

Why is using the Internet difficult with pupils with MLD?

The level of reading and comprehension needed to navigate the web successfully is often far higher than pupils with MLD have.

This does not mean that we should not use the Internet, but it does need thinking about and planning for carefully.

This article will look at some of the issues around planning and offer an example of teaching forces using the Internet.

Internet as a resource

One way in which the Internet can help teachers is by offering a bank of worksheets, lesson plans and resources which can easily be accessed and used. There are many such sites:

www.primaryresources.co.uk

www.educate.co.uk

www.teachingideas.co.uk

and many others. In fact there are so many online resources it is often difficult to know where to turn. I suggest you find 2 or 3 you like in general and stick with them. I like “educate” for looking at science as it lists things in their QCA module titles.

One of the problems of these sites is that there doesn’t appear to be any resources specifically aimed at MLD pupils. We hope that Slamnet will help rectify this situation soon.

Planning to use the Internet in a lesson

Without trying to “teach granny to suck eggs” use of the internet in a lesson requires all the planning normally associated with a lesson and should not be seen as an in fill. A few steps for planning:

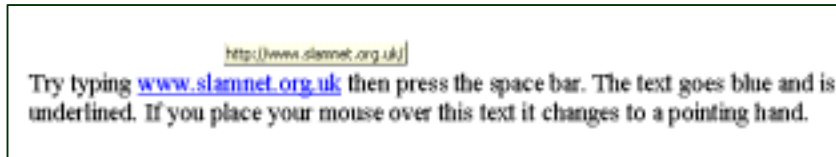
- Be clear that the lesson outcomes require the use of the internet.
- Know exactly where pupils will need to look.
- Check the site for the content you want (and don’t want!)
- Check the site sometime just before the lesson. Is it still there? Does it still contain the information you want?
- Know exactly how the pupils will reach the site(s).
- Know exactly what you want them to do once they get there.
- Do you have the skills to sort out problems? (maybe you can ask your technician to be on hand)

Accessing a website

If you are considering using the Internet in lessons I assume that you have some idea of how to use the net yourself. Sorry if this assumption is not correct. Whilst using a search engine is an important skill for pupils to learn, it may not be the best way to guide pupils to the site you want.

Offering a page of “hyperlinks” can be much better. A hyperlink is something that will take you somewhere else. It may be a different page in a word document or it may be a site on the Internet. Microsoft Word is a big help here. As soon as you type something in beginning with www. the computer recognises it as a website link. It turns the text blue and underlined and automatically makes the links to the internet. Try typing www.slamnet.org.uk then press the space bar. The text goes blue and is

underlined. If you place your mouse over this text it changes to a pointing hand  and the yellow comment box will appear. Click on the blue text and it will take you to the site.



This method is much easier if you know the website address, and is good for getting to general sites. However if it is a specific page in a site the address may be very long which in turn may be confusing for the pupils.

Pictures can have hyperlinks attached to them:



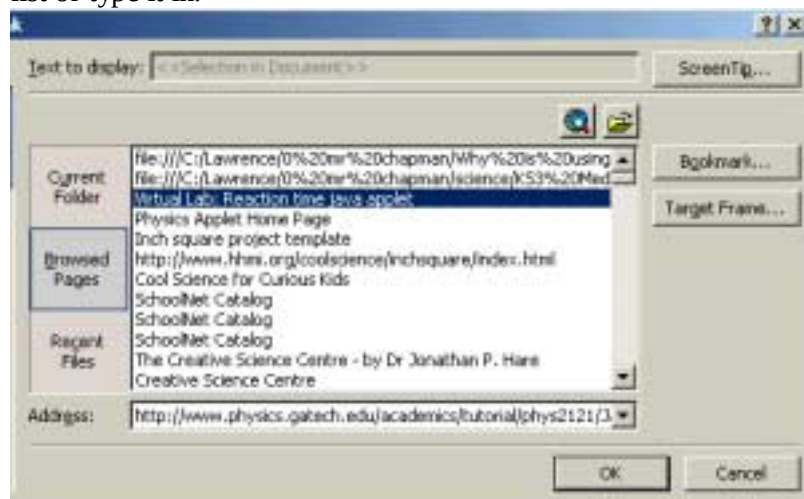
1. insert a picture from clipart.
2. click the right mouse button whilst it is over the picture and choose hyperlink.



Then you need to know the address or copy it from the net. This address is a long one and it leads to an activity about speed.

<http://www.physics.gatech.edu/academics/tutorial/phys2121/Java%20Applets/ntnujava/Reaction/reactionTime.html> but rather than it appearing like this, if I have just looked at the site it will appear for me in the box, see next step.

3. Make sure the button is pressed for link to website and select the site from the list or type it in.



Click OK.

