited, adhere to the current edition of the American Psychological Association (APA) style manual.
3. Articles are limited to 3000 words or less, and Essays to 1500 words or less. Charts, graphs, supplemental graphics, video clips, audio clips, slideshows, multi-media, and Internet links are **strongly encouraged** as JoME is an interactive on-line publication.
4. Submissions must be carefully proofread to ensure that the quality of writing, appearance of the manuscript, grammar, and citation of references, all conform to high standards.
5. All authors must indicate the following information on the first page of the manuscript: name, employer, professional rank, address, telephone number, fax number, email address, and whether the work has been presented at a prior venue.

## REVIEWS OF BOOKS AND OTHER INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS:

1. Potential instructional materials that can be reviewed include books, computer software, CD-ROMs, guides, manuals, web pages, video programs, and audio programs.
2. Reviews may be submitted as a Word document e-mailed to [David Byland](mailto:David.Byland@okbu.edu).
3. Reviews must be 250-500 words in length.
4. The review must provide a full APA citation of the reviewed work.
5. The review must provide the reviewer's name, institution, and e-mail address.
6. The review should follow the guidelines below:
  - Read the whole book and any ancillary materials (CD/DVD, websites, etc.)
  - What is the book's focus?
  - Does the book accomplish the stated purpose?
  - Is the book a contribution to the field or discipline?
  - Does the book relate to a current debate or trend in the field and if so, how?
  - What is the theoretical lineage or school of thought out of which the book rises?
  - Is the book well written?
  - What are the book's terms and are they defined?
  - How accurate is the information (e.g., the footnotes, bibliography, dates)?
  - Are the illustrations/ ancillary materials helpful? If there are no illustrations/ ancillary materials, should there have been?
  - What courses would this book be appropriate for?
  - How does the book compare to other books in the field?

### Classic book review structure is as follows:

1. Title including complete bibliographic citation for the work (i.e., title in full, author, place, publisher, date of publication, edition statement, pages, special features [maps, color plates, etc.], price, and ISBN.
  2. One paragraph identifying the thesis, and whether the author achieves the stated purpose of the book.
  3. One or two paragraphs summarizing the book.
  4. One paragraph on the book's strengths.
  5. One paragraph on the book's weaknesses.
  6. One paragraph on your assessment of the book's strengths and weaknesses.
- (These guidelines adapted from Writing the Academic Book Review by Wendy Belcher, [www.chicano.ucla.edu/press/siteart/jli\\_bookreviewguidelines.pdf](http://www.chicano.ucla.edu/press/siteart/jli_bookreviewguidelines.pdf))

## WEBSITE REVIEW GUIDELINES

While there are many websites designed by and for educators, there are almost no reviews of those sites available. In order for our readers to make effective use of these resources, JoME invites reviews of websites based on the criteria below.

1. Reviews should be e-mailed to [David.Byland@okbu.edu](mailto:David.Byland@okbu.edu)
2. Reviews must be 250-500 words in length.
3. The review must provide a full APA citation of the reviewed work.
4. The review must provide the reviewer's name, institution, and e-mail address.
5. The reviewer should follow the criteria below:
  - Title including complete bibliographic citation for the work (including "http address")
  - One paragraph identifying the purpose of the site, and whether the site achieves that purpose.
  - One or two paragraphs summarizing the site.
  - One paragraph on the site's strengths.
  - One paragraph on the site's weaknesses.
  - Issues to consider when reviewing the text:
    - Look at the entire site, following all links.
    - Is the site easily navigated?
    - Do you immediately get a sense of what the site is all about?
    - Are the graphics appropriate to the subject of the site?
    - Are there graphics that seem superfluous or unnecessary?
    - Does the technology work - Java, scripts, movies, etc. or are you required to load a program or do something in order to use the site?
    - Is the layout cramped and 'too full' or is it aesthetically pleasing?
    - Are the areas of content clearly defined?
    - Is the content what you expected/needed?
    - Can the content be used in the classroom?
    - What courses would this site be appropriate for?
    - How does the site compare to other electronic resources?

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### CALL FOR ARTICLES FOR JULY AND OCTOBER ISSUES OF JOME

The deadlines for the next two issues are June 1 and September 1 respectively. Please keep in mind that we are looking for pedagogically focused articles supplemented by images, audio, video and other interactive media.

In addition to articles, we are looking for reviews of texts, websites, and software. In particular, we are interested in reviews of resources that enhance or facilitate the learning/collaborative process. Some online examples are: Dropbox, Swivel, InfoChimps, ManyEyes, YouTube, Google Charts, DataMash, and Flickr.

We're also interested in faculty development opportunities and activities you're engaged, travel and study abroad opportunities for faculty and students, and the integration of technology in the teaching/learning process.

These are just a few suggestions to get you started thinking about what you might contribute. If you have any questions, or ideas on articles please [e-mail](#) me.

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