

**Expert Review
Evaluation of an NSTA Science Guide
2005**

The following are the complete comments from an evaluative review of an NSTA Science Guide. The review was completed by members of the Committee of Professional Development, the committee on Middle Level Science Teaching, and selected members of the larger education community. A complete list of the reviewers can be found at the end of this document

Questions:

Usability		
The Science Guide and its content is laid out in a logical fashion that is easy to navigate and consume from an educator's point of view.	Yes	No
	9 partially	0
<p>Comments:</p> <p>Admin 4: The links are organized in a conceptual way. Very practical from an application standpoint. Easy to use</p> <p>ML 7: The program is very user friendly. I like the variety in the formatting. The concept map allows a teacher to get a nice overview. I could see how it would be useful to have more comprehensive concept maps based on the standards, benchmarks and atlas.</p> <p>Just like the various concepts are labeled for k-4 or 5-8 links I might suggest doing the same for the vignettes and lesson plan list. That way the teacher will get insight into the age level it targets.</p>		

Effectiveness		
The Science Guide is an effective online resource that will save educators time when searching for vetted URL resources and assist in their implementation by the accompanying lesson plans, vignettes, samples of student work and MP3 files available at the theme level.	Yes	No
	9	0
<p>Comments:</p> <p>PD 5: Of particular value are the filters that can be applied. As the guides continue to be developed, I see this as a rich resource that teachers can use to focus themselves - to first find hands on activities, lessons, then data sources, assessments conducting separate searches as they design "5E" types of constructivist units. I found it interesting to add the 'misconceptions' filter, and then see what came through for activities, etc. – and to analyze why a particular site was recommended as having a 'misconceptions' alignment.</p> <p>PD 9: The sites visited were all of high quality—How do you decide on sites to use?</p>		

Value of a Science Guide		
The Science Guide as a complete supplemental online resource would be a valuable resource to an educator	Yes	No
	9	0
<p>Comments:</p> <p>PD 5: The samples of student work and vignettes (case studies) will be a powerful professional development tool for adult learning communities. Will there be guiding questions for discussion – for study groups?</p> <p>PD 6: All in all, the science guides are an effective tool for teachers to gather information for classroom use and are usable, even for the slightly computer literate individual.</p>		

Overall Attitude Regarding the Science Guide				
1. The Science Guide Structure (Topic/Theme/Keyword) provides a nice scaffolding for the educator prior to accessing the vetted URLs.	6	3		
2. The content contained within a science guide at the theme level would be of value to an educator desiring to implement the URLs found at a keyword level (lesson plans, vignettes, samples of student work, MP3 audio file)	6	3		
3. Science Guides should be created for additional science topic areas, such as: Genetics, Earth Structures, Severe Weather, Atomic Structure, Energy Resources, Properties of Object and Matter, Reproduction and Heredity.	6	1		
4. Would educators be willing to pay \$9.99 for access to a Science Guide on an annual subscription basis?	3 Definitely	2 Don't know	1	1
5. Would districts be willing to pay for access to Science Guides for their educators if enough guides existed to cover the major science topic areas at the respective grade bands?	4 Definitely	3 If district is using a 'SciLinks' textbook Don't know		
Overall Comments/Impressions/Recommendations for Improvement:				
<p>Teacher 2: I believe the guides would be of most use if a district "site license" was purchased so the guides could be used in every school by any and all teachers that so desired and be purchased for a full year including summers. These could be made available for each of the levels and based on number of school or teachers involved.</p> <p>PD 9: I think it is a great site for getting content and inquiry lessons as well as the idea of including assessment suggestions— The least useful component was the review section—unless you have a method to get reviewers it isn't very reliable.</p> <p>ML 10: The guide looks well organized and easy to navigate. It is possible that by using the guide in the classroom would make it possible to make comments on improvement.</p>				

Reviewer List

Teacher 1: (HS teacher)

Teacher 2: (HS teacher)

Teachers 3: (Elem. teacher)

Admin 4: (Principal)

PD 5: (Ph.D. Science PD Specialist ERC)

PD 6: (National Board Certified teacher, HS)

ML 7: (MS Science teacher)

ML 8: (Science Consultant)

PD 9: (Asst. Professor Center for Educational Outreach, Baylor College of Medicine)

ML 10: (MS teacher)