4. Now when you put the mouse over the picture it will change to a hand. You have created a hyperlink to a web site.

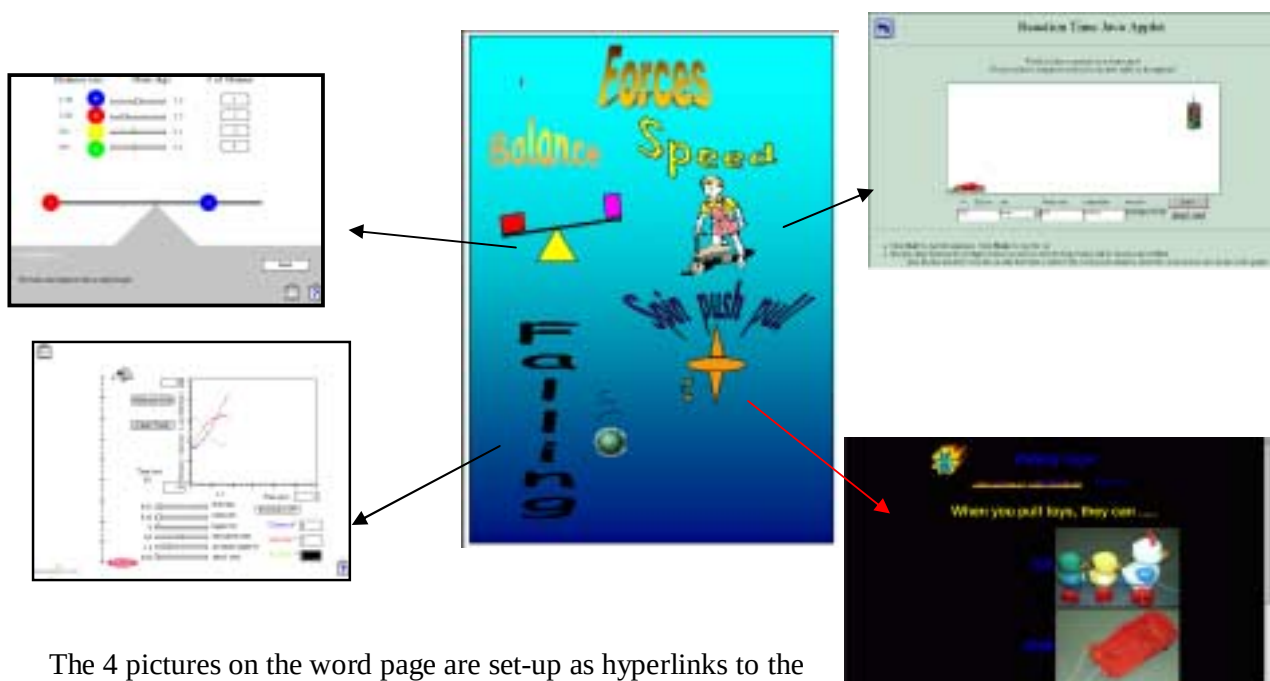
You could have several different pictures all linking to different sites that you want pupils to use.

An example of how to use the internet to teach about forces.

Having the time to find activities that are on the net is a big problem for all teachers. Here is a lesson that it is hoped would be of help for Keystage 2-3 pupils at various levels.

A Word document gives hyperlinks to online activities mainly with www.explorescience.com

To download the word file click here [Brendan Needs you action here to link to word file](#)



The 4 pictures on the word page are set-up as hyperlinks to the other sites on the Internet. In this way the pupils have some choice about what they want to go a view but you maintain over all control.

Although the sites contain a lot of detail I think most pupils at keystages 3-4 will be able to access them in some way.

Here are the full links to the sites:

Spin, push, pull: http://www.hitchams.suffolk.sch.uk/toy_forces/index.htm

Falling: http://www.explorescience.com/activities/Activity_page.cfm?ActivityID=27

See Saw: http://www.explorescience.com/activities/Activity_page.cfm?ActivityID=21

Speedtimer: <http://www.physics.gatech.edu/academics/tutorial/phys2121/Java%20Applets/ntnujava/Reaction/reactionTime.html>

Other sites viewed include:

- See your weight on different planets:
<http://www.exploratorium.edu/ronh/weight/index.html>

- Simple earthquake simulations
<http://www.spartechsoftware.com/reeko/Games/EarthQuakeSim.htm>
- Loads of animated sequences for science, but many of them very hard.
<http://www.slamnet.org.uk/kmg/index.htm>
- Change the look of lights on a panel in a shopping mal in Japan!
<http://light.softopia.pref.gifu.jp>

Summary

- Do use the internet with pupils statemented for MLD
- Do plan carefully and try to use hyperlinks
- Do watch the Slamnet site for further updates and more MLD resources.

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